

and behind the shields of noncombatants. But there is little evidence that such thug armies can or cannot sustain large-scale combat or control significant urban areas in the face of determined action by quality forces, as opposed to actions by peer groups or the atrophied militaries of failing states.³⁶ The October 1993 Battle of Mogadishu, for example, is often offered as evidence for the ability of 'new barbarians' to defeat first-class militaries in urban battles. But all that incident really teaches is that a country like the United States can follow up a tactical engagement that ended favorably at least in terms of casualty ratios, with political surrender. What if the United States and the UN had chosen instead to exploit that battle more aggressively? The question is tantalizing and, of course, unanswerable. But our ability to ask it suggests that the prevailing view that thug armies are a major threat demands rigorous scrutiny and more careful definition. Likewise, why should we expect that national armies will be more likely to fight in their cities in the future than they have in the past. As in the past, why should we expect that the future owners of cities will be any more prepared to see them destroyed, except in extremis? For that matter, why would a country like the United States go into a defended city, unless it becomes absolutely critical to rout out last-ditch defenders or to close an otherwise ended war in short order? If time was not pressing, sieges and/or neutralization would be likely options of choice, as opposed to the bloodletting of direct reduction. It seems reasonable from all of this to assert something of an aphorism for future urban combat:

the groups most willing to fight in cities will have the least capabilities to do so, while the ones most able to fight large-scale urban battles will be least willing to do so.

Again, the credibility of that aphorism is important, because it says a lot about the likely importance, scale, and appropriate concepts of city fighting in the future. Somebody should take it on.

At the operational level, frequent and large-scale city fights seem even less likely in light of the campaign alternatives. From the operational-level perspective, cities can be likened to fortified islands in rural seas, with big cities being equivalent to archipelagos of distinct districts and neighborhoods. Cities resemble fortresses as classic military problems in so far as they are only, important to the extent that they contain things simultaneously of value to attackers and defenders, or provide a base for their possessors to exert political or military influence beyond their immediate boundaries.³⁷ The things that might draw a country like the United States into a contested city could include weapons of mass destruction,

endangered hostages, or political importance. The idea that the mere prevalence of violence, rebellion, and even revolution in the fallen cities of the world forces the hands of countries like the United States bears skeptical and realist re-examination. Cities also are like fortresses in that their physical contrast to their surrounding geography means that forces entering them may have to re-orient their organization and operating patterns substantially as they cross from rural into urban terrain. On the other side of the fortress/island metaphor, cities resemble islands in their critical dependence on access to outside sources of food, fuel, raw materials, psychological security and other essentials, and in their vulnerability to attacks and isolation by forces possessing freedom of maneuver outside their boundaries. Usefully then, cities can be likened to islands of the Pacific Theater during World War II. They can be extremely tough nuts to crack by direct assault, and simultaneously vulnerable to neutralization by operational-level maneuver and/or asymmetrical attack. These similarities carry over into the realm of operational-level technique, since both islands and cities can be taken out by operational concepts such as:

- **Selective Assault:** As was the case for island-hopping, the isolated nature of small cities and of the internal districts of larger cities may offer commanders opportunities to fight only for those cities or parts of them most important to furthering their operational and strategic aims. For example, clearing a line of communication from the coast to its interior may only require taking a few sections of a port, not the whole city or even all the towns along the way.
- **Indirect Approach:** As in the cases of Carthage during the Second Punic War, and of Kuwait City over 2,000 years later, astute commanders may force enemy armies out of their urban bastions by threatening the things their rulers value, such as, in these respective cases, their rural 'breadbasket' or their line of retreat,
- **Siege:** If time and other circumstances permit, sieges offer opportunities to conquer or control cities without assaulting them directly or at least until their garrisons are weakened. As battles, however, sieges also offer defenders opportunities for initiatives, such as spoiling attacks or tormenting local citizens, that might either break the siege or force their besiegers into premature attacks. The principal dilemma of sieges is that they raise the issue of population control to an active level, since they may be difficult or impossible to conduct without inflict-

ing great suffering on noncombatants as well as armed enemies.³⁸

- **Isolation.** Attackers can embargo or blockade belligerent cities militarily and politically, by selectively restricting the flow of personnel, materiel, information, and/or other items in and out of them, as required by the objectives of the attacker. Isolation usually would not have the aim of reducing a city to terms directly as would be the case for a siege, but it also might not place the same force demands on the attacker. For example, if the purpose of an embargo is simply to prevent steady vehicular traffic from going in and out of a city, it could be maintained by a relatively thin mix of ground and air surveillance and strike units, as compared to the forces required to maintain a more airtight siege.
- **Neutralization:** Attackers can degrade or neutralize the offensive capabilities of urban-islands through 'operational-level sniping'. Faced by a strong urban enemy, for example, an attacker can employ long-range fires or aerospace attacks to destroy, the things that give the enemy power to influence outside events, such as heavy weapons, mobile forces, supplies, and communication facilities.
- **Strategic Attack:** During World War II, the Allies obviated the need to invade many Japanese-held islands by conducting strategic naval and air operations against the home islands. In a more modern example of this kind of indirect approach, NATO avoided at least potential battles for Sarajevo and Pristina, in 1995 and 1999 respectively, by conducting strategic air operations against the Serb Republic in the first case, and Serbia in the latter.

These operational concepts are also applicable within the environs of large cities. Cities, particularly megalopolises, are not geographically unitary battlefields. Large cities are broken into sections by man-made and natural terrain, including different architectural styles, rivers, wetlands, parklands, and in major thoroughfares. They also tend to be 'empty' battlefields, in the sense that even in circumstances of major conflicts between organized armies, urban defenders typically will occupy only small portions of a city's terrain and structures.³⁹ Consequently it is likely that there will be plenty of room for attackers to employ operational concepts such as selective assault, isolation, and even strategic attack. For that reason, in battles as diverse as Groningen (1944), Hue (1968), Beirut (1992-93), and

Grozny (1996 and 99), freedom to maneuver and prevent coordinated enemy movement were key determinants in the outcome of specific engagements and of the battles in general.⁴⁰ As a logical expression of these concepts, Marine General Van Riper recently suggested that in future urban battles

*'instead of grinding their way from house to house, Marines will deftly maneuver through built-up areas, using new and unorthodox mobility techniques to avoid the surface and exploit gaps. They will bypass and isolate the enemy's centers of resistance, striking killing blows against those enemy units, positions, or facilities upon which his force depends.'*⁴¹

If accepted, the strategic and operational perspectives thus far discussed challenge the unfettered notion that infantry and close battle will be the decisive arbiters of urban warfare, or even urban combat. To be sure, the infantry has no peer when urban combat comes down to the tough and dangerous job of going into buildings, sewers, and other structures to clear them inch-by-inch, room-to-room. But, even in that specific task, combat experience suggests that infantry works best when teamed with combat engineers, armor, and close support from artillery and aircraft.⁴² Indeed, depending on objectives, rules of engagement and details of terrain, infantry may function primarily as the 'pointer' for aircraft and artillery, which will do the actual killing. The US Army itself is looking at ways to use mobile 'battle forces' to conduct isolation and strike operations on urban terrain.⁴³ Once the analytical perspective is shifted to the operational level, both within and outside the environs of a contested city the role of infantry becomes even more that of a team member than of team captain. To stabilize an insurrected city, for example, a joint commander might employ air-supported infantry to drive hostile forces into an isolated 'no go' zone, and then keep them there with a combination of air and ground patrols, aerospace sensors, and artillery. One could easily come up with many such examples.⁴⁴

This line of thought also calls into question the notion that only infantry have the 'precision' to conduct effective urban operations in the context of restrictive rules of engagement to minimize collateral damage. If soldiers could perform all urban tactical tasks with the cool precision of snipers, then this assertion might be valid. But, experience suggests that soldiers, as they become tired or angered by friendly casualties, may become less and less discriminating and precise in their use of their weapons.⁴⁵ Moreover, enemies often place themselves in positions where the choices for taking them out are bloody assault or the employment of heavy weapons. These considerations, coupled with standing doc-

trines that make shooting out door locks and reconnaissance-by-hand-grenade standard tactics for clearing rooms, tend to increase the likelihood that contested urban infantry assaults will be bloody and destructive for friend, foe and non-combatant alike.⁴⁶ The likelihood of such bloodshed, coupled with a perception of American intolerance for casualties, led one broad-based study group to conclude:

*'no longer can the United States expect to commit multiple divisions to a long-term urban operation unless means of dramatically reducing personnel losses are developed.'*⁴⁷

It seems logical, therefore, to believe or at least to hope that, in many circumstances, primary reliance on military arms other than infantry to accomplish urban warfare tasks may be the beginning of both the more humane and the more efficient paths to success.

Implications

On the office wall of a RAND Corporation researcher reside these apocryphal final lines from a past project briefing:

*'We have not succeeded in answering all your questions. In fact, the answers we have found only serve to raise a whole set of new questions. In some ways we feel we are as confused as ever, but we believe we are confused on a higher level and about more important things.'*⁴⁸

Whoever the author of these words was, they also capture nicely the intent of this article: to raise the level of our questions and doubts about our unfolding knowledge of urban warfare, rather than to settle them. Its primary purpose was to undermine any confidence that the current line of inquiry is producing a comprehensive foundation of theoretical and doctrinal guidance upon which to base policy, resource investments, and training. Its secondary purposes were to propose that urban combat may be less likely to dominate future warfare, at least for the United States, than

some thinkers expect, and that it will be a truly joint problem, in which all Services and arms will have important and sometimes 'lead' roles in solving. Urban warfare, as opposed to MOUT will be and is about much more than infantry, fighting 'three block wars' with everyone else poised in support.

Several objectives for further inquiry flow more or less naturally from these propositions. First, military policy makers and commanders involved in urban warfare issues should add their voices to the scattered calls in the literature for a broader discourse on urban warfare, one that treats strategy, operations, and tactics with equal scope and rigor.⁴⁹ Second, it follows, *all of the Services must take 'ownership'* of this undeniably important aspect of conflict and make sure their doctrinal, resource, education, and training preparations are appropriate, energetic, in sync with the efforts of the other Services, and focused on giving Joint commanders the fullest range of options possible. Third, the urban warfare discourse needs to be reinforced in its general posture of objectivity and rigor. There is no call for the strident advocacy pieces that dot the current literature and even the sources for this essay. This is not a runaway problem that threatens with a degree of immediate failure which justifies pell-mell resource commitments without full assessments of their real value or opportunity costs, in terms of their impact on other important missions and tasks facing the defense community. Undoubtedly certain 'high marginal return' investments and actions justify immediate commitments, such as urban warfare experimentation, training, doctrine development, and the acquisition of infantry support equipment and weapons. The advantages of certain medium cost systems, such as specialized surveillance systems and 'tailored' aerial munitions might also justify near term investments, particularly since they will often offer advantages across a broad range of other conflict scenarios. But beyond those kinds of perhaps intuitively obvious sorts of resource and policy commitments, there is time to think this thing through – assuming we actually use that time to conduct objective, rigorous, and balanced analysis.

