



Senior Officer Professional Digest

Selected readings from the world's military journals

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CONTENTS

Of Insurgency, Arab History and Militant Islam	p. 3
The Middle East and a Second-term Bush Administration	p. 3
The Fight for Kufa: Task Force 2-37 Armour Defeats al-Sadr's Militia	p. 5
Four Scenarios for Iraq	p. 5
Canada's Global Role: A Strategic Assessment of its Military Power	p. 7
Terrorism, Insurgency and the Military Response from South Armagh to Falluja	p. 8
From Bush I to Bush II: Plus ca change?	p. 9
Technical Developments and Effects-based Operations	p. 10

Compiled by:



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.



Article	‘Of Insurgency, Arab History and Militant Islam’
Author	Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Clark, USMCR, Marine Emergency preparedness liaison officer, to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region V, Iraq
Publication Details	<i>Marine Corps Gazette</i> , vol. 89, issue 1, January 2005, pp. 41–3.

SYNOPSIS

At the core of the this article is a list of over forty books and essays that form a rich source of material spanning the subject areas listed in the title. The article is the author’s attempt to arm United States Marine Corps (USMC) personnel returning to South-West Asia with a wealth of historical, political, religious and sociological information. He expresses the hope that these resources will assist USMC personnel in understanding the context of their current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. From a military point of view, the key points that the author wants readers to glean from the article are summed up in this quote:

First, insurgencies are not short-term commitments. Second, success or failure in the GWOT [Global War on Terrorism], like other insurgencies, will in large part depend upon the quality of the strategy pursued rather than the technology and operational means employed. Third, insurgencies like other forms of war are pursued for political objectives, hence counterinsurgencies must address the political considerations that give rise to or sustain them.

Article	‘The Middle East and a Second-term Bush Administration’
Author	Rami G. Khouri, Executive Editor of the Lebanese newspaper <i>The Daily Star</i>
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , vol. 149, no. 6, December 2004, pp. 12–14.

SYNOPSIS

Khouri’s article examines how the second-term Bush administration is likely to deal with a series of old issues and new opportunities that will confront US policy in the Middle East. In the recent past, Washington’s policies in the region have been aggressive and militaristic, but the latest developments in the United States, Europe

and the Middle East have generated new forces that might pull US Middle East policy in a different direction.

The author lists four interlinked issues that define America's relationship with the Middle East:

- the situation in Iraq,
- the Arab–Israeli conflict,
- the war on terror and attempts to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and
- the broad reform strategy for the region's political and economic systems.

Khoury believes that currently 'all four of these dynamics are in a state of flux'. He also feels that new diplomatic and policy initiatives might be able to bring about better outcomes than those that have been achieved in the recent past.

The author notes that, throughout the Middle East, the general reaction to the re-election of Bush has been concern that hardline policies will cause the region to decline further into violence and instability. Khoury states that the key to halting this deterioration will be the quality of leadership in the United States, Europe and, of course, the Middle East itself. However, the main fear in the region is that in his second term Bush will institutionalise the neo-conservative policies that were tested during his first term. Bush's new Secretary of State and National Security Adviser are seen as indications that US foreign policy will now be smoothly implemented, without the differing viewpoints that characterised many policy initiatives in the President's first term. The best indication of whether US policy will be ideologically driven or more pragmatic is the way in which America deals with Iran and Syria. However, ongoing problems in Iraq make it unlikely that the United States would use military force to deal with Teheran or Damascus.

Turning to the Arab–Israeli conflict, Khoury sees some cause for optimism. Initial indications, following the death of Arafat, show that all parties involved seem to have renewed their resolve to find a peaceful solution to the problem of creating a Palestinian state. Decisive diplomatic action now, by all of the key players in the Palestinian conflict, will strengthen the likelihood of a positive outcome. Israel's willingness to withdraw from all of the occupied territories remains a major stumbling block to a peaceful solution. If peace between the Arabs and Israel is achieved, the United States will regain a great deal of the diplomatic credibility it has lost in the region. Such an outcome, the author states, would allow America to redefine its presence in the region as a positive force for change.

In the conclusion Khoury restates his belief that future developments in the Middle East will depend on the way in which the US, European and regional leaders can reshape their diplomacy in order to take advantage of new opportunities that might bring about peaceful change. Failure to achieve such a redefinition will doom the region to decades of conflict and instability.

Article	‘The Fight for Kufa: Task Force 2-37 Armour Defeats al-Sadr’s Militia’
Author	Major Todd E. Walsh, Brigade Executive Officer, Ready First Combat Team, 1st Armoured Division, Freiberg, Germany
Publication Details	<i>Armor</i> , vol. CXIII, no. 6, November–December 2004, pp. 26–30.

SYNOPSIS

The employment of armoured forces in urban operations is the subject of this article by a highly experienced US Army officer. The article recounts the combat between coalition and Iraqi security forces fighting the Mahdi Army militia of radical Shia cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr, in the cities of Najaf and Kufa during April, May and June 2004.

