

S O P D



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Land Warfare Studies Centre

Ian Campbell Road
Duntroon ACT 2600
Australia
+61 2 6265 9624

lwsc.publications@defence.gov.au

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

This month the Editors of the *Senior Officer Professional Digest* recommend ten articles drawn from professional and academic journals on the subjects of counterinsurgency, insurgent motivation, South-East Asian terrorism, oil-market power, Chinese maritime strategy and diplomacy, and climate engineering.

Military history is generally regarded as a crucial element in the professional development of an officer. However, Hew Strachan challenges such conventional wisdom and argues that sometimes the context of elements of military history—primarily insurgencies—are sui generis and should, therefore, *not* be studied for advice. Major Daniel C Turner of the Australian Army, Richard M Cavagnol and Richard L Hayes take the opposite position, arguing the similarities between providing advice to foreign militaries during the Vietnam War and in Iraq today. Like Strachan, Michael Vasquez criticises the learning of lessons from insurgencies, arguing that misleading lessons are being gleaned from operations in Iraq. Regardless of the many contested 'lessons of war', attacking the enemy's motivation to fight is widely recognised as a fundamental military lesson, and a key to victory. Rune Henriksen and Anthony Vinci examine non-state combatant motivation in the hope their article will help achieve such victory.

Changing focus from one front in the War on Terror to another, Justin Magouirk, Scott Atran and Marc Sageman explain how their 'Global Transnational Terrorism' database will provide a valuable new source of hard data on terrorists in Southeast Asia. On a similar theme, Eduardo F Ugarte examines the structure and methods of operation of the Filipino terrorist organisation Abu Sayaff, focusing in part on their rather unique method of utilising traditional Filipino-Muslim alliance systems to mobilise and distribute resources.

Resources are just as crucial to even the largest political organisations. Steve A Yetiv & Lowell Feld, David Lei, and Toshi Yoshihara & James R Holmes all examine energy issues and their effect on China and/or the United States in their articles. Finally, Fred C Ikle and Lowell Wood examine one response to the issues contingent on human energy usage—climate engineering.

Enjoy
The Editors

Hew Strachan, 'British Counter-Insurgency from Malaya to Iraq', *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 152, Iss. 6, December 2007, pp. 8–11,

<<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/ftinterface~content=a790119851~fulltext=713240928>>.

The study of military history remains the bedrock of professional excellence for all officers. It is, as the distinguished Australian Army thinker Colonel E G Keogh once wrote, 'the study of military experience'—something on which officers can draw that reflects the 'centuries of experience of [the] many' people engaged in the profession of arms.

Counterinsurgency (COIN) would, at first, seem to be no exception to this general rule. However, Hew Strachan argues that the study of past insurgencies is *not* beneficial to the modern soldier, and may even be counterproductive. Strachan maintains that the political and social context of each insurgency is so crucial to their nature that lessons drawn from one COIN campaign will generally not be applicable to the waging of another, because their contextual elements will not be the same. The author illustrates his argument by pointing to the differences between Malaya and Kenya on the one hand, and Afghanistan and Iraq on the other. He shows that the Coalition's desire to draw lessons from these successful campaigns has caused them to 'cherry pick' facts that are not applicable when removed from their context, and to ignore 'inconvenient truths' about past COIN methods.

While Strachan points out that the conduct of conventional wars are largely independent of their political and social contexts, and thus remain suitable objects of study for future symmetrical operations, COIN campaigns are not. This argument is significantly different from the logic that currently prevails in most Western military organisations, and for this reason alone it is worth the time and attention of senior leadership. That such an argument comes from a scholar as distinguished as Strachan makes it all the more essential that it be read by Australian officers.

Professor Hew Strachan is Chichele Professor of the History of War at the University of Oxford, and the Director of the Leverhulme Programme on the Changing Character of War. His most recent publication is Carl von Clausewitz's On War: a Biography.

Richard M Cavagnol, Richard L Hayes and Daniel C Turner, 'From Vietnam to Iraq', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 92, Iss. 1, January 2008, pp. 10–19.

**'[T]he truest sign of success for an advisor
is when he is no longer needed.'**

This brief article offers some straightforward advice derived from the experience of three officers who have served as advisors to foreign forces—namely the new Iraqi Army and the former South Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC).