NOTES

- 1 Robert H Scales Jr, 'The Indirect Approach: How US Military Forces Can Avoid the Pitfalls of Future Urban Warfare', *Armed Forces Journal International*, October 1998, p 68. Also see Robert E Podlesny's comment that 'what is missing [from the USMC and Army approaches to Urban Warfare experimentation] is an approach... which requires mission planners to address strategic, operational, and tactical issues in a holistic manner', in 'MOUT: The Show Stopper', *Proceedings*, Feb 98, p 53.
- 2 For examples of the tendency to focus on tactical level issues, rather than strategic and operational, see John M House, 'The Enemy After Next', *Military Review*, March-April 1998, pp 22-27, and Sean D Naylor, 'A Lack of City Smarts?', *Army Times*, May 11, 1998, p 22; Russell W Glenn, *Combat in Hell: A Consideration of Constrained Urban Warfare*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1996,

- throughout, and 'Entering the Intersection: Choosing the Right MOUT Strategy for the 'Twenty-First Century' in *Denying the Widmo-Maker: Summary of Proceedings, Rand DBBH Conference on Military Operations in Urban Terrain*, Santa Monica, CA, RAND 1998, pp 77-114. (To be fair to Dr Glenn, however, both of these studies intentionally focused on MOUT as a consequence of his research with the Arroyo Center, while his monograph *We Band of Brothers: The Call for Joint Operations Doctrine*, Santa Monica, CA, RAND, 1999) is a very important recent validation of the US military's need to create a comprehensive body of operational level urban warfare doctrine.)
- 3 Department of the Navy, HQ US Marine Corps, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-35.3, *Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain (MOUT)*. US Army Field Manual (FM)90-10, *Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain*, 15 Aug 1979.

- 4 Scott Gourley, 'Marines Train For "Three Block" War', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 21 April 1999, p 30.
- 5 United States Joint Staff, *Handbook for Joint Urban Operations*, 17 May 2000, throughout.
- 6 For discussion of the effects of demographics and sociology, see: William G Rosenau, 'Every Room is a New Battle: The Lessons of Modern Urban Warfare', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol 20, 1997, pp373-385. Ralph Peters, 'Winning Against Warriors', *Strategic Review*, Spring 1996, p 16, and David Tucker, 'Fighting Barbarians', *Parameters*, Summer 1998. Also House, op cit, p 22. Other recent works of salient interest include R D McLaurin and R Miller, Abbot Associates Inc, *Urban Counterinsurgency: Case Studies and Implications for US Military Forces*, report for US Army Human Engineering Laboratory, Aberdeen Proving Ground, distributed by Defense Technical Information Center, October 1989, p16; and Timothy J. Saffold, *The Role of Airpower in Urban Warfare*, Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Command and Staff College, *Wright Flyer Paper No 6*, December 1998, p 12.
- 7 Saffold, op cit, p 53; John R Groves Jr, 'Operations in Urban Environments', *Military Review*, July-August 1998, pp 34-5, 39. Groves argues that, given the inevitability of urban combat, the civil and military leaders must develop policies as clear as possible for dealing with its manifold ambiguities and variations. Also Rosenau, p 372.
- 8 Ralph Peters, 'Our Soldiers, Their Cities', *Parameters*, Spring 1996, pp 43, 50.
- 9 MCWP 3-35.3, pp 2-1 through 2-2. FM 90-10. Chapter 1, Introduction, p 1.
- 10 *Handbook for Joint Operations*, IV-51.
- 11 Scales, throughout.
- 12 Paul K Van Riper, 'A Concept for Future Military Operations in Urbanized Terrain', *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 1997, passim. The Marine Warfighting Lab at Quantico Marine Corps Base, Virginia, remains perhaps the most important single source of conceptual and practical urban warfare development, particularly at the tactical and operational levels of surface combat. The author would like here to thank Mr Randy Gangle (Colonel, USMC retired), Senior Operational Advisor at the MWL, for his careful review, and comments in support of this paper, despite his probable conviction that he was trying to teach a pig to sing.
- 13 Paul Van Riper and Robert H Scales, 'Preparing for War in the 21st Century', *Parameters*, Autumn 1997.
- 14 Darrell G Press, 'Conference Summary: Urban Warfare, Options, Problems, and the Future', *MIT Security Studies Program*, Cambridge MA, January 1999, p 16. Russell W. Glenn, *Widow Maker*, pp 4-5.
- 15 Saffold, pp 14-25. James Kitfield, 'War in the Urban Jungles', *Air Force Magazine*, December 1998, p 74. The author particularly thanks Lt Col Peter C. Hunt, 23rd Fighter Group, Pope AFB, North Carolina for an early look at his draft study, 'Aerospace Power in Urban Warfare: Beware the Hornet's Nest,' which he is developing under the sponsorship of the USAF Academy's Institute of National Security Studies.
- 16 Alan Vick, John Stillion, and others, *Exploring New Concepts for Aerospace Operations in Urban Environments*, Los Angeles, RAND, November 1999.
- 17 Ralph Peters, 'Will We Be Able to Take the Cities?', *Army Times*, May 11 1998, p 34.
- 18 MCWP 3-35.3, p 1-13.
- 19 Citation taken from Army Doctrine Homepage, www.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/fm/90-10, which does not offer pagination. However, it is located in the third paragraph of the 'CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN WARFARE' section of Chapter 1.
- 20 Podlesny, op cit, p 51. In a more circumspect approach, Generals Van Riper and Scales argue that emerging precision guided munitions and 'microchip' technologies should be 'designed to enhance rather than replace land power', rather than to underpin reliance on 'distant attack', their euphemism for aerospace and missile attacks, 'Preparing for War', pp 12-13. See also Peters, 'Our Soldiers, Their Cities', p 47, Scott E Packard, 'Bottom Line: It's Infantry', *Proceedings*, November 1998, pp 29-31, and T R Milton Jr, 'Urban Operations: Future War', *Military Review*, February 1994, p 40.
- 21 Rosenau, pp 377, 389. Glenn, *Combat in Hell*, pp i-iii, 5.
- 22 Robert F Hahn II and Bonnie Jezior, 'Urban Warfare and the Urban Warfighter of 2025', *Parameters*, Summer 1999, p 76; Podlesny, p 53.
- 23 John R Groves Jr, 'Operations in Urban Environments', *Military Review*, July-August 1998, p 37.
- 24 Packard, pp 29-31.
- 25 Rosenau, p 388; Milton, p 44.
- 26 Hahn and Jezior, p 84; Van Riper, 'Concept for Future Military Operations', A-4 through A-6.
- 27 'MIT', 'MOUT Experiments Pay Early Dividends', *Jane's International Defense Review*, November 1998, p 13.
- 28 Milton, p 45. Timothy L. Thomas, 'The Battle of Grozny: Deadly Classroom for Urban Combat', *Parameters*, Summer 1999, p 94; Peters, 'Our Soldiers', p 49; Hahn and Jezior, p 83.
- 29 Gregory J Ashworth, *War and the City*, London, Routledge, 1991, pp 10-62.
- 30 Ashworth, pp 97-121.
- 31 MCWP 3-35, p 1-17.
- 32 McLaurin and Miller, op cit; Thomas, 'Deadly Classroom', pp 93-4.
- 33 McLaurin and Miller, 15-7.
- 34 Thomas, p 99, McLaurin and Miller, p 142. Rosenau, pp 387-9).
- 35 Scales, 'Indirect Approach', p 69.
- 36 David Tucker pursues this idea of the ultimate impotence of these new barbarians in the face of organized states in 'Fighting Barbarians', pp 69-78.
- 37 As Carl von Clausewitz suggested, 'the effectiveness of a fortress is obviously composed of two distinct elements... The first appears in the protection that it gives to the area and everything in it... the second, it exercises a certain influence on the countryside beyond the range of its artillery'. From Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds and trans of Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1989, p 394.
- 38 Ralph Peters, 'Will We Be Able to Take the Cities', p 34.
- 39 Hahn and Jezior, p 76.
- 40 Ashworth, p 131; Thomas, 'Deadly Classroom', p 95.
- 41 Van Riper, 'Concept for Future Military Operations', A-2 through A-3; in a similar vein, Colonel John M House reports that an underlying assumption of the Army After Next Program is that 'anticipated improvements in battlespace knowledge will help leaders exploit advances in mobility... knowledge and speed are AAN's watchwords' in 'Enemy After Next', p 22.
- 42 Rosenau, pp 376-7, 38; MCWP 3-35.3, p 1-13.
- 43 Naylor, p 22.
- 44 MCWP 3-35.3 recognizes that 'in future urban warfare, aviation will be even more effective due to advances in... aircraft, munitions, communications, sensors, and targeting systems', p 1-16.
- 45 Rosenau, p 389; Ashworth, p 121. For excellent accounts of urban battles that involved almost immediate escalations of the use of heavy weapons to 'clear' or breach structures, and to engage forces directly, see Eric Hammel's excellent *Five in the Streets: The Battle for Hue, Tet 1968*, Chicago, Contemporary Books, 1991, throughout and particularly pp 98-99, 135, 151-55, 171, 257 and 268; and Mark Bowden's *Blackhawk Down: A Story of Modern War*, New York, Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999.
- 46 MCWP 3-35.3, A 23 through A 39.
- 47 Glenn, *Denying the Widow Maker*, pp x and 10.
- 48 My thanks to that 'RAND Researcher', Mr Paul Killingsworth.
- 49 Thomas, 'Deadly Classroom', p 93.

FIBUA – The Tactics of Mistake?

42 Commando's H-Hr was 0130hrs on 9 August 2001. By 6am they had accounted for about 40 of the 60 defenders of Copeshill Down in a fairly traditional frontal slog. About 20 defenders held two buildings about 80 yards apart. A Marine rifle troop had infiltrated into the other end of the village before H-Hr, and the recon troop was holding a large building in the village centre.

Watching from the roof of the Church, the Operations Research analyst asked why the Marines were grinding forward so slowly. The enemy were isolated in two small pockets and effectively surrounded. It was fairly obvious to an objective observer, given the luxury of a bird's eye view, that things should be done differently and could be done better.

Déjà vu. The author had seen it many times before, with several different battalions. Five years before, in Copeshill Down, on CATAC. Ten to twelve years before, many times whilst Ops Officer in Berlin. Sixteen years before, on a London District and South East District joint study period. What happens is:

- We stress how jolly important, and how difficult, FIBUA is.
- We continue to teach drills and tactics that are in principle unchanged since 1943.
- We pontificate, prevaricate, and ignore the hard, concrete evidence that we can (and should) do things differently.

