



Senior Officer Professional Digest

Selected readings from the world's military journals

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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.

P.F. LEAHY
Lieutenant General
Chief of Army



Article	'The Role of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Stabilization'
Author	Major General Roger Lane and Emma Sky
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , Vol. 151, No. 3, June 2006, pp. 46–51

SYNOPSIS

Roger Lane, Deputy Commander Operations for International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) VIII, finished his second tour in Afghanistan in May 2006, and Emma Sky is an Adviser to Commander ISAF, having previously served in the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq. Both authors bring unique, timely and relevant experience to their discussion of the challenges facing nation-building efforts in Afghanistan. They declare that, as NATO assumes security responsibility in support of the Government of Afghanistan, it faces 'the most challenging operation ever undertaken by NATO'. And yet the success of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) has been variable, most often hampered by differing views and interpretations of the causes of instability and ways to aid Afghanistan achieve security, governance and development.

This article seeks to fill the current conceptual gap by identifying the fundamentals of stability, conceptualizing the role of PRTs in delivering stability at the provincial level, identifying the activities that PRTs should be conducting to deliver stability, and setting out the PRT exit strategy.

The authors identify the major factor of instability in Afghanistan as weakness in government institutions, rather than the strength of Al Qaeda, the Taliban, lack of infrastructures, narco-criminal syndicates, poverty, warlords, or corruption. Correct identification of the problem, unique to each district within each province, 'is everything;' 'We are therefore engaged in a contest for the ungoverned space ... in the cognitive domain of the minds of the population ...' To achieve this, four major strands need constant attention:

- legitimate and effective governance;
- capable Afghan security forces;
- mitigation and marginalization of threats to stability; and



- conditions for sustainable and legitimate economic growth.

These are not deliverable through military force and can only be achieved by coherent and evolutionary unity of effort between the various and often disparate indigenous and international agencies in Afghanistan. ‘In effect, the PRT should lead from behind and underneath’.

Article	‘The Privatization of Security: Lessons from Iraq’
Author	Deborah A. Avant, Institute for Global and International Studies, George Washington University
Publication Details	<i>Orbis</i> , vol. 50, no. 2, Spring 2006, pp. 327–42

SYNOPSIS

As private forces take a greater role in the modern battlespace, the challenges for decision-makers have also increased. Traditionally, civilians have provided a limited logistic support to operations, but across the 20th century the ratio of combatants to civilians has increased. The author notes that ‘During Vietnam ... the use of civilian contractors began to change. Not only did civilians support the war effort, but contractors were deployed to the theatre to provide a variety of services to the government and military.’ Since then, as weapons systems have increased in complexity, contractor in-theatre technical support has become an essential element of deploying military force. The 2003 Iraq War saw contractors provide operational support to complex weapon systems including the B-2, the F-117, Global Hawk, the M-1 tank, and Apache helicopters. Also, private security contractors are playing a large role in close personal protection and vital asset.

Contractors provide a “surge” capability to Western militaries that is ‘politically less costly’ than deploying additional military personnel. Yet the financial cost can be substantial; in Iraq, the deteriorating situation in the summer of 2003 led to a seller’s market, especially for Special Forces personnel. Uniformed soldiers operated in the same environment for a quarter of the salary of the privateers—this disparity caused serious morale problems in the military force. Avant highlights that the demand for contractors in Iraq led to a global search and, in some cases, the employment of personnel who were not always up to the standards of Western military best practice.



Avant notes that a important concern in the employment of contractors related to the ‘rules of engagement and shared knowledge of armed movements, knowledge about both of which is crucial to missions’ safety and success.’ Additionally there are significant issues surrounding the legal status of contractors and their degree of accountability. The Geneva Conventions only stipulate three categories: combatants, non-combatants, and civilians; this “in-between” status may lead contractors to be denied prisoner of war status. Further, the Abu Ghraib scandal, where contractors ‘were implicated as ringleaders in the abuses’, demonstrates the strategic impact that the actions of contractors on operational effectiveness.

Article	‘Struggling for Control: Procurement Reform in the US and Britain’
Author	Professor Keith Hayward, Head of Research, Royal Aeronautical Society
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , Vol. 151, No. 3, June 2006, pp. 62–5

SYNOPSIS

This critical examination of the procurement processes of the United States and the United Kingdom defence establishments echoes many of the public criticisms of the Defence Materiel Organisation. . The article begins with a brief examination of the F-22 Raptor. The US initially planned to buy of 648 aircraft at a cost of US\$125 million. But cost overruns and force structure changes inherent in US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s Transformation initiative mean that the current procurement plan is for 181 aircraft has a unit cost of US\$361 million—a 189 per cent increase in cost for significantly less capability. Professor Hayward acknowledges that buying weapons for a government ‘is a complex mix of high technology, large sums of public money, industrial interests and challenging customer requirements set against a context of potential or actual lethal violence.’

