

S O P D



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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 Systemic Operational Design, Islamic extremism, Iraq, Irregular Warfare, close air support, logistics and contractors, cyber-war, reconstruction and piracy.

Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege is a leading intellectual figure in Western military thought, and this month the Editors open their recommendations with his ideas on operational design. His approach—'Systemic Operational Design'—draws heavily on the Australian Adaptive Campaigning construct, and offers some useful reflections on it. Key to his ideas is knowing one's enemy: Jeffrey B Cozzens's article offers an excellent view of what victory looks like to a Jihadi fighter, and Jonathan Steele's article reveals the factors in the 'Iraqi mind' that arguably doomed the US occupation of Iraq before it even began.

Knowing your enemy was the advice of Sun Tzu—understanding how the military instrument functions was the advice of Clausewitz. To this end, the Editors recommend Kenneth C Coons Jr and Glenn M Harned's article which analyses the US Armed Forces' concept of Irregular Warfare, along with Collin T Ireton's article which explores the value of Close Air Support in a combined-arms context. Similarly, Devon Matsalla and Mark Cancian's pieces examine logistical support for combat forces, each revealing some interesting conclusions regarding the future of this vital task.

Regardless of the method by which a military instrument operates, it must succeed at difficult, poorly defined tasks, such as reconstruction, restoring law and order, or meeting the challenge of emerging threats such as cyber-war. Amitai Etzioni's article sheds new light on the idea of rebuilding shattered societies, while Peter L Brookes's essay reveals the tactics and motivations of modern-day pirates. Finally, Timothy L Thomas examines Chinese ideas on cyber-war.

Enjoy
The Editors

Huba Wass de Czege, 'Systemic Operational Design: Learning and Adapting in Complex Missions', *Military Review*, Vol. LXXXIX, No. 1, January–February 2009, pp. 2–12, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20090228_art004.pdf>.

Huba Wass de Czege's article on Systemic Operational Design (SOD) is as much an exposition of this new concept as it is a rebuttal of the Effects-Based Planning construct. For Australian officers, this article is vital to understanding their own SOD concept—Adaptive Campaigning.

The author specifically notes the Australian Army's new operational concept and singles it out for commendation—certainly a strong confirmation of the concept's quality given Wass de Czege's senior position in the Western military-intellectual hierarchy. However, as all military professionals know, resting on one's laurels is a sure path to defeat; Australian officers would therefore do well to read this article. They will find that the author's insights into the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of this new approach to operational design will give them an enhanced understanding of how it works and how to make it work.

This article also offers the Army's senior leaders a chance to understand the thinking of one of the West's most able operational designers—a professional task which supports the Chief of Army Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie's decision to reinvigorate the force's capabilities in the operational art. Considering this article's worth, its utility to senior officers is self-evident.

Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege, US Army (Ret), was one of the principal developers of the US Army's famous 'AirLand Battle' concept of the 1980s. He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy, Harvard University, the US Army Command and General Staff College, and the US Army War College. He served operational tours in Vietnam as both an advisor and commander, and today publishes widely on land warfare topics.

Jeffrey B Cozzens, 'Victory From the Prism of Jihadi Culture', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Iss. 52, 2009, pp. 86–91, <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/jfq_pages/editions/i52/18.pdf>.

Jeffrey B Cozzens's article is an excellent piece on a vital topic—the enemy's definition of victory. As Cozzens points out, only by understanding how the enemy sees the fight and its objective can one formulate a useful response.

Cozzens argues that, unlike Western democracies, Islamic extremists view victory in both instrumental and existential terms. For example, most Australians see the ADF as a 'tool' to effect foreign policy in dangerous circumstances or against violent opposition—the classic instrumentalist 'means and ends' argument inherent to the Western idea of strategy since Clausewitz. However, the author's analysis of popular Jihadi literature reveals that many Islamic extremists view fighting as an end in itself. This is because much of the extremist religious

teaching on Jihad defines the objective not as the attainment of a rationally-defined victory, but simply as the act of fighting. Put simply, Jihadists believe that all they must do is fight—victory will only come about if Allah wills it.