The advice of the three authors ranges from the simple—such as correcting one's counterpart in private, and praising their successes in public—to the more complex, such as how to tread the fine line between engaging with one's counterpart by taking an interest in their family, and remaining

distant enough so that one's interest is not seen as condoning every action of that family. This latter issue is apparently an ongoing problem in advisor-counterpart relationships in Iraq. The historical perspective that Richard M Cavagnol's Vietnam experience adds to the article is excellent, demonstrating the timelessness of some of the issues inherent to advising foreign military organisations.

At a time when the ADF is transitioning to more training and advisory roles on operations, this article is both timely and relevant. In addition to absorbing the lessons this piece offers, senior officers may also find that this article's direct style and straightforward content means that it is something that they may consider passing on to their subordinates as well.

Richard M Cavagnol served in a number of positions with the US Marine Corps in Vietnam, including several postings as an advisor to the VNMC. He also recently completed a visit to Iraq where he advised current USMC personnel serving as advisors. Lieutenant Colonel Richard L Hayes USAR served during the first Gulf War, and recently completed a tour in Iraq as advisor to the Maintenance Director, Iraqi Joint Headquarters. Major David C Hayes ARA has deployed to Solomon Islands and Timor Leste, and recently served as advisor to the Iraqi Director of Transportation and Provision.

Michael C Vasquez, 'Tribalism Under Fire', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 92, Iss. 1, January 2008, pp. 62-7.

Recent US successes in al-Anbar province against al-Qaeda were widely heralded as the turning of a new page in the Iraq War. However, while the majority of commentators claim that these victories have been the result of the mobilisation of Iraqi tribal leaders, Michael C Vasquez argues otherwise.

He believes that this conclusion resulted from the US Armed Forces' poor institutional understanding of the nature of tribalism in Iraq. Accordingly, Vasquez sets out to correct this assessment by offering a more nuanced model of both tribalism and mobilisation. Vasquez maintains that it was most likely the invigoration of neighbourhood security networks, among other things, that 'tipped the balance' in the minds of those who were weighing up the decision to cooperate with Coalition forces against the possibility of al-Qaeda retaliation.

'In addition to the tendency to view tribalism as a less advanced form of social organization, many leaders continue to misunderstand tribal organization patterns.'

Vasquez's article is concise and in some instances sharply critical of orthodox thought. It is certainly well worth reading for the perspective he brings, especially given that he couches most of his argument in reference to the new US Army/US Marine Corps counterinsurgency manual. This is a document which many senior Australian officers are no doubt aware of, and one which points to the path that Australia's closest ally will be following in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Michael C Vasquez is a captain in the US Marine Corps. He has served in Haiti and Iraq, and is currently completing a Master's Degree in Comparative and Regional Studies at American University, Washington DC.

Rune Henriksen and Anthony Vinci, 'Combat Motivation in Non-State Armed Groups', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 20, Iss. 1, pp. 80–109, <<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/ftinterface~content=a789727166~fulltext=713240928>>.

Attacking the enemy's motivation to fight is a central part of any military campaign—whether that enemy is an insurgent or a professional soldier. Doing so requires an understanding of the enemy's motivation, and Rune Henriksen's and Anthony Vinci's article addresses this topic.

'Understanding combat motivation in non-state armed groups is essential for defeating such groups.'

The authors diverge from the majority of analysts regarding non-state combatant motivation, arguing that the makeup of each fighter's motivation will be distinct from even their closest comrades. Furthermore, the two authors maintain that a fighter's motivation may also change several times during their 'career'. Henriksen and Vinci examine many different motivating factors, and how these affect both the individual fighter's motivation and that of their group, as well as how these factors interplay in the differing ideological and political contexts that various groups will inevitably experience.

This article presents a nuanced and articulated model of non-state combatant motivation, and is thus of distinct value to Australian officers serving on, or preparing to deploy on, operations around the world.

Rune Henriksen is a PhD candidate in the Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics. Anthony Vinci holds a PhD from the same institution, and both authors have published in various journals on this and related subjects.