OUR PERCEPTION OF FIBUA SEEMS TO BE CHARACTERIZED by superlatives. We see it as having extremely high ratios of force to space. We think it leads to extremely high casualties, particularly to the attacker. Therefore we employ firm, centralised control in the attack, and this results in slow, methodical, set-piece assaults. In defence we envisage an initial series of planned ambushes followed by the deliberate defence of an extensively prepared main position. Tanks are seen to be extremely vulnerable in FIBUA, and their use is therefore constrained. We also think that FIBUA requires extremely high ammunition expenditure.

Contradictory Evidence

However there is evidence which suggests that our perceptions are both wrong and dangerous. The best objective evidence comes from a series of trials and historical studies which looked at combat degradation in the urban environment. This process was called Exercise KING'S RIDE V. Some of the relevant reports are referred to below.^{1, 2, 3} Discussions with civilian analysts involved with both the field trials and the historical studies suggest that the most important findings have been underestimated by military observers. Current FIBUA doctrine does not seem to give sufficient weight to them.

Other, more subjective evidence can be found in the files of one of the battalions (1 KINGS) which served in Berlin for two years in the late 1980s. Two documents are available, one written by the Commanding Officer as a PXR,⁴ the other by one of his platoon commanders.⁵ Both those officers and the author of this article served with the Battalion for almost the whole of its two-year tour in the city (to avoid possible confusion, it should be noted that 1 KINGS was not involved in KING'S RIDE).

The KING'S RIDE trials were conducted in Ruhleben Fighting City with troops from 1st Battalion, the Royal Hampshire Regiment in 1985. One of the more important findings was that the deliberate attack tactics currently employed by the British Army led to the attackers losing on a number of occasions, whereas more rapid, Soviet-style tactics did not seem to. Casualties were broadly comparable in both cases. The (military) Trials Officer wrote:

... This came as a surprise to all. It had been generally held that a British approach, employing slow methodical methods involving (outwardly) less risk, would lead to success in slower time but with fewer casualties. In the event, however, conducting staff and observers noted that it tended to lead to failure to maintain the momentum and cohesion of the attack...⁶

This result is supported by 1 KINGS' subjective experience. Attacks by and against the battalion in training were usually slow and ineffectual. A few enemy infantry, with little more than the wit to change position from time to time, were able to hold up British-style attacks quite easily.

The historical studies were also illuminating. The key discovery was that, over a total of 73 FIBUA battles in the Second World War, the attackers' casualties averaged 28 per cent of those of the defender. That is worth stressing: the defender, for all his advantages, loses three to four times as many casualties as the attacker.

When the attacker used tanks, this ratio rose on occasion to as high as 25 to one. Most of the battles cited occurred late in the war, when shoulder-fired antitank weapons were available in numbers. Clearly tanks are vulnerable at close quarters. However their firepower is considerable. That firepower has become more effective since the Second World War. A 120mm HESH round can be reasonably relied upon to blow in buildings in a way that a 75mm HE round could not.

Concerning the defence, the KING'S RIDE Trials Officer queried *'whether the large amounts of time which is needed to prepare proper strongpoint positions might not be better spent on other tasks'*. More positively, CO 1 KINGS wrote *'Defence was not about "walled-in fortresses" but about mobility, deception and initiative'*. The historical evidence was similar; it concluded

'[T]he practical effect of the study is to point towards the need for an aggressive counterattack posture rather than extensive fortification in defence'.

During the field trials, it was rare for (surviving) infantrymen to run out of ammunition, largely because of the habit of picking up ammunition from casualties. 1 KINGS conducted a force-on-force exercise using laser weapon effects simulators. The surprising result was that ammunition expenditure was halved. It seems that ammunition expenditure will be high in FIBUA, but our perception of how high is excessive. Running out of ammunition could probably be more a result of the protracted nature of battle than of extreme expenditure rates.

The perception of very high force densities is also misleading. A TEWT held in Copehill Down recently had the scenario of the village defended by a battalion, and attacked by a motor-rifle regiment. Several exercises in Ruhleben involved two battalions attacking on a frontage of 200 metres. Such occurrences cloud perceptions as to real force-to-space ratios. Battalion GDP areas along the former Inner-German Border typically included a couple of villages with about a hundred buildings, defended by at most

a company group. 1 KINGS' main defensive area in Berlin was approximately a square kilometre, with about 50 city blocks each with an average of 88 four-storey houses.

Simple multiplication shows that force densities would not approach the levels commonly imagined. Take the example of a company group holding a village of about a hundred buildings similar in size to Ruhleben or Copehill Down. At full strength, the company would have nine sections, or eighteen fireteams. Suppose every fireteam occupies one house. The company would not even occupy a quarter of the available buildings. If the defence included strongpoints (of a number of fireteams in two or three buildings), the number of occupied buildings would go down even further. The conclusion is that although troop densities are high in FIBUA, there are normally unoccupied buildings and gaps around and between positions. Therefore manoeuvre is not only possible but necessary.

To summarize, there is evidence that British offensive tactics result in plodding, deliberate attacks that seem to lose momentum and fail. Casualties are high, but considerably higher to the defender than to the attacker. The use of tanks in the attack can significantly increase the defender's losses. Massive preparation of strongpoints seems to be a waste of effort; the defence should be conducted as a series of aggressive counterattacks. Ammunition expenditure is high but sustainable. Finally, troop densities, although high, normally result in numbers of unoccupied buildings and gaps between adjacent positions.

Understanding Why

Why do prevailing perceptions contradict the available evidence? The historical study remarked that its results were

'particularly intriguing because they lead to conclusions which have been termed "counterintuitive" and do not accord with many preconceptions'.

Why is this? It seems to be because the British Army's major experience of FIBUA was against a tactically superior enemy.

Until 1939 the British Army had virtually no experience of FIBUA. In the Second World War it was, to be blunt, consistently bested at the lowest tactical levels by the Wehrmacht. The following quotation from Max Hastings's work on the Normandy campaign⁷ supports this:

'The American Colonel [redacted] has conducted a detailed statistical study of German actions in the Second World War. Some of his explanations as to why Hitler's armies performed so much more impres-

sively then their enemies seem fanciful. But no critic has challenged his essential finding that on almost every battlefield of the war, including Normandy, the German soldier performed more impressively than his opponents...'

Hastings then quotes from Dupuy:⁸

'On a man for man basis, the German ground soldier consistently inflicted casualties at about a 50% higher rate than they incurred from the opposing British and American troops UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES (emphasis in original). This was true when they were attacking and when they were defending, when they had a local numerical superiority and when, as was usually the case, when they were outnumbered, when they had air superiority and when they did not, when they won and when they lost.'

Wehrmacht infantry were generally very well trained and led. In 1917 and 1918 the German Army had developed and refined infiltration tactics, which they carried forward with great effect into the next war. This was especially so in FIBUA, where very-low-level leadership and flexibility is at a premium. Further objective evidence⁹ suggests that the Germans' better performance was due not to better individual soldiers but to better low level tactics.

The British response was to be slow, thorough and deliberate; and to exercise firm, centralised control, particularly in FIBUA. This means narrow sectors, slow rates of advance, thorough clearance and reorganisation at every stage. It was the competent response of a tactically inferior army.

From 1945 until the mid-1980s the British Army had no real experience of FIBUA. Its Infantry re-read the war diaries of the last war and re-hashed them without analysis. FIBUA training was limited to an occasional attack on Imber Village. This seemed to confirm existing doctrine – scarcely surprising, given the ratios of forces to space employed and the frontage available.

Since the mid-1980s the Army has had considerable opportunity to exercise in Ruhleben and Doughboy in Berlin, in Hammelburg and most recently Copehill Down and Whinney Hill. However, our preconceptions remain. They are reinforced by the understandable desire of commanders to make best use of the available facilities. This leads them to put the maximum possible number of troops into the various FIBUA villages. Hence battalion and even brigade-level exercises in Ruhleben and Copehill Down. Such exercises reinforce existing perceptions, and prevent low-level manoeuvre due to sheer overcrowding.

Such, perhaps, are the reasons why the Army has inherited its present perceptions and tactics.

Because of those misleading perceptions, we do not appear to have looked at the available evidence objectively. That is why perceptions and evidence appear to be contradictory.

Moving On

It is stressed that current methods are wrong and dangerous. That they are wrong has been illustrated. That they are dangerous stems from their consequences. They dispose the defender to allow himself to be surrounded, and suffer up to four times the attacker's casualties. They dispose an attacker to slow, plodding, deliberate methods that will often fail. That will result in more casualties, in order to achieve the objective in a further assault. How, then, should we approach FIBUA?

If the defender can expect to suffer three to four times as many casualties as the attacker, it is sensible that he should choose not to defend. His best course is to counterattack at all times, wherever and whenever possible. CO 1 KINGS ordered his rifle companies to:

*'continue to attack the enemy whenever possible, in ambush and on ground of our choosing. Movement is essential to the success of this battle. It may be forward or lateral movement... Opportunities are to be taken when they occur.'*¹⁰

Conversely, to choose to fight from strongpoints allows the enemy to surround and isolate the troops in them, and then destroy them with tank gun fire.

The relevant part of the Army Field Manual (AFM)¹¹ describes the defence as comprising the perimeter force, disruption force, strongpoints and a reserve. What it does not explain is what the strongpoints are for. It suggests that their purpose is to enable the infantry to hold ground. This can be seen as an invitation to be surrounded. It encourages the defenders to fall back to what they perceive as a better position, but one which actually places them at a systematic disadvantage. Several passages in the references cited here state the need to spend time in reconnaissance and preparation of routes, rather than in constructing strongpoints. Those routes should be forwards, backwards and to a flank: the point is that time should be spent in preparing to fight a mobile, aggressive battle rather than a static, defensive one.

The latest amendment to that part of the AFM recognises that defender's casualties may exceed those of the attacker, but does not draw any concrete deductions. It emphasises counterattacks slightly more strongly than previously. It still stresses the preparation of strongpoints. It even states that they should be *'prepared for continued resistance even when by*

passed and isolated¹². Its keynote section¹³ does not specifically require the execution of counterattacks. It scarcely mentioning the term at all. The terms 'offensive manoeuvre' and an 'aggressive defence' are used in an abstract and anodyne manner.

The amendment is clearly intended to suggest a more aggressive posture. However it does not actually change doctrine from a positional defence, based on the holding of strongpoints, to one based on counterattacks. Doctrine for the attack is unchanged; namely meticulous and methodical planning coupled to a plethora of control measures.