Cozzens's analysis is cogent, his sources well employed and his logic coherent. He examines other existential elements to Jihadi definitions of victory, and makes recommendations for how secular Western democracies can advance their cause in such a 'war of ideas'. This piece stands out as one of the more engaging and unique analyses of the Islamic extremist enemy, and as such is highly recommended for all officers and strategists.

Jeffrey B Cozzens is the Head of the Terrorism Studies and Analysis Program at Areté Associates.

Jonathan Steele, 'A War Fated to Fail: America's False Template in Iraq', *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 25, Iss. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 80–88.

Conventional wisdom dictates that the insurgency in Iraq would have been far less serious—or avoided altogether—had the Coalition developed more detailed plans for the occupation of Iraq and the transition to democratic rule. However, Jonathan Steele argues that no matter how thorough the Coalition's plans could have been, the inherently humiliating nature of an occupation would most likely have triggered an insurgency anyway.

Steele presents his own personal experiences as a journalist in Iraq immediately after the invasion as well as historical research in support of his argument. The evidence is compelling—within days of the US entry into Baghdad, many of the Iraqis Steele spoke with were adamant that the US had to leave or else violence would ensue. For senior officers grappling with the professional, intellectual and ethical challenges of war among the people, Steele's unique views on the feelings and emotions of a conquered society deserve study.

'[D]o the proponents of this conventional wisdom really believe that Western armies can successfully maintain an open-ended occupation of an Arab country in the twenty-first century and not face mounting opposition?'

While this material is critical for senior leaders to grasp, it is necessary to look beyond Steele's gratuitous recollections of Coalition heavy-handedness, his attacks on certain Coalition figures such as L Paul Bremmer, and his questionable conclusions on broader US goals in Iraq if one is to learn from this article. That said, Steele's logic stands up to scrutiny and his points regarding the humiliation of occupation are valid. Accordingly, this short, engaging article is worth the time of any senior officer or policymaker looking for a different perspective on interacting with host populations.

Jonathan Steele is senior foreign correspondent for The Guardian and their in-house international columnist. His latest book, which expands on his arguments from this article, is entitled Defeat: Why America and Britain Lost Iraq.

Kenneth C Coons, Jr and Glenn M Harned, 'Irregular Warfare Is Warfare', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Iss. 52, Winter 2009, pp. 97–103, <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/jfq_pages/editions/i52/20.pdf>.

Since the beginning of the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States and its allies have struggled to understand, define and adjust to the realities of these difficult conflicts. However, the US Department of Defense has finally begun to turn a corner in its battle to adjust to the new realities of Irregular Warfare (IW). Kenneth C Coons Jr and Glenn M Harned's article offers a clear and concise review of America's efforts to date.

Coons and Harned highlight the key developments that have punctuated the US Armed Forces' evolving understanding of IW. From definition to roadmap, the authors' examination of IW efforts is excellent. Coons and Harned also highlight the many areas where further work is necessary, pointing out that planning for IW is one thing—waging it is quite another.

As Australia continues to fight the Taliban alongside the United States and other NATO forces, Australian officers will find this article useful as an indicator of where future US efforts—and their own—may be directed. This will provide them with valuable 'food for thought' regarding how Australian forces can best contribute in the future to the evolving mission.

Colonel Kenneth C Coons Jr, USAF, is Chairman of the Warfighting Department at the US Air War College. Colonel Glenn M Harned, US Army (Ret) is the leader of the Booz Allen Hamilton team currently supporting Irregular Warfare efforts at the US Special Operations Command and other US military commands and defence agencies.

Collin T Ireton, 'Shifting the Air Force's Support Ideology to Exploit Combined Arms in the Close Fight', *Air & Space Power Journal*, Vol. XXII, No. 4, Winter 2008, pp. 85–94, <<http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj08/win08/ireton.html>>.