Justin Magouirk, Scott Atran and Marc Sageman, 'Connecting Terrorist Networks', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 31, Iss. 1, pp. 1–16, <<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/ftinterface~content=a789156026~fulltext=713240928>>.

The study of terrorism is hindered by a lack of sources, or the unreliability of those sources that do exist. In an effort to combat the factual 'gloom' surrounding terrorism, Justin Magouirk, Scott Atran and Marc Sageman established the 'Global Transnational Terrorism' (GTT) project in 2006.

'A major problem facing the study of terrorism today is a lack of strong, quantitative data that is freely available for scientific research in the academic, policy and government communities.'

As part of the GTT project, the authors have meticulously compiled most of the publicly available terrorism-related media reports, official government statements, victim accounts, terrorist testimony etc., and then collated this information into a database. This database, focused on South-East Asian terrorists, contains two major information sets: detailed biographical and

socioeconomic information on individual terrorists, and the links between these terrorists. The database contains over 300 Islamic extremists, and identifies over 1600 lines of relations between

them, with a ‘veracity rating’ for all of the information used to develop each profile and relational link.

While the authors draw some basic conclusions from their database, this article’s main value for senior officers is in the explanation it provides of the database, its content and its limitations. ‘Connecting Terrorist Networks’ should therefore be seen as an introduction to a database that will likely prove to be a valuable resource for many Defence personnel.

Drs Justin Magouirk and Scott Atran both work for the Department of Political Science at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Dr Marc Sageman works at the University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia.

Eduardo F Ugarte, ‘The Alliance System of the Abu Sayyaf, 1993–2000’, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 32, Iss. 2, pp. 125–44.

As a partner in many regional counterterrorism initiatives, Australia has a responsibility to help combat the many different Islamic extremist groups in the region. One such organisation is Abu Sayyaf, an Islamic extremist group operating on the Jolo and Basilan islands of the Philippines.

Little open-source information regarding Abu Sayyaf exists, and many accounts of the group contain large discrepancies when describing its composition, size and membership. However, Eduardo F Ugarte’s analysis shows that these seemingly large discrepancies are actually indicative of a group organised along the lines of Thomas Kiefer’s ‘Tausug alliance system’, an alliance system traditional to the Muslim populations of Jolo and Basilan islands.

Ugarte’s examination of Abu Sayyaf is thorough, given the paucity of material, and demonstrates the intricate workings of this group with reference to Kiefer’s model. This analysis shows how the group mobilises its supporters, how they maintain their base, how they distribute their resources and what motivates them to fight. Despite Abu Sayyaf’s extremist Islamic rhetoric, Ugarte concludes that the majority of the group’s fighters are most likely motivated by financial gain. This is but one example of the many surprising insights that Ugarte reaches on Abu Sayyaf, making his article an insightful piece for both the senior officer and departmental strategist.

Dr Eduardo F Ugarte is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism at the University of Canberra.

Steve A Yetiv and Lowell Feld, ‘America’s Oil Market Power’, *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 24, Iss. 3, pp. 53–62.

Steve A Yetiv and Lowell Field argue that the United States has overlooked a vital economic weapon in combating Iran—oil market power. The United States currently consumes nearly one quarter of global oil production, making it the world’s largest consumer of oil. This dominant share represents enormous buyer-power in any market, and the authors argue that it is a source of leverage that the United States should use to influence Iran.

Yetiv and Field maintain that a three million-barrel-per-day (MMBD) cut in the United States' oil consumption could be decisive, a reduction which equates to approximately 14% of the United States' total daily consumption of 21 MMBD. This cut, if it were to be achieved by 2030, the authors argue, would significantly reduce global oil prices by freeing up a considerable portion of global oil production capacity. The two authors demonstrate that the United States could meet this target by a modest increase in the federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) standards. Moreover, they maintain that this improvement could be achieved at present rates of innovation in the automotive industry, requiring almost no further investment in new technologies. These cuts would reduce oil prices, and would certainly damage the credibility of the radical clerical elements of the Iranian leadership, given that their government's legitimacy is based on oil-funded subsidies for most essential consumer goods.