Martin van Creveld¹⁴ suggests that in extreme conditions, command must be either firmly centralised or firmly decentralised. Both can be successful. Waterloo and El Alamein are good examples of firm, central command. However, it does not seem to work in FIBUA. Conversely, German experience suggests that decentralisation does work. Authority is devolved to the lowest levels. The minimum of orders are given. Commanders are well forward. That is not so that they can supervise their subordinates closely, but so that they can see opportunities first hand as they develop. They can then feed in reserves or bring fire support to bear to assist the leading troops. This means that in the attack, section commanders are simply given an H-Hour and an objective. They are directed, expected and encouraged to get there by any reasonable means. They are to infiltrate, get round, avoid and penetrate the enemy's positions. That is quite feasible, since there is plenty of cover and there are inevitably gaps in the enemy's positions. Platoon commanders are directed, expected and encouraged to support their lead section commanders, to open up the best routes, to push forward and get on to the objective. Likewise the company commanders.

Objectives should be major urban features such as buildings dominating crossroads. There is little point in stating the mission as 'to destroy the enemy' at these levels. The enemy's destruction cannot normally be achieved unless his withdrawal is prevented. In FIBUA this is most difficult because of the cover available. In addition, such a mission tends to result in head-on battles of attrition.

If the enemy's position is infiltrated on several axes by a more numerous attacker, he will feel vulnerable. He will be inclined to pull back to better-prepared positions to the rear. He will be encouraged to close up to his strongpoints. He will be located, surrounded and defeated in penny packets. If the enemy is bold and well led, he will counterattack strongly and unexpectedly. One can then resort to slow, deliberate and methodical tactics. However the likelihood is that the enemy is not that good. The British Army is one of the few all-professional armies in the world. The Wehrmacht was exceptional, and its like will probably

not be seen again in the near future. We should learn from its methods, and apply them to the fine soldiers and excellent training facilities at our disposal.

Some of the skills we currently teach are extremely good, insofar as they relate to what may be called 'housebreaking'. However that is but a small part of the repertoire required. The skills of movement and infiltration, of scouting to find routes through and past, need more attention. This calls for fewer set-piece attacks on defended houses and more walkthroughs, talkthroughs, minor battle lessons and TEWTS.

Most importantly, our present perceptions of force to space and troop density must be overthrown. There should be space in every exercise and every TEWT for infiltration and manoeuvre. In practical terms this means attacking or defending Copehill Down with no more than a company. To attack along its main streets with a company on each side of the road, each with only a single building's frontage, is to guarantee a frontal slogging match which proves little for either the attacker or the defender.

Thus present perceptions of FIBUA should be revised. Instead it should be emphasised that FIBUA takes place on terrain which offers good cover to attacker and defender, leads to short engagement ranges; requires manoeuvre both in defence and offence; and requires loose, highly decentralised command and control. This is very different from the tightly controlled battle we currently try to stage. However, it is more consistent with the doctrine of directive control.

Summary

To summarise, the Army's perceptions of FIBUA are contradicted by available evidence. As a result, its tactics are inappropriate. They will lead to attacks which bog down of their own inertia. In defence we will be systematically outmanoeuvred, and defeated in detail. Our perceptions seem to be due to the Army's experience at the hands of a tactically superior enemy in the Second World War. This has prevented change to a more positive doctrine. Such a doctrine should be based on decentralisation of command in the offence, and counterattacks in defence. It would require changes to current training methods, particularly as they relate to ratios of force to space.

We now have excellent training facilities and instructors. We merely need to shake off our perceptions as to the real nature of FIBUA, and change our tactics accordingly.

The Author wishes to thank [redacted] the Defence Operational Analysis Centre, West Byfleet [redacted] of the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, and Dr [redacted] for their assistance in the preparation of this article.

REFERENCES

- 1 [REDACTED] KINGS OWN BORDER, 'Exercise KING'S RIDE V: Initial Impressions', *Army Training News*, April 1986 (Edition 16), pp 32-43.
- 2 D Rowland, Defence Operational Analysis Establishment, 'The Effect of Combat Degradation on the Urban Battle', *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, Vol 42, No7, 1991, pp 543-533.
- 3 R C Thornton and J H Thody, Defence Operational Analysis Establishment, 'Field Trials of Infantry Close Combat in Urban Areas', *DOAE Memorandum M88109, Report on DOAE Item 662*, December 1988.
- 4 Commanding Officer's Post Exercise Report, Exercise NICHOLAS SILVER 15-20 Jan 89. 1 KINGS File G206 dated 21 Feb 89.
- 5 Lt D W A McBride KINGS, *Fighting and Defence in a Built Up Area: A Platoon Commander's Perspective*. Undated MS, ca Jun 89.
- 6 Lyman, *op cit*, p 34.
- 7 Max Hastings, *Overlord*, Michael Joseph, 1984, p 184.
- 8 Colonel T N Dupuy, *A Genius for War*, London 1977, pp 253-4. Quoted in Hastings, *op cit*.
- 9 D Rowland, Defence Operational Analysis Establishment, 'The Use of Historical Data in the Assessment of Combat Degradation', *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, Vol 38, No 2, 1987, pp 149-162; and private communication with the author.
- 10 Reference 4, para 11.
- 11 The Army Field Manual Volume IV Part 5, *Fighting in Built Up Areas*. Army Code No 71346 (pt 5)
- 12 Reference 11, Amendment 2, sub-paragraph 0105a.
- 13 Reference 11, paragraph 0105 passim.
- 14 Martin Van Creveld, *Command in War*, Harvard University press, London 1985, passim.

[REDACTED]; article first appeared in the *Army Doctrine and Training News* in 1994. The lack of any kind of response was staggering. It is repeated unchanged here.

Both this and the previous piece reinforce the Editor's own view that at both the operational and tactical level the key to success in urban warfare lies in encirclement - to isolate the urban battlefield from the remainder of the operational area. Looking at the macro level, the classic historical example is Stalingrad; the Germans never succeeded in securing the river frontage, leaving the reinforcement route across the Volga open. Conversely, once the Russians in turn managed to close the ring, the fate of the Sixth Army was sealed. An entire urban area does not have to be sealed off: both the reduction of the Warsaw Ghetto and the defeat of the Polish Home Army in the 1944 Rising illustrate the principle of isolating then liquidating individual pockets of resistance.

Russian doctrine, where the capture of an urban area was essential, was - and is - to seal off the area then break it into manageable slices with concentric attacks by battalion-based combined arms groups containing a heavy admixture of assault weapons and personnel (see SCSI Occasional No 40, the Second Chechen War, pp 94-96). We understand that a similar principle has been adopted by the USMC, but are unsure as to the results being achieved.

Isolation is also applicable at levels of conflict below warfighting.

The other point emerging from both articles which we would highlight here is that the traditional 'given' - that urban warfare performance involves large numbers of troops and high force to space ratios - is neither a matter of fact nor a desirable. Historical example, and more recent studies, seem to be indicating that fast penetrations by powerful groupings on narrow frontages followed by clearance of the resulting segments are preferable to a broad front advance through the whole of the occupied area.

As far as defence is concerned, we support Major Storr's contention that an offensive defence is the only game in town, but looking at the wider issue - what for, if the enemy has isolated the urban area? The answer is probably prestige more than anything else - note that the main body of Grozny's defenders broke out. On the subject of strongpoints, we would suggest that their main function is to act as logistic bases for the mobile defence, but in that case their prime need is security as opposed to tactical effect.

We would hope that the re-publication of the second article will provoke more reaction than was the case on its first appearance, if only because the subject is now recognised as having more importance than was the case in 1994 - [REDACTED]

DOCTRINE (WILDER SHORES) Non-Combat Mission Command or, 'Barracks problems – No problem'

Colonel (Retd) [REDACTED]

The application of Mission Command techniques and procedures to non-combat situations

WHEN RICHARD'S SYNDICATE AT THE BRIGADE JUNIOR Officers' Study Day had been introduced to Non-Combat Mission Command (NCMC) or 'Barracks Command', they were given a twice-folded and well-filled crib card. [See below]. This detailed how problems ranging from Pte X's skills' failings to how the organisation of adventurous training might be tackled.

The syndicate's immediate reaction had been horror. Being mainly brisk and decisive types they wobbled when they glimpsed its apparently considerable content and, in particular, the notes relating to the estimate which appeared at centre left on its front side. [The reader is invited at this stage to scan the front of the NCMC card (p 39), and to sympathise with the syndicate.]

Paul, who is not fazed by detail, remarked after reading the 'Preliminaries' section that 'Easy' problems did not require an estimate, only some mental 'cycling'. 'Simple' problems – solve. [BAR readers will, of course, have noticed this.]

The syndicate then noted that 'Difficult' problems would use an NCMC form of estimating with Jo remarking that the crib's notes appeared to be helpful. Richard, the DS, agreed making the point that the dodge of classifying some 'Difficult' problems as 'Simple' or 'Easy' was not on. He then asked everyone to reassemble one month later well versed and practised in NCMC. Their OCs, having been well briefed, had been asked to prod the slothful.

When the syndicate met again Richard recapped the four NCMC phases highlighted on the crib card,

- Preliminaries,
- the Non-Combat Estimate (and Orders),
- Action and
- Review.

He asked Kate to outline the 'Easy' problem process. She mentioned the light-weight monitoring and aim definition,

"...try to get it as tight as you can. Then CoA are related to a number of factors and each COA's suitability, or otherwise, is determined by the influence of As, Ds and Cs. A COA is then selected. The Action phase follows and later there should be a Review – even if it is very short. OODA looping might guide the process."

Alec then outlined the first stage of solving a 'Difficult' problem using the Non-Combat Estimate.

"As with an 'Easy' mission the initial requirement is objective definition - note 'objective' and not a loosely

Non-Combat Mission Command – Activity Details

Preliminaries. When receiving, or originating (moral courage), a **Non-Combat Mission**, action it oneself, or delegate. If the former, **'Do not Jump In'**. Consider **Time Available and Priorities** by identifying **Urgency and Importance**. Make every effort to decide on the course of action promptly but should circumstances dictate that a **Quick Fix** has to occur always ensure that it is processed soonest.

Initially answer the question, **'Is the problem Easy or Difficult?'** (**Simple** problems – solve immediately, review later). If **Easy**, lightly monitor to achieve a fair degree of process control. Initially define aim. Then instinctively identify a number of courses of action (CsOA). Gain support or otherwise of these from recall of similar situations, from various factors, and by intuition. Then select after comparing pros, cons and consequences for each COA. Always review after the action phase. OODA looping (Observe (gain facts)/Orientate (gain CsOA)/Decide/Act) may be appropriate. See ADP 2 Command 0313, 0314.

If **Difficult** process the three core phases of Non-Combat Mission Command (see below).