However, he argues that the fundamental reason for many procurement difficulties is well known: ‘Too many programmes are launched on the basis of inadequate knowledge.’ That is, the technology is not mature and the defence procurement agencies ignore the rules of the commercial world. Hayward highlights that, ‘Evolutionary design, prototyping of all crucial items and stringent peer review of decisions by all stakeholders (including



supplier representatives)’ is commercial best practice—prior to the production decision. The military does the reverse: ‘large-scale leaps in technology entailing high levels of risk’ by a system geared toward early commitment. Increasing competition, according to the UK’s National Audit Office, ‘does not feature as one of the key drivers of successful delivery of typical major defence projects’, but realistic risk appreciation and mitigation are ‘fundamental to successful procurement performance.’

In Britain, ‘pressures remained to push projects through Main Gate in a less mature state, especially where existing equipment was obsolete.’ International collaborative programs ‘also created additional pressures to commit early to ambitious technological objectives.’ The challenge of interoperability with US forces, especially as the ‘US is still conducting an arms race against itself’, sets many hurdles for smaller nations that are ‘trying to stay in touch with the Pentagon’s transformational agenda.’ The answers, according to the author, are more cultural than procedural. Electoral and posting cycles, which are much shorter than program lifecycles, work to dilute knowledge and increase collective irresponsibility. The urge to ‘tweak’ requirements lengthens the product-cycle and micro-management remains a significant hindrance. Program managers need clear lines of authority and expectations of outcomes. ‘Above all,’ observes Hayward, program managers need to keep chanting the mantra “we can learn from the commercial world”. Defence is not different.

Article	‘What Does China Want?’
Author	Ross Terrill
Publication Details	<i>The Wilson Quarterly</i> , Vol. 29, Iss. 4, Autumn 2005, pp. 50–62

SYNOPSIS

China, for centuries the world’s significant ‘Other’, remains an elusive and often inscrutable player on the global stage. This article, written by a researcher at Harvard University’s Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, delves beyond the image of China as ‘a cautious, even conservative, power’ that ‘tends to behave reactively rather than pursue distinctive goals beyond China’s borders.’ Defensive and reactive behaviour, according to Terrill, has two sources. First, Beijing sees itself



‘as recovering from economic backwardness’, and second, China is bristling over ‘its relative weakness’ compared to the United States. Consequently, China joins international organisations ‘for the limited purpose of keeping their agendas from inconveniencing China.’ Terrill identifies and explores six major goals in the actions of the Chinese leadership:

Internal stability: ‘China pursues a foreign policy that maximises stability at home.’ As a diverse semi-empire, philosophical heterodoxy is not tolerated: ‘The regime trusts you with your money but not with your mind.’

Economic growth: ‘Beijing has crafted foreign policy to sustain the economic growth that keeps its legitimacy intact.’ Ideology in the global marketplace is second to pragmatism.

Peaceful geography: ‘In a striking change from what was true for most the PRC’s history, Beijing today has no enemies.’ With 14 nations sharing borders, and four others close by an extensive coastline, geography is central to Chinese security: ‘In its first 30 years, the PRC went to war on all five of its flanks’ but today practices ‘omnidirectional smiles’.

Being a hegemon: this unstated goal, to be the dominant East Asian influence, seeks to replace the United States. Hence the US exclusion from the East Asian Summit, aid packages to the region, and trade enticements to nations like Australia.

Perception as US equal: the desire to be seen on equal footing with the United States on the diplomatic stage, not subservient or inferior.

‘Regain’ territories: beyond resuming control of Taiwan, Beijing wishes to resume control over islands such as the Spratlys group, and has in the past claimed large sections of the eastern Soviet Union.

But for Terrill, the greatest challenge facing China comes from closer to home: ‘A middle class push for property rights, rural discontent, the Internet, 150 million unemployed wandering between village and city, and a suddenly ageing population bringing financial and social strain’.



Article	'Terrorism: Global Insecurity or Global Hyperbole?'
Author	Louis A. Delvoie
Publication Details	<i>Canadian Military Journal</i> , Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 2005–2006, pp. 103–4, < http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/engraph/Vol6/no4/PDF/13-Views1_e.pdf >

SYNOPSIS

Louis Delvoie is a retired Canadian diplomat and currently a Senior Fellow at the Queen's University Centre for International Relations. Delvoie argues that words and phrases like 'terrorism' and 'nine/eleven' have come to occupy the same place in our language as phrases like the 'red menace' and the 'yellow peril'. They are meant to 'counsel prudence and vigilance' but instead 'engender fear, if not paranoia'.