Collin T Ireton's article on Close Air Support (CAS) and the combined arms team should be of central interest to the entire ADF, but especially to the Army and the RAAF.

'The Air Force must make a mental shift with regard to its tactical aircraft: close support must eclipse other roles.'

Essentially, Ireton calls for the US Air Force (USAF) to eschew the current preoccupation with air combat in favour of a more strategically relevant focus on CAS. Ireton believes that CAS forms any modern air force's most critical contribution to any predominantly land

campaign. CAS, therefore, should become that air force's primary focus. The author argues that CAS is the most important mission because it ensures the availability of combined arms effects to land commanders where traditional means are unavailable. For example, aircraft can provide the precision engagement capability of tanks by using precision guided munitions, or the area suppression effect of artillery with 'dumb' bombs and rockets. In situations where

tanks or artillery cannot be brought to bear, such as in the mountains of Afghanistan, CAS aircraft can preserve the ground commander's combined arms options.

To this end, Ireton argues that what is needed for the CAS mission is a platform that offers the same 'leap ahead' capability that the F-22 provides for the air superiority mission. The author maintains that the F-35, suitably augmented with enhanced communications, can do just this. Ireton acknowledges that air superiority remains a critical mission, but argues against focusing training and funds on air combat if it decreases those available for CAS. Interestingly, Ireton argues that the F-35's inferior kinematics, when compared with modern Russian fighter aircraft (which entails the surrender of a missile-range advantage to the enemy), can be offset by simply developing a longer ranged air-to-air missile. This is a far simpler solution than focusing obsessively on training to counter this threat at the expense of the more valuable—and more likely—CAS mission.

For Australia's large, highly-mobile light infantry force, CAS aircraft offer a means with which commanders can augment the modest armour and artillery resources available. Accordingly, Ireton's article will provide senior officers with an excellent place at which to begin their own thoughts on taking air-land operational integration to the next level.

Lieutenant Colonel Collin T Ireton, USAF, is a highly experienced pilot with 2500 hours flown on the A-10, F-16 and F-117. He has also served as an experimental flight-test pilot on all three of these aircraft. He is currently serving as the US Air Force Materiel Command's Chief of Policies and Procedures for Fighter, Trainer, and Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

Devon Matsalla, 'Practical Sustainment Concepts for the Non-Linear Battlespace',
Canadian Army Journal, Vol. 11, No. 2, Summer 2008, pp. 45–62
<http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_11/iss_2/CAJ_Vol11.2_07_e.pdf>.

The nature of the contemporary non-linear battlefield does not conform with the current practice of logistic sustainment in many Western armies, including Australia's. Devon Matsalla's excellent article provides a solution to this problem, suggesting new and innovative ways to approach logistic support on a complex, non-linear battlefield.

As Australian officers are aware, logistic support is traditionally divided into separate 'echelons' which occupy different zones of the battlefield. The most time- and resource-intensive support tasks take place in the most secure areas of the battlefield—usually determined by their distance to the frontline. However, when countering an insurgency, it is not possible to define the frontline with any certainty and prudent commanders must assume that their soldiers are at risk from enemy action no matter where they are located. Under these circumstances, linear concepts become unfeasible and new ideas are required.

'The current ... sustainment doctrine ... is based on a number of premises that are no longer applicable in a non-contiguous battlespace such as in Afghanistan.'

'In COIN operations, there is no defined FEBA, as the threat of insurgent activity is present throughout the operational area. The FEBA in Afghanistan is effectively right outside the Kandahar Airfield ... gate.'

Matsalla's solution to this difficult environment is to concentrate all levels of support in a series of fortified nodes. From these nodes, forces can be sustained while they deploy among the people, and scarce logistic support assets can be more efficiently employed through a 'host' and 'guest' arrangement rather than habitual association as is currently the case. Matsalla's model offers manoeuvre forces more timely

logistical support and offers support units a more secure method for operating. Most importantly, Matsalla's non-linear sustainment concepts have been tested by Canadian forces on operations in Afghanistan, meeting with considerable success.