Mission Analysis		The Non-Combat Estimate (and Orders) ——— Evaluate Factors		Commander's Decision, Plan, Orders		Action	Review After-Action Review [Intuition Development]
Mission Statement Title, Task, .../What UP (1)	Resources Personnel Morale Time	Create CsOA then,	Decision on COA(2)	Leadership and Teamwork	Honest Self- and Team Audits for Continuous Improvement...		
Intent Policy/Standard to be achieved ... Why	Money Equipment Stores Data	Compare the Advantages and Disadvantages including +ve & -ve Consequences of each COA	Moral Courage and Stamina Develop Plan and Orders Situation Change? Update WO	Moral Courage and Stamina Monitor – Leave alone/ Advise/Lead	Extra-Team Comment		
Tasks Specified/Implied .. How	Influences: Safety Regulations Policy Competitor(s)	Self-Tasking / Team Orders Mission Statement (What) Who is involved Why this mission Where the mission is					
Constraints Scan Factors > What Nox/When	Creativity/Intuition Deductions: Sw? Sw? Sw? creating Tasks/Constraints ...Assumptions? ... Weighting?	How mission will be achieved When key timings occur Take Os Ask Os					
Main Effort (ME) ... Define the 0	Situation Change? Confirmatory Check? Redefine Mission Statement? (Plus Completion and Review Date/Time) Command Style? (Tells/Sells/Talks/Delegates) Initial WO	or.... Use Orders format when briefing a team					
	Avoid COA Decision Trap						
	Situation Change? Query during mission: Has the situation changed? Should the Mission, Plan and Orders be changed? (1) UP – Unifying Purpose, in order that... etc (2) End of Contingency Planning – Probable COA noted						
	Open Communication. During these phases the leader and also team members, when it is appropriate, should: 'Listen', 'Ask Questions', 'Shut Up', 'Think', 'Be Creative', 'Speak Up'. This can create Leadership Confidence fostering Trust, Teamwork and High Morale.						

defined 'aim' - in order to fix the Main Effort (ME). This entails considering the content of the previous four mission analysis stages [Mission Statement, Intent, Tasks, Constraints] and to then decide if it is one of 'cause removal', when there is a cause to be 'removed', or 'organisation' when, for instance, some training or admin has to be 'organised'. This often creates a Redefined Mission Statement that should now include completion and review timings.

"With the 'Difficult' mission there must be heavy 'brain-straining' during Factor Evaluation before COA consideration. 'Difficult' problems do require an extra effort. The card's prompt is 'Avoid the COA Decision Trap'. You may mentally note likely CsOA but factors must be evaluated first - the crib lists many."

Paul then outlined how the eleven factors in the Non-Combat Estimate's Evaluate Factors column were expanded on the card's reverse side (p 41). He added that

"occasional scanning of the 'People' and 'Morale' lists can help you to identify activities and qualities which you, or your team members after some prodding, could develop. In the 'People' area the 'Difficult Issues' list raises prompts which refer to examples of unsatisfactory situations. To prepare for some of these I have boned up on what might have to be done should they occur. It's a form of Contingency Planning and it has worked well especially in the case of one personal problem last week which I preempted having already discussed such an situation with my Sergeant Major."

Looking again at the card's front the three very junior captains then discussed how Murphy could spoil the use of an Assumption in a plan and also that certain factors should be mentally weighted so that their proper influence on a COA would be considered - safety and financial restrictions were obvious examples. All felt that the notes that highlighted the essential contributions of a leader's, and also team members' Moral Courage and Stamina during planning and tasking were beneficial. Alec then mentioned that,

"good solutions to problems are gained through Creativity. My 'it won't work' or, 'it's always been green' or 'I'm right and you're wrong', forms of negative thinking have now been pretty well replaced by real creativity - I am now more ready to accept others' ideas - including Extra-Team Comment. I also now evaluate more factors and gain extra CSOA when sussing 'barracks' problems and also when combat-wise as during this morning's JOTES TEWI."

"in addition, NCMC-based pre-meeting preparation has caused me to offer much more sensible input during my OC's and other's, meetings."

Kate felt the same, adding,

"the Team-Audit sessions during my own Reviews have identified areas for Continuous Improvement and I've followed the Open Communication - 'Shut Up', 'Listen', 'Ask Questions' - format when discussing a poor performance with someone who should have known better because of his rank, training or experience. It gains a far better outcome when such an individual has to review his efforts during the failed activity. You can always then add a few brief pearls of wisdom."

During a Review session, which had preceded the second syndicate discussion with Richard, the trio had discussed their action plans and team projects. Bald Honesty had been very apparent with Alec admitting to a character change of now being, 'less arrogant'. No one could really say if his, or her, Intuition had increased but it was thought that the increase in reviewing must have been creating experiences from which intuition might be cultivated: 'time would tell'.

Each had initiated several WOs and SNCOs into NCMC activities through coaching. Both Kate and Alec felt that this had improved their leadership confidence and their soldiers' morale. The Easy/Difficult drill had generated more effective decision making with both types of problem.

'Barracks problems - No problem.'

The trio also felt that the NCMC process had added to their interest and study of the leadership and management aspects of command. Paul had, in a notebook, logged a number of relevant - and often amusing - quotes which he had collected through reading broadsheet newspapers, military and professional journals and through watching and listening to various media sources. Some of these had prompted better practices. One was

Effective people do not grumble about the dark, they light candles.

Kate then asked Richard, as the session ended,

"Why isn't NCMC, in the same or a similar form to that summarised on the card, a proper part of the training that one receives at Sandhurst? It is so applicable to the situations that I've experienced since commissioning especially those relating to that hot potato - soldier retention."

Richard's answer was - "I don't know".

The Non-Combat Estimate – Factors – Prompt Words

In all of the prompt word groups there may well be additional relevant factors – ‘Think’, ‘Be Creative’.
Always consider validity of all relevant factors. Regard ‘doubtfuls’ as assumptions.

People

Personalities: Officers, WOs and NCOs, Experts/Advisors, Agencies, Medical, Spiritual, Confidentiality, Yourself, Your Team, Retention, Recruitment, Other teams – Families, Partnerships, Relationships, Friends, ‘Customers’, MoD (Army), TA, Military Police/SIB, Police, Media, Civilian population, Culture, Religion, Refugees, Terrorists/Rebels, Security status, Psychometric Tests and Feedback. Similar situations recall – this factor can apply during consideration in any of the eleven factor areas.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Self-awareness, Situation-awareness, Duty, Selflessness, Accountability/Responsibility, Morale (below), Moral courage, Moral stamina, Maturity, Self-esteem, Self-control, Equal opportunities, Courtesy, Confidence, Optimism, Pessimism, Cool, Bravery, Bluff, Stress, Intelligence, Honesty, Integrity, Loyalty, Trust, Respect, Cooperation, Conflict, Career implications, Reliability, Sense of urgency, Impulsiveness, Decisiveness, Experience, Discretion, Commonsense, Intuition, Creativity, Flexibility, Initiative, Risk, Persuasion, Persistence, Enthusiasm, Encouragement, Sense of humour, Idleness, Absenteeism, Individuals’ knowledge/skills/abilities, Verbal and written clarity, Language(s), IT, Health, Fitness, Stamina, ‘Switching Off’/Relaxing, Ageism, Naiveté, Attention to detail, Turnout, Social/sporting abilities.

Development: Leadership development, Ambition, Potential, Mentoring, Coaching, Delegation, Training, NVQS, Action Plans, Projects, Courses, Potential, Confidential Reports, After-Action Reviews.

Difficult Issues: Morality, Attraction, Homosexuality, Arrogance, Change, Dismissiveness, Prejudice, Authoritarianism, ‘Not invented here’(NIH), Bullying/Beating, Peer pressure, Swearing, Alcoholism, Drugs, Favouritism, Sexism, Ethnic issues, Leniency, Zero tolerance, Human rights, Gender neutrality, PC, ‘Thinking the unthinkable’.

Morale (The Will Achieve Factor)

Moral courage and stamina, Self-respect, Self-discipline, High standards (integrity), Open communication as primary features of Leadership and Teamwork. Plus... Everyone’s personal Commitment (Cause belief), Success (nice to have – essential eventually), Team pride, Good personal and team Administration and Organisation, Personal happiness, Enjoyment, Courtesy, Fun, ‘Laugh’, ‘Smile’.

Time

Importance/Urgency, Priorities, Task completion time, Estimating/OODAing including Orders time, Start time, (Earliest, Latest), Mission ‘Chunking’ – Phases, Phase timings, Source for timings change approval, Facilities: timings when available, Surprise, After-action Review date/time/duration.

Money

Pay, Budget target(s), Budget flexibility, Accounting responsibilities, Income, Expenditure, Costs, Insurance, Security, Anti misappropriation/counter-fraud measures, Foreign exchange rates.

Equipment

Weapons, Aircraft, Helicopters, Boats, Bridges, Radios, Mobiles, Tools, Equipment, Buildings, Clothing, Accommodation, Cooking equipment, Training area(s), PC hardware, Responsibilities/certification for operation/safety/maintenance, Security.

Stores

Task-associated stores, Training stores, Accommodation stores, Adventurous training stores, Rations, Medical stores, Sports stores, Clothing, Fuel, Ammunition, Pyrotechnics Heating, Lighting, Canteen, PC software, Issue / replenishment responsibilities, Quality monitoring, Serviceability feedback, Security.

Data

Ground, Going, Distances, Travel speeds and duration, Weather, Sunrise/sunset, Assumptions, Data information sources, Update sources, Spin, PC software, Security, Usage, Letter/document typing/production, Cribs, Previous instructions/letters.

Safety

Responsibilities: Weapons, Driving, Fire, Noise, Adventurous Training, Medical (mil/civilian), Inoculations, Risk assessment, Briefings.

Regulations

Relevant instructions, Responsibilities, Civil law, Military law, Common sense, Briefings.

Policy

MoD/HQs/CO’s/Sub Unit Comd’s/ our own standards, Ethics, Drugs, PC influence, Responsibilities, Mature behaviour, Policy maintenance – Briefings.

Competitors

Opposing Teams, Reputation, Strength / weaknesses, Own Team, Captain, Team’s strengths/weaknesses, Tactics, Training, Surprise, Coaching, Monitoring, Reviewing, Rebel Ops, Morale, Strength, Tactics, Influence, Weapons, Mincs.

Development

Scan, in particular, the People and Morale prompts periodically in order to identify necessary self, team-member- and team-development missions.

The 30 Second Problem – YO's' Answers.

The problem (see below) which was set and answered on 1 Aug 01 was,

Assume that you have now been in camp and on exercises with your Regiment for six months. At about the three month point you had a difficult problem to solve. You did this successfully.

State – taking no more than 30 seconds – the phases you would have actioned.