Task Force (TF) 2-37 included elements of both the 2nd and 3rd Armoured Cavalry Regiments. TF 2-37 comprised twenty-nine Abrams tanks and a range of armoured vehicles, including four 120 mm mortar carriers, six M109 Paladins and various combat support vehicles. This range of vehicles permitted the TF commander to task-organise into very flexible tank and cavalry teams that provided him with numerous tactical options for a wide variety of missions.

The author provides the reader with a clear, chronological narrative of the actions of TF-37 during several weeks of operations. The article is also a useful account of urban operations. The author illustrates how the Mahdi Army frequently used tactics that included the deployment of heavy weapons in areas inhabited by non-combatants and the developed defensive positions around mosques and schools.

Article	‘Four Scenarios for Iraq’
Author	Dr Greg Mills, National Director of the South African Institute of International Affairs
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , vol. 149, no. 6, December 2004, pp. 20–7.

SYNOPSIS

Mills begins his article with a brief reference to the British military operations in Iraq that culminated with the creation of the Hashemite monarchy in 1921. He then

outlines four medium-term scenarios for modern Iraq in the wake of the polls held on 30 January 2005.

- Scenario One: Government with Iraqi Consent—*'Limited Democracy'*
Consent from key groups in the Iraqi population will be a crucial factor in achieving even limited democratic government in Iraq. Iraqis have little experience of stable, responsible government. Many of the country's previous rulers, including Saddam, used to play on the wide range of tribal, ethnic, religious and economic differences within the country to keep the population divided. Mills borrows a quote from the American author, Tony Horwitz, who points out that the 'history of Iraq reads like *Macbeth*, only bloodier', with twenty-three coups and numerous revolts between 1920 and 1991. The Shiah majority and influential clerics such as Ali Sistani, the Kurds and the Sunni will need to work hard to reach the complex accommodations necessary to achieve the outcome discussed in this scenario.
- Scenario Two: Iraqi liberal democracy—*'A Model for the Region'*
There are no role models for this scenario in the Middle East. The obstacles to accomplishing this outcome are again cultural, but also heavily influenced by regional politics. A liberal democracy in Iraq would highlight the internal problems of its neighbours and perhaps even create instability in the region. This scenario also presumes that Western-style democracy is both desirable and appropriate for Iraq. Mills states that the model of government adopted post-January 2005 must reflect the context and aspirations of Iraqis.
- Scenario Three: Internal Fragmentation—*'Peace in Pieces'*
Fragmentation of Iraq along ethnic lines—a Kurdish north, a Sunni Arab centre and a Shiah Arab south—has frequently been discussed since 2003. Mills gives four reasons why fragmentation may be less likely, and again regional geopolitics is high on the list. While Iran might encourage a break away by the Shiah in the south, Turkey is unlikely to want the Kurds in northern Iraq to achieve greater independence. In the south the Shiah are Arabs, not Farsi speakers, and identify more with Arab culture than Iranian culture. Equitable division of Iraq's oil revenues throughout the country would do much to salve the divisions fostered by Saddam over the past thirty years. Acknowledging these problems, the interim government took positive steps to give cabinet representation to all the regions. Mills states that there is a trend towards dialogue and engagement with the central government, rather than towards dissolution.
- Scenario Four: Civil War and Collapse—*'Strategic Failure'*
The West has a great stake in ensuring that this particular scenario does not come about. Firm leadership and strong support for Iraqis to achieve their political aspirations will be essential in preventing a collapse of the current political process. So too will be the ability of the coalition and Iraqi forces to

secure the nation's borders and suppress the insurgency, which consists of at least five main groups.

In the aftermath of the elections, Mills considers that the most likely medium-term prospects for Iraq will be a combination of scenarios one and three: limited representative government with some regional decentralisation. The author concludes that the future of Iraq is not to become three separate states, but rather to return to the slow process of becoming a unitary democratic state along similar lines to the one established by the British in 1920.

Article	'Canada's Global Role: A Strategic Assessment of its Military Power'
Author	Colonel Joseph R. Nunez, US Army War College
Publication Details	<i>Parameters</i> , vol. XXXIV, no. 3, Autumn 2004, pp. 75–93.

SYNOPSIS

An examination of Canada's role as a military power in the period since the end of World War II provides the main theme of this article. From a US perspective the Canadians reap great benefits from their proximity to their powerful neighbour, not the least of which is the ability to spend only 1.1 per cent of Gross Domestic Product on defence.

The author also believes that, because of its position in North America, Canada has an identity crisis. The problem is summed up by a senior Canadian officer who remarked, 'We are a regional power without a region.' Evidence is also presented that many Canadians today see themselves positively on the domestic front, but negatively in international terms.