For Australian officers, Matsalla's ideas have applications well beyond counterinsurgency campaigns. As deployed forces shrink in size but grow in combat-power, forming unbroken lines across any battlefield becomes almost impossible. Accordingly, logistic assets will be at considerably greater risk from enemy penetrations 'through the gaps'. In this instance, Matsalla's idea of fortified nodes provides logistic forces with the protection and security necessary to achieve their goals on the non-linear battlefields of tomorrow.

At the time of writing, Major Devon Matsalla, Canadian Army, served as Operations Officer for the Canadian National Support Element of Joint Task Force Afghanistan (Rotation Four). He is currently serving as the Canadian Field Artillery Equipment Manager at Gatineau, Quebec.

Mark Cancian, 'Contractors: The New Element of Military Force Structure', *Parameters*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3, Autumn 2008, pp. 61-77, <<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/parameters/08autumn/cancian.pdf>>.

Contractors are a controversial yet essential part of modern war. As budgets and forces shrank in the post-Cold War era, many Western military forces allocated most of their scarce human resources to combat units. In case of a prolonged confrontation, these military organisations planned to augment regular support units with

'Contractors are part of what makes the all-volunteer force viable in an extended conflict.'

reserve or militia personnel. However, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown, such an approach is not feasible when operations extend from months to years. Mark Cancian's article offers logistics planners some illuminating insights into military contracting, helping them to better integrate the now-essential military contractor into their plans.

Cancian's article is based squarely on factual evidence, helping him to dismiss many of the myths surrounding military contractors. He demonstrates how contractors are now an essential part of military operations, and that further improvements in their application to logistic and other support duties can only come about through better integration. While highlighting the improvements that have already been made in the United States, Cancian

advances several further points that he believes are vital to achieving a more effective utilisation of contractors on operations.

For Australian officers, making the best use of military contractors is critical to operational effectiveness—indeed, contractors are often hired to achieve monetary savings, and without efficient use can become a resource *drain*. Cancian’s article examines ways to achieve this goal and senior officers will therefore find it of considerable interest.

Colonel Mark F Cancian, USMC (Ret) was awarded a BA and MBA from Harvard University. He served in a number of USMC operational and HQ positions until his retirement. He is now a civilian employee of the US Department of Defense working on force structure, acquisition and personnel issues.

Amitai Etzioni, ‘Reconstruction: A Damaging Fantasy?’, *Military Review*, Vol. LXXXVIII, No. 6, November–December 2008, pp. 111–117, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20081231_art016.pdf>.

Amitai Etzioni’s provocatively titled article makes for excellent reading on a topic central to the ADF’s current operational commitments.

Etzioni’s argument focuses on the difficulties facing any society attempting to transform another. While many point to the success of the US-led occupation and reconstruction of Germany and Japan following the Second World War, Etzioni demonstrates that these case-studies are not relevant to the contemporary realities of Afghanistan. Instead, he paints a picture of a proud society which is largely offended by reconstruction efforts the West sees as central to improving the average Afghani’s situation.

‘[The Coalition] assumes that foreign powers can engage in large-scale social engineering overseas “just as the U.S. and its allies helped reconstruct Germany and Japan after World War II.” However, these are deeply flawed notions. A different, humbler, and more realistic approach is called for.’

The author advances many excellent points in support of his central argument. He also offers several recommendations to improve the chances for success of Western reconstruction efforts. However, he stresses throughout his article that reconstruction, as it is currently envisaged by most of the Coalition, is a forlorn hope. He calls for greater selectivity in employing resources and a more empathetic approach to reconstruction. Above all, Etzioni calls for far more modest goals so that they may actually be

achieved as advertised. This last point fits well with the existing literature on ‘strategic communications’, which stresses that coalition pronouncements must be strictly truthful if they are to be credible. Etzioni maintains that current reconstruction efforts are too numerous and that many things which have been promised have not been delivered due to a lack of resources, damaging the population’s trust in the Coalition.