The YO's' Answers:

- 1 *'Identify Problem/What it entails/What needs to be done/What you intend to do.'*
- 2 *'Assess situation/Take advice/Plan/Brief/Control/Evaluate.'*
- 3 *'Assessment-Options/Advantages and Disadvantages/Look at all influencing factors/Best option for ????'*
- 4 *'Evaluate /Do an Estimate.'*
- 5 *'Assess the situation/Come up with a plan/Brief Team on Problem/Tell team Plan/ Apply individuals to Task/Supervise Task.'*
- 6 *'What is problem/Sources of Problem/ Consequences of Problem/Sort it out.'*
- 7 *'What is it?/What does it affect?/Who does it affect?'*
- 8 *'What problem is/Reasons behind problem/ Take action on information obtained.'*
9. *'Assess the problem/Plan/Estimate/Delegate tasks/Implement/Solve problem.'*
- 10 *'Identified the problem/Identified possible solutions/Sought the advice of others/Made an informed decision.'*
- 11 *'Find out what the problem is/List possible solutions/Pros and Cons of each solution.'*
- 12 *'Assess exactly what the problem was/Consider the courses of action/Select the best course of action.'*

ANNIVERSARY

A Century of Royal Navy Submarine Operations

Holland 1 to Vanguard

Commander ██████████

██████████ a submariner for almost thirty years, and the Captain of four of HM Submarines, has been the Director of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum since July 1994. His proudest achievement since moving into the post is getting *Holland 1* back on display in May 2001 after a six-year conservation and preservation programme. More information on the Museum can be found on its website www.rnsubmus.co.uk.

(The Editor has always had a high regard for the Andrew, particularly since hosting a party at which a Naval guest made the remark "Good God, a pongo who knows how to mix a G&T..."

This article celebrates a notable centenary. For those who prefer to stay on the surface, remember the old Submarine Service maxim: "There are two sorts of things that float, submarines – and targets".)

IN 1900, WHEN THE THEN CONTROLLER OF THE NAVY declared that submarines were 'underhand, unfair and damned un-English' he was not alone in his vehement condemnation of the platform as a means of waging war. At that point in history, Britain was the only major maritime power not to have at least an embryonic submarine flotilla, but fortunately those who were bent on finding out what all the fuss was about prevailed in the argument. So *Holland 1*, built under licence from the USA, was launched in Barrow in 1901, and the Royal Navy Submarine Service was born.



During those pioneering days it was not plain sailing, and although they would be the last to admit it our early submariners were in fact struggling with what was little more than an animated mine – a defensive weapon of position to be used to protect our own bases. Equipment was crude and to put their problems into perspective, if a target was sighted through the periscope right ahead it was horizontal, vertical on the beam, and upside down astern. This must have made the estimation of target course and speed a most interesting pastime!

It was not long however before increased range and endurance and greater firepower turned submarines into offensive weapons and formidable opponents. During the 1914–18 war German submarines, against which there was little protection other than to convoy, sank 11 million tons of Allied merchant shipping. The RN Submarine Service, first out and last in, quickly made its mark as well, and finally laid to rest its image of being manned by 'unwashed chauffeurs'. Equipped in the main with the excellent E-class, and operating in the confined and distinctly unhealthy areas of the North Sea, Baltic and Dardanelles, they sank fifty-four warships, including nineteen submarines. Names emerged such as Max Horton (*E9*) (the first CO ever to fly the Jolly Roger), Norman Holbrook (*B11*) (the first of our fourteen VC winners), and Martin Nasmith (*B11*) whose exploits were the stuff of legends. The Service was also beginning to learn that its preparedness to go where others could not tread exacted a heavy toll of submariners' lives.

Despite technical improvements, submarines were still weapons of position – that is slower than

their quarry – so experiments were put in hand to seek higher speeds, more powerful armament, and better sensors (the hydrophone for listening had been introduced during WWI, and the pigeon had been superseded by wireless for long-range communications). The results were the steam-driven K and big-gun and aircraft-equipped M-classes. Experience with these submarines showed that technical capability lagged tactical thinking, so between the wars design hardened into a diesel-electric boat, with torpedoes and a small bore gun for armament. They had a good range, but to achieve tactical mobility and charge their batteries they had to surface, and it was with this type of submarine that the warring factions entered WWII.

Unlike German and American submarines that fought, in the main, a wide-ocean campaign, our submarines operated regularly in shallow water, densely populated with mines and against strong ASW forces. The nature of these operations extracted a heavy price, and one in three submariners were killed. Despite these losses the Service never lacked for volunteers, and stories of submarine exploits are legendary. Malcolm Wanklyn in *Upholder*, Tony Miers in *Torbay*, Tubby Linton in *Turbulent* were Victoria Cross winners and personified the skill and courage of all the crews. Clandestine operations figured largely in the tapestry of operations, with Alistair Mars in *Unbroken* being a leading exponent. Baldy Hezlet's 'five out of eight' in *Trenchant* when he sank *Ashigara* will remain forever a world record. Then there were the achievements of the mini-submarines and chariots. The crippling of the German *Tirpitz* and Japanese *Yakao* earned a further four VCs, but in addition to these very highest awards there were a string of medals for feats of outstanding bravery in the face of the most challenging circumstances.

By the end of the war RN submarines had sunk or damaged by torpedo and gun two million tons of shipping, including seventy-eight warships, thirty-eight of which were submarines. In addition to the destruction of the enemy were the roles of surveillance and reconnaissance; cargo and troop carrying; mining; harbour penetration; air/sea rescue; clandestine operations; and finally the vital task of training our own ASW forces. Winston Churchill's statement that 'Great deeds are done in the air and on the Land, nevertheless there is no part to be compared to your exploits' says it all.

In 1948 the primary task of the post-war Submarine Service was declared as anti-submarine, and with it came the development of the excellent P and O-classes that eventually took over from the faithful T and A-classes. However for the RN to remain at the cutting edge of maritime influence it was essential that nuclear propulsion was embraced in order to counter the growing Soviet submarine threat. HMS *Dreadnought* went to sea in 1963, and she was followed by the excellent *Valiant* and *Churchill*-classes that became the workhorses of the Cold War. With their even better *Swiftsure* and *Trafalgar*-class sisters, the 'fighters' carried the battle to the enemy at every possible opportunity. Deterrence was of course at the heart of the national defence strategy, and this awesome mantle of responsibility fell on the RN's shoulders in 1968 when HMS *Resolution* undertook the first of 229 unbroken patrols by the Polaris-armed R-class 'bombers'. The story of their successors, the mighty Trident-armed *Vanguards*, continues.



The legacy of the pioneers is a record of sacrifice and achievement of which all British submariners through the ages can be justly proud. What is unchanging is the man – as Lieutenant Colonel [redacted] USAF observed after three days on board HMS *Seraph* in 1942

'You suddenly realise that here is one of the essential points about war; there is no substitute for good company. The boys in the Submarine Service convey a spirit which explains why they would sooner be in submarines than anywhere else'

(The Ship with Two Captains – Terence Robertson)

MILITARY LAW (THE LIGHTER SIDE)

Homage To Theodore Ende

Professor ██████████ Professor of Law at the University of Kent at Canterbury. He is current chair of the UK Group, International Society for Military Law and the Law of War.

A version of this paper was given on May 5, 2001 at a meeting of the Group held at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. The venue was different from that normally used. By the most amazing of coincidences (!) the annual Army v Navy rugby match was being played that very afternoon at Twickenham, next door to Kneller Hall.

Introduction

One of the few branches of the British Army which has experienced a growth in numbers in recent years has been Army Legal Services within the Adjutant General's Corps. Some have attributed this growth to the activities of one particular civilian lawyer who has brought a number of high-profile legal challenges to the court-martial system, resulting in legislative changes. Informed sources insist, however, that it is merely a mischievous rumour that Army Legal are recommending a special award for this civilian practitioner.

Captain ██████████

A year or so ago I published a paper in an academic journal concerning the case of Captain ██████████ ██████████, 1948.¹ Briefly, ██████████ had been granted an emergency war commission in 1940 and after VE Day served with two Military Government Detachments in Germany as a finance officer. A year after his release from service in December 1945, he was arrested by the military police at his home in Leigh, Lancashire and taken to Luneberg. There he was court martialled in May 1947 for fraudulent conversion in relation to funds received from the sale of leather from a German factory taken over by the British Occupation Government. He was found guilty, cashiered and sentenced to two years in Wornwood Scrubs, reduced on confirmation to eighteen months. Nine months into his sentence he sought a writ of habeas corpus on the premise that at the time of his court martial he was not subject to military law, following his release from the services under Army Order 83/45, 18 June 1945 (the war crimes Army Order enabling the British military authorities to conduct the Belsen, and the Stalag Luft III (the 'Great Escape'), trials, among others, was AO 81/45, 14 June 1945). In addition he claimed that he did not fall within the scope of s158(1) of the Army Act 1881 (which was in force at the time), under which ex-service personnel could be court martialled within three months of leaving the services for offences committed within the previous three years.² For ██████████ court martial took place 17 months after his release from the Army in December 1945, long after the expiry of the three-month period.

When the Divisional Court heard his habeas corpus application in February 1948 for his release from prison, it decided that as ██████████ had long since stopped receiving Army pay and had long since ceased wearing uniform, following his release under AO 83/45, he was not subject to military law. "Let the body be produced in this court tomorrow morning", Lord Goddard formally instructed the governor of the Scrubs.³ As the *Star* newspaper con-

firmed the next day, 'Judge Frees Demob Captain: Outside Army Law'.⁴ The newspaper went on to observe that the decision would affect 'thousands of demobilised army officers'. One of them was Major Frank Edmunds, whose prosecution for cruelty against two SS men held at the Bad Nenndorf detailed interrogation centre was dropped the day before proceedings were due to commence.⁵

As to the [redacted] decision itself, the War Office was fuming at the practical difficulties it would cause. Indeed its discomfiture was exacerbated by the legal advice it received both from the Law Officers, Sir Hartley Shawcross and Sir Frank Soskice, and from the Judge Advocate General (JAG), Sir Harry MacGcagh, not only that the court's decision was flawed but that the Crown could not appeal against the decision. A legislative remedy hurriedly presented to the Commons by the Minister, Manny Shinwell, and dealing with future cases, was incorporated into the annual Army and Air Force Act 1948. This permitted the Attorney General to authorise, in relation to a civil offence committed abroad, the trial of ex-servicemen by court martial after the three month period following release had expired. But it was too late to catch [redacted] and a number of other ex-servicemen whom the military authorities had wished to prosecute.