The authors present a thoroughly argued yet simple article. While the arguments about US reductions targets may be academic for the Australian audience, the idea of oil market power is not. For Australian officers, it is a vivid example of the practical applications that 'soft-power' and economic power can have, and an excellent illustration of how such non-military elements of national power could possibly fit in to an adaptive campaign.

Steve A Yetiv is a Professor of Political Science at Old Dominion University, and his latest book is The Absence of Grand Strategy: The United States and the Persian Gulf (1972–2005). Lowell Feld worked as a Senior International Oil Market Analyst at the US Energy Information Administration until March of 2006.

David Lei, 'China's New Multi-Faceted Maritime Strategy', *Orbis*, Vol. 52, Iss. 1, Winter 2008, pp. 139–57.

China's economic and military development are topics which have received great attention from Australian officers, and rightly so. However, that focus is often limited to details of China's military forces and aspects of their foreign and domestic policies. David Lei's article offers a 'big picture' view of China's maritime strategy, and outlines how Beijing is directing its economic, diplomatic, 'soft-' and 'hard-power' resources toward a maritime agenda.

'As the PLA continues to innovate and upgrade its naval, space and cyber-based capabilities, China continues to pursue a full-fledged diplomatic offensive throughout Southeast Asia, Africa and the Middle East.'

Understanding how China's various diplomatic initiatives, military acquisitions and foreign policy initiatives fit together is of central importance to senior officers of the ADF. For example, aspects of China's military and foreign policies can be plausibly explained in isolation, but have a different meaning when considered together. For example: many may see China's pursuit of long-range naval bombers, supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles and

electronic warfare capabilities as assets for denying US access to Taiwan in the event of war. Other commentators see China's 'diplomatic offensive' in Sudan and Iran to secure oil and other natural resources, as well as China's pursuit of basing rights for surveillance assets in Myanmar as Chinese solidarity with other less-democratic regimes. However, Lei's article—by bringing all of these points together—offers the reader new perspectives. It becomes clear that China's pursuit of long-

range naval aviation, resource agreements and surveillance bases are all part of China's multifaceted approach to securing its sea lines of communication (SLOCs) against any threat—not just the United States.

While such simple analysis is obviously conducted within the Defence organisation, the astute officer always 'leaves no stone unturned'. Some of Lei's conclusions—especially those regarding possible triggers for a Chinese transition to 'blue water' capability—are insightful and not found commonly in the literature. Accordingly, this article is essential reading for all Defence senior leadership.

David Lei is an Associate Professor at the Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. His latest book is Strategic Management: Building and Sustaining Competitive Advantage.

Toshi Yoshihara and James R Holmes, 'China's Energy-Driven 'Soft Power'', *Orbis*, Vol. 52, Iss. 1, Winter 2008, pp. 123–37.

The considered opinion of the Western maritime strategic community is that China is pursuing a selective naval modernisation program in order to deny the United States access to Taiwan. However, despite the centrality of Taiwan to the military calculus of the People's Republic of China, Beijing is pursuing other agendas through its maritime strategy. Toshi Yoshihara and James R Holmes examine these lesser known elements of China's broader maritime strategy in their article for *Orbis*.

Central to China's maritime strategy is continued access to the energy sources that are fuelling its economic growth—economic growth that is crucial to the Chinese Communist Party's survival. Most of this energy comes by sea, and accordingly the authors argue that China is pursuing an energetic campaign of 'soft-power' diplomacy to secure those resources. This diplomacy is essentially a simple contrasting of historical themes as China sees them—between its 'friendly' maritime history epitomised by the fifteenth century Ming dynasty admiral, Zheng He, and that of the Western 'colonial' maritime history, epitomised by the colonial 'depredations' brought and enforced by British, Dutch, French, Portuguese and American fleets. Africa's and Asia's objections to colonialism are strong, and China's narrative is readily accepted in these regions. In support of their argument, Yoshihara and Holmes point to several US initiatives in Asia that China defeated with 'soft-power' diplomacy.

'[T]he Deng Xiaoping reforms of the late 1970s have garnered acclaim in virtually every part of the world. This has furthered China's soft power.'