In the late 20th century, Canada's armed forces were involved in peacekeeping operations on a global scale. Some Canadians referred to the nation as a moral superpower, but the effect that multiple peacekeeping operations had on the nation's military forces was deleterious in the extreme. In the light of international developments since 2001, Canada is reassessing its traditional peacekeeping role and becoming more involved in peace enforcement operations, such as Afghanistan, while also looking closely at its relationship with the United States.

The main conclusion of the author is that both Washington and Ottawa would benefit from strengthening their defence ties. However, it is the Canadians who need to reassess their place in the world. As part of this reassessment, Canadians must realise that they stand to benefit more from increased defence ties with the United States than the Americans do. The reality of the 21st century is that hard military power counts and the United States wants allies that can provide military weight to future coalitions.

Article	'Terrorism, Insurgency and the Military Response from South Armagh to Falluja'
Author	Sub-Lieutenant Conor O'Neill, RN
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , vol. 149, no. 5, October 2004, pp. 22–5.

SYNOPSIS

This article is the result of Sub-Lieutenant O'Neill's studies at Oxford. The article is a comparative study of the British experience in Northern Ireland in the 1970s and the more recent operations in southern Iraq. The main thesis of the article is that, in terms of using military force in counter-insurgency operations, there are some significant patterns of experience that the British can draw on from their first years of operations in Ireland and the emerging experience of British forces in southern Iraq.

Two key issues mentioned in the article are:

- the attitude of the local population , and
- the credibility of local forces.

The need for the benevolent neutrality of the local population was recognised as an important factor very early in the Northern Ireland campaign. A key determinant in attaining this response from the population was the proper treatment of prisoners and detainees. Likewise, the behaviour of local forces was important in determining the legitimacy of the regime with the local population. O'Neill found significant indications that these factors were also operating in Iraq, allowing the British forces to address them on the basis of prior experience.

Article	‘From Bush I to Bush II: Plus ca change?’
Author	Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , vol. 149, no. 6, December 2004, pp. 8–11.

SYNOPSIS

This article reviews a number of issues that will be important in the second Bush administration. Such issues include the US world-view, the importance of 11 September 2001, Condoleezza Rice, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and, of course, Iraq. Before beginning his discussion of these issues, Cox makes some general remarks about where he sees the second Bush administration heading. The model he uses is President Ronald Reagan and, as with the other second-term Republican president, Cox says that Bush will be compelled to moderate his policies by a combination of circumstance and choice.

Cox believes that the second Bush term will see the President desire to retain the leadership role in world affairs that America has taken on since the events of 11 September 2001. As Mr Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defence, has said, other nations will ‘have to accommodate to the facts.’

The events of 11 September will remain a central factor in any Bush foreign-policy decision. The new Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, although not a neo-conservative, is close to the President in her views and this will give US foreign policy a coherence that it often lacked under Colin Powell.

Reform of the CIA will be a difficult process that treads the path between organisational independence and self-censorship. Cox believes that the Bush administration will opt for an agency that is politically pliable rather than objective in its assessments.

Iraq will be the defining issue in Bush’s second term. The credibility of the administration and the United States will depend on how matters develop in the next few months with an Iraqi government elected by its own people. Bringing stability to Iraq will be a key performance indicator of US policy in the Bush second term. Cox concludes the article with the view that, ‘Clearly, difficult days lie ahead’.

Article	'Technical Developments and Effects-based Operations'
Author	Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burridge, RAF
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , vol. 149, no. 5, October 2004, pp. 26–30.

SYNOPSIS

Air Chief Marshal Burridge's article is based on his 2004 Trenchard Memorial Lecture. The main theme of the article is a consideration of the combination of equipment, organisation and thinking. This combination exemplifies the effects-based approach to operations in the air. Burridge believes that Trenchard's legacy to the modern Royal Air Force (RAF) is the habit of technical thinking.

Fundamental to effects-based operations is network-enabled capability (NEC). Burridge says that NEC offers air power three enhancements:

- Through increased situational awareness delivered by NEC, air power gains the ability to respond speedily and thus is able to maintain control of the air.
- NEC enables the generation of overwhelming tempo by integrating air power with land manoeuvre.
- Persistence (the ability to remain over the operational area for longer periods) allows air power to respond rapidly to fleeting targets of opportunity as and when they are located.

Each of these points is illustrated with historical or contemporary examples.

The role of technology in achieving these enhancements must be focused on the ability to relay to platforms information that is timely and accurate. This goal should form the basis of future equipment investment strategies, with the result that new capabilities are based on fewer, more potent platforms. For his own command, Strike Command, Burridge sees that this requirement will be encapsulated in the phrase, 'Precise Campaign Effects-at Range-in Time'. He goes on to describe the type of capabilities that should allow the RAF to meet this goal by 2015.

Before concluding the article, the author outlines how both doctrine and organisational culture of the RAF will need to change in order to keep apace with technical advancements and new strategic realities. The article concludes with Burridge reiterating that the greatest legacy Trenchard gave to the RAF was its technical-service culture, capable of absorbing the massive advancements in the technology of air power that have occurred over the past eight decades.