By using such phrases, governments have been galvanised to take action to protect the safety their citizens. This, Delvoie argues, is appropriate; however, he takes issue with 'pundits of all professions and persuasions' who argue that 'we are now living in a world of unprecedented danger and that combating terrorism should be or should become the first and only priority of all Western governments'. He asserts that the claims made for al Qaeda's desire (or any terrorist group) to acquire and use nuclear weapons or other advanced military capabilities are over-stated. He highlights that, compared to those who lived through the two World Wars of the 20th century, today's populations are living through a benign international security environment.

This is not to say that the world is without major security issues. Delvoie points out that the African continent continues to be embroiled in civil wars and faces catastrophe from disease. Similarly, the complexity of the relationships between Pakistan, India, China and Japan has the potential to 'lead to conflict in the longer term'. However, these threats do not emanate from terrorism. The threat of terrorism is also very real, Delvoie states, but that the sooner it is portrayed in 'its true proportions, the better off we shall all be'.



Article	'Lessons Learned from Terrorist Investigation in the United Kingdom'
Author	Peter Clarke
Publication Details	<i>RUSI Journal</i> , Vol. 151, No. 2, April 2006, pp. 22–6

SYNOPSIS

This article is drawn from a speech by the author, Head of the Metropolitan Police's SO13 Anti-Terrorist Branch, presented to RUSI on 15 February 2006. He begins by noting the significant evolution of anti-terror investigations over the past several years: 'this appreciation of the evolving threat has led us to change completely the concept of operations that we use to interdict, arrest and prosecute terrorists.' Whilst the extensive experience against the Irish Republican Army provides a solid base, the author highlights several important differences: the Irish threat was essentially domestic and tightly structured, casualties were limited, and the weapons were conventional. The reverse is true of the terrorist threat currently facing the UK.

Counter-terrorist operations, in theory, must balance three elements: 'public safety, evidence gathering and maintaining the confidence of all communities.' Given the nature of modern terrorism, public safety takes primacy of consideration, and, for the author, the next most important factor is maintaining the confidence of those communities that can assist in preventing terror attacks. As a consequence, current UK counter-terrorism operations focus on the criminal activities that are precursors to an attack—such as 'the planning, the raising of finance, the gathering of logistical support, the hostile reconnaissance, and finally the execution'.

Clarke argues that while the disruption of these activities may not lead to explicit terrorism charges, they have the same effect in preventing attacks. He details several cases and alludes to others still *sub judice*. These include 'conspiracy to murder, to cause explosions, to cause a public nuisance by means of radiological devices, and possession of automatic weapons.'

The article concludes with three suggestions for future reforms to police anti-terrorist methodology beyond updating legislative frameworks:

1. closer cooperation with various Muslim communities to encourage intelligence sharing;



2. honestly consider police structures and capabilities, leading to strategic, regionally-based capacity; and
3. raising the level of informed public debate.

Article	‘Knowing How and When to Cross the Street’
Author	Major Henry W Lutz III, USMC
Publication Details	<i>Marine Corps Gazette</i> , Vol. 90, No. 5, May 2006, pp. 78–81

SYNOPSIS

‘All Marines must know how and when to “cross the street” from HA [Humanitarian Assistance] operations to combat operations and back again without hesitation.’ In this article, the author examines the reality of contemporary US Marine Corps deployments and laments a lack of preparation for humanitarian assistance. He notes that the compression of time and space means that General Krulak’s ‘three block war’ isn’t a distinctly phased transition but instead concurrent activities. All three of these blocks confront the soldier on the same street at the same time.

From Operation *Al Fajr* in Fallujah to the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami, operations routinely have an element of relief and assistance to civilian populations. In the latter case, the short-notice precluded time for mission preparation, meaning that disaster relief is a ‘come as you are’ demand. The author highlights that Marine Corps training does not prepare Marines well for this contingency.

The reality facing military forces engaged in humanitarian assistance operations is that the military is often not the lead-agency. Developing the capacity to work effectively with the other arms of government, international partners and non-governmental organisations is not a strong component of Marine Corps education and training. The author suggests that engaging such bodies in educational settings to better equip troops for tasks like establishing and running refugee camps or providing food aid will improve operational effectiveness. Often, the military have the logistics systems needed, and are in the best position to be ‘first responders’; this author argues for a comprehensive and sustained educational effort to ensure that the Marines of the future are capable of achieving the mission on all three blocks in wars of the future.



Article	‘There’s More to Coalition Life Than Strategy and Tactics’
Author	Major CS Bell & Major AM Roe (British Army)
Publication Details	<i>British Army Review</i> , No. 139, Spring 2006, pp. 34–37

SYNOPSIS

This article reinvigorates the investigation into the operational level of war. ‘The operational level of war is where the conditions for campaign success are set or lost. It is the interface that should inform and refine strategic level direction, as well as set the conditions for tactical success.’ The authors begin by noting that recent military and strategic debates have ‘become polarised between two extremities: strategy and tactics.’ This is a weakness because ‘significant opportunities’ exist for ‘sailors, soldiers and airmen, often exposed early in their careers to the complexities of the operational level of war in relatively small national components, to make a crucial, and much-needed, contribution to the effectiveness of the coalition.’