This article is of value for the senior officer in and of itself, but it also serves as an excellent supplement to David Lei's article entitled 'China's New Multi-Faceted Maritime Strategy', which is recommended elsewhere in this edition of the *SOPD*. While Lei's article examines the broad scope of China's maritime strategy and touches upon its diplomatic component, Yoshihara and Holmes's article serves as a deeper examination of this often overshadowed element of Chinese strategy.

Toshi Yoshihara and James R Holmes are both Associate Professors of the Strategy and Policy Department, US Naval War College. Their latest book is Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century: The Turn to Mahan.

Fred C Ikle and Lowell Wood, 'Climatic Engineering', *The National Interest*, Iss. 93, January/February 2008, pp. 18–24.

The debate about how to combat climate change usually focuses on means for cutting greenhouse gas emissions. However, some in the scientific community argue that the greenhouse gases already present in the atmosphere will irreversibly warm the planet for several decades to come, regardless of any emissions reduction activities implemented now.

'[W]e are told that substantially more warming is "locked in" by what has already transpired. We clearly need to find more promising ways to address the whole global warming issue.'

Fred C Ikle and Lowell Wood present suggestions to counteract this 'built in' warming effect. They argue for further research into climate engineering techniques aimed at altering the earth's 'albedo' or its capacity to reflect solar radiation back into space. Such measures, the two authors maintain, will be necessary to counteract the warming potential of existing greenhouse gases until governments have effected the emissions cuts necessary to restore the atmosphere.

'Alas, environmental extremists fiercely oppose any proposal for any type of climate geoengineering... Such wilful ignorance is plainly irresponsible.'

Ikle and Wood's call for global climate engineering is not without its detractors. Readers of the *SOPD* will recall that in Issue 50, the Editors recommended an article by James R Fleming from *The Wilson Quarterly*, entitled 'The Climate Engineers' in which he raised several legitimate security concerns attendant on climate engineering

technologies. Most importantly, he asks 'who would control such a [planetary] "thermostat", making life-altering decisions for the planet's billions?'

Climate change is a serious issue for Defence and the government more broadly, and Ikle and Wood's article is a thoughtful and thought-provoking contribution to the debate surrounding this issue. It will appeal to all in the Defence community.

Fred C Ikle is a Distinguished Scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and was former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy for President Ronald Reagan. Lowell Wood is a Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution and is affiliated with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory of the United States.

'Reflections' has been designed by the Editors of the SOPD to showcase the most influential texts from history regarding operations, strategy and politics. This month the Editors of the SOPD recommend:

Elliot Abrams et al, *Letter to President Clinton on Iraq, 26 January 1998*,
<<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>>.

The Project for the New American Century (PNAC) is a neoconservative organisation that advocates a more forceful US foreign policy, and a 'moral approach' to foreign affairs. This influential group was the most prominent advocate of the US war against Iraq.

In 1998, the PNAC wrote a letter that outlined a neoconservative agenda for the Middle East. This vision centred on the removal of Saddam Hussein from power, and the destruction of Iraq's capacity to develop and deploy weapons of mass destruction. This letter, addressed to President Clinton, had only a mild effect on US foreign policy

'Mr. President... American policy towards Iraq... should aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power.'

during his administration. However, when President George W Bush took office, the neoconservative program was realised with the full might of the United States government. This is not surprising when one considers that, of the letters 18 signatories, ten are instantly recognisable as senior Bush Administration figures: Eliot Abrams, Richard L Armitage, John Bolton, Paula Dobriansky, Zalmay Khalilzad, Richard Perle, Peter W Rodman, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Robert B Zoellick.

This letter embodies the practical application of the philosophical ideas underpinning US neoconservatism—a school of political thought that has dramatically shaped today's global environment, and whose adherents have been instrumental in launching the Iraq War. As such, this letter's importance to the senior officer can hardly be overstated.

The eighteen signatories to the letter were Eliot Abrams, Richard L Armitage, William J Bennet, Jeffrey Bergner, John Bolton, Paula Dobriansky, Francis Fukuyama, Robert Kagan, Zalmay Khalilzad, William Kristol, Richard Perle, Peter W Rodman, Donald Rumsfeld, William Schneider Jr, Vin Weber, Paul Wolfowitz, R James Woolsey and Robert B Zoellick.