Yet one intriguing question remains. The writ of habeas corpus was sought nine months into [redacted] sentence. Who put him up to it? Let me put the question another way. What is the connection between the losing team in the 2001 FA Cup Final, Arsenal, and the answer to that question? A circuitous route might (if we want to guarantee the right answer!) take lawyers to a House of Lords judgment in 1979 in a case called *Arsenal Football Club Ltd v Ende* [1979] A C 1. That was a case where a local ratepayer was held entitled to challenge the decision of the local authority in 1972 to fix the rateable value of Arsenal's ground, Highbury Stadium, at £9250 instead of about £60000 which the ratepayer, who was a local property and estate agent, considered was more accurate.

[redacted] And here is the connection with [redacted]. For the local ratepayer in 1972, [redacted] was the same person who, in 1948, according to the *Sunday Dispatch*⁶ was the 'Man Behind Court Martial Appeals'; indeed the man who was 'Making the War Office Work Overtime'. It appeared that [redacted] long bore a chip on his shoulder as a result of his being unjustly convicted, as he saw it, by a court martial in 1943. The [redacted] case was reported as being his first victory in his campaign to expose the legal flaws accom-

panying courts martial. So it was he who put up the money for the application to the Divisional Court and who quite possibly drew the attention of [redacted]'s lawyer to the legal argument to deploy before the court. As he further explained,

'...from the moment I got what I still regard as a raw deal by that court martial [in 1943 when he got 14 days detention for pranging a jeep], I have given every spare moment to studying military law and spent about £400 into researches into procedure. Every night when I get home I study documents and consult authoritative works... I am ploughing back into this fight the money I recovered from the [redacted] case. I have spent and shall spend every penny of my savings in backing appeals in other cases.'

Ende in fact saved his harshest criticism for those civilian barristers and solicitors serving in the Army during the war and who had been called upon to serve on courts-martial. These people, he complained, had absolutely no knowledge of military law even though they were knowledgeable regarding civil law; yet, he insisted, they nonetheless had unduly influenced the lay members of the court to convict the accused, which presumably meant [redacted] in particular.

What was the War Office's reaction? It no doubt felt put out by this troublesome individual whose intervention had caused considerable administrative chaos as a consequence of a questionable Divisional Court ruling. The Deputy DPS (A), Brigadier Lionel Burns, who was clearly a bad loser, wrote to Guy Lambert, the Assistant Under-Secretary at the War Office.⁷ What could be done about this fellow, enquired Burns. Lambert replied,

'Even if Mr [redacted] is guilty of maintenance, champerty or barratry [cue quick consultation of Osborne's Concise Law Dictionary for the distinctions between these rather archaic offences], I do not think it would be advisable for the War Office to move the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider the question of prosecuting him. If the only information we have is that contained in this article, it would be a very unsafe ground for action, as the article is full of such loose and incorrect statements. If we pursue a campaign against Mr [redacted] it may be attributed to fear of him on our part; and it may also give him a much desired advertisement. Unless, therefore, Mr [redacted] is really making himself a nuisance to you by his activities, as to which there is no evidence here, beyond the suggestion that he is 'forcing the legal department of the War Office to work overtime', whatever that means, I would advise leaving matters to the police whose business it is to see that the ordinary law of the land is not broken.'

█'s Crusade

So █ enjoyed his success unmolested and in fact took nine Army and Royal Air Force cases to the Lewis Committee of Enquiry into Court-Martial Procedure established in 1946.⁸ He was particularly exercised by the case of young Theodore Schurch, the RASC PW, who was convicted of treachery after the war and hanged at Pentonville on 4 January 1946, the day after William Joyce's execution. Ende complained that he and Schurch's father had only 48 hours to prepare a petition against sentence following confirmation, and to secure an interview with Colonel █, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, which took place the day before the execution.⁹ He insisted to the end that the JAG was wrong in stating that the death penalty in Schurch's case was mandatory. The schedule to the Treachery Act 1940 provided that a person subject to military law convicted under the Act was to be 'liable [emphasis added] to suffer the death penalty'. According to Ende the JAG was mistaken in failing to indicate that this word had offered the court a sentencing option. █ he believed, was therefore guilty of a legal misdirection prompting the suggestion of a miscarriage of justice. It was typical of █'s we shall see in a later example) to engage lawyers at their own game of seeking to draw subtle or significant (or, indeed, obscurantist) distinctions in the meaning of statutory words by the adoption of different 'canons of construction'. On some occasions, as we saw in █ he was successful in persuading the high priests of the law of the merits of his argument. In Schurch's case, however, his legal argument in his 'Memorandum', which was endorsed by Victor Collins MP in correspondence with the minister, was probably hopeless but in character.¹⁰

It would be tiresome (and unnecessary) to provide a full account of █'s torts in 'forcing... the War Office to work overtime'. Let us therefore select one post-war court martial which received wide publicity at the time as representative of the genre. It concerned the case of █, The Black Watch, who had been on guard duty at a Medical Reception Station (MRS) at Mulheim in Germany in 1950. Though the unfolding of events was somewhat complicated, the basic picture is that Linsell had fired at a truck in the back of which were two drunken policemen (with whom he had earlier been drinking beer in a cafe when he should have been on guard duty!). The truck had been driving slowly past the MRS and the drunken Germans were creating a noisy disturbance. The sentry, having previously

been told of the need to ensure the patients were not disturbed, ordered the driver to turn towards the guard room where his platoon commander could investigate. █ jumped on the running board of the vehicle; it moved off in the opposite direction; he fell off (or jumped off); ordered the driver three times to halt; and then fired five times, killing the policeman, █.

█ was court-martialled at Hubbelrath for murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging, though the court added a recommendation to mercy, as the guarding instructions from his superiors had been considered inadequate. A month later, the C-in-C BAOR, Lt-Gen Sir Charles Keightley, decided to withhold confirmation and █ immediately rejoined his regiment. The soldier's 'exclusive' story of what it felt like 'to walk back into life from the condemned cell' was splashed across the front page of the *Sunday Dispatch*.¹¹ His joy was short-lived, however, as sadly he died of meningitis the following year.

But why did █ withhold confirmation? One reason among others was that given inadequate guarding instructions received by █ a verdict of manslaughter as distinct from murder, together with a three-year prison sentence, was thought by the C-in-C to be about right (█ had, it was recognised, taken himself outside the scope of his duties as a sentry and had gone on to pursue what became a private quarrel with the policeman). However, despite his clear preferences, █ acknowledged that the confirming officer had no power, as he told the Secretary of State, John Strachey, to alter the court's finding.¹²

At this point, or more precisely a few days after the withholding of confirmation, █ now enters the scene. He wrote to Strachey alleging that what he considered to be legal defects in █'s trial mirrored precisely that 'multitude of irregularities which are, in my experience, the accompaniment of any court martial'. █ claimed (perhaps correctly) that confirmation had been withheld because otherwise 'certain of his [█] superiors would incur liability to trial also'.¹³ But the thrust of his letter raised one of the 'irregularities' with which he was obsessed – an obsession which was also repeated over 40 years later when he submitted evidence to the House of Commons Armed Forces Bill Select Committee of 1990–1991.

What he argued was that the provisions of section 6(3)(d) of the Army Act 1881 which were still in force in 1950, and which are now contained in section 63 of the current 1955 Act, had provided a maximum of two years imprisonment on conviction abroad in respect of any offence against the person or property of a member of the civil population of a country or territory outside the United Kingdom when the military accused was an active service.

Literally, of course, homicide is an offence against a person and in ██████ case the alleged offence did take place abroad while he was on active service. So why was he not charged under that section, asked ██████ who was no doubt aware of the provisions of section 41 of the 1881 Act, now section 70 of the 1955 Act, which enables servicemen to be tried by court martial for civil offences (except the most serious offences such as murder, if committed in the United Kingdom). The current *Manual of Military Law* states that the existing section 63, which does not define 'offence', applies to behaviour contrary to the law of the country in which the accused is serving outside the United Kingdom and which is not punishable by the law of England. In other words, it is meant to apply to some local, perhaps religiously-based or alcohol-prohibiting, law breach or which might upset local sensitivities. But going back chronologically the 1956 edition of the *Manual* was not so certain of this distinction. Section 63, it was suggested, could be used abroad if there was some uncertainty as to what civil offence had been committed; and going back even further, the 1929 edition of the *Manual* does not seem to draw any distinction at all between offences committed abroad on active service and which were punishable by English law, and those which were not so punishable. What of course seems to have happened is that Ende applied a literal construction to section 6(3)(d) of the 1881 Act and concluded that, notwithstanding the existence of section 41 (now section 70 of the 1955 Act) under which ██████ was actually tried, the prosecution should have charged him under section 6(3)(d) since the circumstances applied, literally, to his case (as, indeed, did section 41 of course).

As indicated above, this obsession by ██████ with the literal interpretation of statutory provisions (which ignored the alternative 'golden' rule or 'mischief' rules which judges sometimes invoke in order to identify the 'intention' of parliament) was revealed again in the midst of the Gulf War. The occasion was when ██████ submitted evidence to the 1990-91 Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill 1990-91.¹⁴ In his submission he drew the attention of the committee of the prosecution practice during the Second World War of charging soldiers under section 41 of the 1881 Act and not under section 6 of that Act, '...as if the offence had been committed in Piccadilly or Hyde Park instead of far from home under what may have been demoralised conditions'. In respect to the failure of the authorities to use section 6 of the 1881 Act in the ██████ case, ██████ was told in the usual revealing manner of the War Office that, 'The legal issues involved... are well known to the military authorities...'¹⁵

Three weeks later, following a parliamentary debate on the ██████ case and its implications for servicemen on guard duty, ██████ wrote to the veteran abolitionist MP, Sydney Silverman, who had indeed been told by the Secretary of State that ██████ as confirming officer had no power to alter the finding to manslaughter. ██████ however, pointed out to ██████ that a confirming officer, if he thought fit, could send back to the court martial, for the purpose of *revision*, its finding of murder and the court could then, if it so agreed, find the prisoner guilty of manslaughter and substitute a lesser sentence. In addition, as the finding in ██████ case had not been confirmed, he could have been retried, '...and I cannot imagine why this was not done in the case in question'.¹⁶

██████ was, of course, correct in noting that the confirming officer could send the finding and sentence back (once) for revision and accepted that the latter could not unilaterally alter the finding (though he could of course mitigate, remit, commute or suspend the sentence). Moreover the court could adhere to its original finding and thwart the confirming officer's rather obvious wishes. ██████ was also correct in saying that non-confirmation would permit a retrial yet the authorities were hardly likely to dispute that point. The issue was the policy one of whether it was fair or, on the other hand, oppressive to order a retrial; and given ██████ release, it is difficult to know what so perturbed ██████ that he thought a retrial was appropriate.¹⁷

Conclusions

Julian Putkowski, the author of the study of the First World War soldiers shot at dawn¹⁸ and who has been preparing a book on the ██████ case, knew ██████ quite well, before the latter's death about three years ago. Putkowski has vividly described him as a 'cadaverous sepulchral-voiced old retired estate agent, and unreconstructed Tory' whose grievance over his own wartime court martial was 'the last straw in terms of racial discrimination',¹⁹ which he felt he had experienced in the Army. ██████, had parents of different nationalities (██████ parents were German and British while ██████'s father was Swiss), 'but unlike Schurch, Ende did not incline towards HM's enemies'.