The US Army, through its Exercise Unified Quest, have undertaken to improve ‘operational level command, design, and planning for complex and irregular operations.’ Systemic Operational Design (SOD), based on the work of the Israeli Defense Force’s Shimon Naveh, seeks to ‘examine, and where necessary hypothesize, about the logical relationships between friendly, neutral and rival actors, as well as other entities such as loose organisations, that make up the system in question.’ By breaking linear thinking, ‘SOD is happy to see the ball moving towards, and then over, the try line and does not seek to direct how and where the points must be scored on the pitch, if on the pitch at all.’

By recognising the evolutionary, complicated and fluid nature of any military operation, SOD employs complex systems theory, including feedback loops and adaptability, to take a holistic, iterative and evolutionary approach to the operational art. At the staff level, ‘Characteristics such as openness, intellect, independent-mindedness, healthy cynicism and originality’ are valued for the creativity and insight they promote, leading to better framing of problems, clearer recognition of limitations, and ‘increased effectiveness at the operational level’.



Article	'The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations'
Author	Colonel Ralph O. Baker, US Army
Publication Details	<i>Military Review</i> , Vol. LXXXVI, No. 3, May–June 2006, pp. 13–32, < http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/MayJun06/WEB%20pdf/Baker.pdf >

SYNOPSIS

The author, who commanded the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Armored Division, provides great insight in the practical application of Information Operations. Declaring that he 'was among the skeptics who doubted the value of integrating information operations (IO) into my concept of operations', he 'quickly discovered that IO was going to be one of the two most vital tools' in the counterinsurgency campaign. The 'traditional tools in my military kit bag were insufficient' and the 'reality I confronted was far different from what I had professionally prepared for over a lifetime of conventional training and experience.'

Distilling his experience in seven observations, the author states:

1. 'To be effective, you must tailor themes and messages to specific audiences ... more quickly than our adversaries'.
2. 'You must engage with the press to influence them; learn what they want to know'.
3. 'There is a direct correlation between our credibility and our ability to demonstrably improve the quality of life, physical security and stability in a society.'
4. A major IO goal at the tactical and operational level is to 'get the people in your area of operations (AO) to have confidence in you'.
5. 'Commanders need to communicate their vision and intent through personal involvement with subordinates'.
6. 'Keep IO messages simple and few, and repeat them often'.
7. 'Media must earn their access'.



In fleshing out these points with examples, the author details several adaptations he implemented, such as not ‘bagging’ detainees—which is a source of great shame to the average Iraqi male—and allowing field grade officers to hold impromptu press conferences at the site of an insurgent attack, something usually restricted to divisional headquarters staff. The use of handbills (leaflets) is also described as highly successful in promoting the Coalition message and countering insurgent myth and propaganda. Being a more trustworthy and responsive source of information than insurgents or the ‘rumour-mill’ ‘proved to be an essential tool for informing and influencing the key Iraqi audiences in our AO’.

Article	‘British Counter-insurgency in History: A Useful Precedent?’
Author	Ashley Jackson, King’s College London
Publication Details	<i>British Army Review</i> , No. 139, Spring 2006, pp. 12–22

SYNOPSIS

The idea that the British experience of colonial policing has equipped their modern army with enduring principles of counterinsurgency has become *de rigueur*. Yet this article challenges this orthodoxy and casts into question the utility of bringing past examples forward as a guide to the future. Jackson’s concern is that this truism has become so doctrinaire among military and academic circles that new approaches to counterinsurgency are missed or overlooked: ‘more attention should be paid to “lessons not learned” from past experience as thinking develops to meet likely future scenarios.’

Specifically, the author contends that British Army policies of ‘minimum force’ and ‘hearts and minds’ must be viewed as adjuncts to colonial government and policing policies; the non-military elements must not be ignored or diminished. Significantly, previous campaigns were conducted on sovereign British territory, without scrutiny from media or human rights lawyers; today, these operations will likely occur in other peoples’ countries and in the glare of global communications. Other state security arms used forced relocations, detention without trial, torture, forced labour and food denial to coerce popular compliance in Malaya, Kenya,



and Oman, etc. 'It might, in fact, be claimed that colonial counterinsurgencies were won because we "flouted our own laws".'

'In looking for lessons of contemporary relevance in past counter-insurgency campaigns, important contextual differences must be properly understood.' The author also argues that 'first principle' questions must be asked and answered with brutal honesty when using historical examples: *'Is there any value in studying the Malayan emergency as preparation for understanding modern Iraq?'* The answer to that question is more important than any lesson to be derived from studying the example.