For Australian officers engaged in reconstruction in Afghanistan, many of Etzioni's points are already in practice. However, some are not, and therefore his article will make for informative reading.

Amitai Etzioni is Professor of International Relations at the George Washington University. His latest book is Security First: For a Muscular, Moral Foreign Policy.

Peter Brookes, 'Flashpoint: Buccaneers are back', *Armed Forces Journal*, December 2008, <<http://www.afji.com/2008/12/3803680>>.

The rampant piracy in the waters off Somalia has recently become quite topical, and Peter Brookes's article offers senior officers a concise summary of the state of affairs in this troubled region.

Brookes examines the pirates, their motivations and their tactics, as well as the response from shipping companies and US, Russian, European and Indian navies. This largely uncoordinated multi-national response could potentially create a flashpoint all of its own as unfamiliar fleets operate in close proximity. While it is unlikely that Australian forces will become involved in anti-piracy operations off Somalia for the foreseeable future, piracy is prevalent in waters much closer to Australia—the Strait of Malacca. Indeed, as Brookes points out, the Strait of Malacca saw the highest incidence of piracy in the world until only recently.

Piracy is a transnational crime that requires not only a response at sea, but follow-up operations on land. Brookes highlights the fact that most pirate operations are run from land and that only small boats are launched into chokepoints—the Gulf of Aden or the Strait of Malacca for example—to capture vessels and crews for ransom. Accordingly, ADF officers and policymakers should be alert to the current state of piracy, as Australia may need to conduct operations against these criminals in the future. Indeed, given the prevalence of this threat in nearby sea lanes, Australia's status as a maritime trading nation, and the primacy of our armed forces in the region, it is plausible that Australia's anti-piracy efforts may soon become more intensive. Brookes's article offers ADF leaders a brief update on this increasingly prevalent threat, and as such is well worth their time.

Peter Brookes is a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the US Department of Defense. Today, he is a Senior Fellow of the Heritage Foundation. He has previously served with the US Navy and the CIA.

Timothy L Thomas, 'China's Electronic Long-Range Reconnaissance', *Military Review*, Vol. LXXXVIII, No. 6, November–December 2008, pp. 47–54, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20081231_art009.pdf>.

Cyber-war is yet one more emerging threat against which the ADF has been called upon to prepare. However, while it seems a futuristic proposition that can be addressed after the more

pressing commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan have been met, it is a reality *today*. Timothy L Thomas addresses Chinese progress in this field, and reaches some surprising conclusions.

Thomas asserts that many countries, including Australia, have been the subject of Chinese military cyber-attacks of some form or another. He examines the Chinese strategic literature and how it has evolved in order to determine the purpose of these incursions. The author concludes from his review that Chinese doctrine demands proactive and pre-emptive cyber-action during peacetime and prior to the onset of hostilities in order to cripple an enemy's computer networks before battle is joined physically. Building from this conclusion, Thomas argues that present Chinese cyber-attacks may indeed have moved beyond reconnaissance and into the placing of Trojan horses or similar booby-traps into a potential adversary's computer systems.

For Australian officers, an increasing reliance on technology for mission accomplishment risks an increased exposure to cyber-attack. Thomas's article reveals quite advanced theoretical and practical preparations for such war on the part of the Chinese. Australian officers would do well, therefore, to keep abreast of such preparations, and this piece offers an opportunity to do just that.

'How and when China might use its active-offensive concepts for purposes other than reconnaissance is unclear, but, as general concepts, they are worrisome.'

Lieutenant Colonel Timothy L Thomas, US Army (Ret), holds a Bachelor of Science from the US Military Academy and an Master of Arts from the University of Southern California. He is currently a Senior Analyst at the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth in the United States.