Instead he became a barrack-room amateur lawyer, pronouncing on the finer points of military justice and enjoying some limited success (or notoriety) in this regard; writing regularly to Whitehall officialdom; a private prosecutor against owners leaving abandoned vehicles in the street;²⁰ and an indefatigable writer to the local and national press on the merits and demerits of such exciting topics as rent and rates levels and builders' profits.²¹ Perhaps not all them count as 'lost (usually right-wing) causes', as

Julian described them to me. But [redacted] proved to be a challenge not only to the War Office, for even Julian could only tolerate him in small doses.

'I could take about an hour at a time of his courtesies before I began to suffer ear-ache as he plodded on, recounting details of court martial cases that stretched back half a century.'

And there, perhaps, the present author should take the hint and leave the subject; apart from noting one final point. And this is that, true to his character,

Ende proved both sufficiently determined (or mad?) and intensively prepared (in respect to the relevant legal principles) to represent himself successfully, as a *'litigant-in-person'*, at the House of Lords hearing in the Highbury Stadium rateable value case. Thus let us not only acknowledge the individual who took on and defeated the War Office (and Arsenal FC). Let, also, all those acquainted with the military justice system, in whichever capacity(!), pay homage to the remarkable [redacted] and to his legally qualified successors who are forcing today's military lawyers to work overtime!

NOTES

- 1 'Court-Martial Jurisdiction and ex-Service Personnel: The "Boydell Gap" (1948) Revisited', *Journal of Legal History*, Vol 21, No 3, December 2000, pp 67-84.
- 2 The three-year limit did not apply to cases of mutiny or desertion.
- 3 *Evening Standard*, 26 February 1948.
- 4 *Star*, 27 February 1948.
- 5 The present author is currently preparing a study of this case.
- 6 *Sunday Dispatch*, 11 April 1948.
- 7 Public Record Office (PRO), LCO55/100, 19 April 1948.
- 8 *Report of the Army and Air Force Courts-Martial Committee 1946* (chairman, Mr Justice Lewis), Cmd 7608 (1949).
- 9 Information from Julian Putkowski who is preparing a study of the [redacted] case.
- 10 (PRO) LCO55/99/1, note to JAG, 18 February 1946.
- 11 *Sunday Dispatch*, 25 June 1950.
- 12 (PRO) W032/17168, note by [redacted] accompanying letter to [redacted], 22 June 1950.
- 13 *Idem*, [redacted], 28 June 1950.
- 14 *Special Report from the Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill, Session 1990-91*, House of Commons Paper 179, 24 April 1991, pp 175-6.
- 15 (PRO) W032/17168 [redacted], 5 July 1950.
- 16 *Idem*, [redacted], 17 July 1950.
- 17 For an example of a controversial post-war re-trial arising out of one of the RAF demobilisation protests in India in 1946, see the case of LAC Atwood. His plea in bar of trial, that his offence had been condoned by his commanding officer, had been accepted by the first court martial. However the confirming officer sent the case back for re-trial (technically for a trial for the first time since a confirming officer had no power to withhold confirmation from an acquittal). At the new hearing Atwood was found guilty but on this occasion non confirmation by the Air Officer Commanding worked to his advantage and he was released as a free man. For discussion see D N Pritt, *The Autobiography of D N Pritt, Part Two: Brasshats and Bureaucrats*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1966, pp 237-53.
- 18 Julian Putkowski and Julian Sykes, *Shot at Dawn*, London: Leo Cooper, new and revised edition, 1992.
- 19 Putkowski to author, 3 October 2000. See also note 10.
- 20 [redacted] *The Times*, 17 June 1964.
- 21 See, for example, his correspondence in *The Times*, 18 July 1959; 6 July 1965; and 15 December 1980.

MORAL COMPONENT

Threats to the British Army's Ethos

Second Lieutenant [REDACTED] ROYAL
SCOTS

The ethos of the Army is defined in ADP 5 as, 'That spirit which inspires soldiers to fight. It derives from and depends on the high degrees of commitment, self sacrifice and mutual trust which together are essential to the maintenance of morale'. What pressures will the Army face over the next 10 years that might undermine its ethos?'

*Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
Stretch'd his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy.
The babe hung crying to his nurse's breast,
Scared at the dazzling helm, and nodding crest.*

Homer, *Iliad*, Book VI

THE BRITISH ARMY OF THE POST COLD WAR ERA HAS undergone and continues to undergo what Christopher Dandeker has described as 'one of the most dramatic periods of change in [its] history'.¹ The so called peace dividend of the 'New World Order' has seen defence cuts reduce force levels and spending to new lows in order answer to a perceived increase in public demand for money to be spent elsewhere other than in maintaining a highly potent armed force to repel a foe which no longer exists. This peace dividend gave way towards the end of the 1990s to a far more radical change in affairs for Britain's military. This challenge was not to the size of or amount of money to be spent on the military, but its ethos – the very character and mentality upon which its fighting spirit is founded. This challenge can be summarised as what Sidney Jary called 'the lunatic application of political correctness'.²

The British Army's ethos is defined by Army Doctrine Publication 5 (ADP 5) as shown above, and we shall for the purposes of this essay accept this definition, as it stands as the view with which the Army has of itself.³ ADP 5 sets out what it calls 'The Military Covenant' which can be summarised as the 'mutual obligation... between the nation, the Army and each individual soldier'.⁴ It is therefore the solid bond which ties the civilian society of the nation with the military society of the Army. This essay suggests that it is the breaking down of this bond and the failure to appreciate the contra-distinct natures of civil and military society, which poses the greatest threat to the British Army's ethos over the next ten years.

It is a constant of civilised society that it requires an uncivilised armed force to protect it. It is the old adage that good men sleep whilst rough men stand and guard the door. Homer's allegory of the armour of Hector frightening his own son away shows that this has long been an accepted view in western society. Historically nations have viewed their armies as menaces to society only tolerated because of their inevitable necessity.⁵ It is from these roots that the concept of a 'Military Covenant' grew. Society allowed the military a relatively free rein in how it conducted and ran itself internally in return for its services which demanded extensive and often ultimate personal sacrifice from those serving.

It is not the case that military society has ever been totally divorced from civil society. The nature of a society determines the nature of the war it wages and thus by implication must define the nature and hence the ethos of its armed forces. Military society has always, however, been permitted to co-exist with its civil parent on different terms for reasons of operational effectiveness.

* * *

ONE IS THEREFORE IMMEDIATELY CHALLENGED BY THE question as to what has changed in recent times for this no longer to be the case? The beginnings of an answer to this question may be found in the increased politicisation of the American and British militaries in the post-1945 world. Political control of the armed forces is well established in western society. If we accept, as is commonly the case, Bismarck's interpretation of Clausewitz's linking of war to political aims then we must accept a definite amount of politicisation of military hierarchy. It is the magnitude of this politicisation which has increased since the Second World War.

The horrors of World War II and its immediacy both in terms of personal experience and in terms of reporting to those outside or on the periphery of experience meant that there was a call for military society to be liberalised, and thus civilised, to prevent such a catastrophe occurring again. Whilst Prussian militarism had long been admired throughout the rest of Europe, the World Wars were a catastrophe for which the distinctive nature of German military society and its influence on civil society was largely blamed. It was a case, as Ferenbach put it, of society '*confusing the plumbers with the men who pulled the chain*'.⁶ This in concert with the fact that '*the generals could not have retained their new popularity by antagonising the public and suddenly popularity was very important to them*' meant that generals became political figures on a new scale and in a nature different from historical precedents such as the Duke of Wellington.⁷

This increased politicisation of the military meant that the military hierarchy was less robust in its resistance to social pressures implemented by politicians fighting for votes. During the years of the Cold War this pressure to change was held in check by the perceived reality of imminent war with the Warsaw pact. This direct foe justified both massive defence spending and the maintenance and tolerance of the '*rough men at the door*'. With the end of the east-west tension the British public largely imagined the justification for large armed forces with separate identities and a unique ethos as unnecessary and not only expensive but also morally undesirable. Now the check of imminent world war was removed, the politicised military which was protected by this threat of war now found itself exposed to the ravages of politicians hungry to capitalise on the expected peace dividend.

Throughout the 1990s the Armed Forces were cut back to reflect what George Bush described as '*The New World Order*'. No longer requiring massive armies to fight the red hordes from the east, slim-lined armies were instead deployed on peace support, peace keeping and under the increasing umbrella of peace enforcement. The increase in deployments and a worsening overstretch in the British Army did nothing to persuade the public that its armed forces were in fact

as vital now as ever. This change did not really touch, however, the fundamental ethos of the Army. The challenges to that were to develop towards the end of the 1990s, when cutbacks had reached their limit.

* * *

CIVIL SOCIETY AT THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM IS AN increasingly individualistic construct, with a greater sense of individual right than of collective responsibility. The increasingly litigious nature of society coupled with the growing prevalence of the delegation of moral definition to the lowest level has bred a society in which the ethos of the army, that of '*high degrees of commitment, self-sacrifice and mutual trust*'⁸ is increasingly alien. This has coincided with an increased fluidity of political and military decision making such that decisions on military matters increasingly are dictated by politicians with voter-orientated concerns.⁹

Academics who attack military society and the ethos it treasures often miss the key difference between civil and military society which has given rise to this distinctive disparity. An example of such misunderstanding can be found in Ficarrotta's assertion that the moral dilemmas which service persons face are no different to those which, for example, a doctor might face. Ficarrotta asserts that moral integrity is required of a doctor whilst he or she executes their role of a doctor but to cheat on their spouse does not affect their performance as a doctor.¹⁰ Ficarrotta fails to understand that military society is such that a moral or societal failing by a member of the Armed Forces can lead to a loss of trust within his team which can ultimately equate to a loss in combat effectiveness and hence the loss of life. The stakes being dealt with in military society are that much higher. The doctor does not live with, share a shell scrape with and rely on for protection with his or her patient. Ficarrotta fails to understand military life at quite a fundamental level, in common with many who lobby for change.

The lobby for change draws strength from the fact that there is a decreasing experience of the military both in civil society and in its political representatives. In 1970, 216 out of 630 (over one-third) of MPs elected to the House of Commons recorded military service whereas at the last general election (1997) only 63 out of 658 (less than 10%) recorded any military service.¹¹ The societal urge to create a more egalitarian military coupled with an ignorance of matters military in politicians led to the abolition of the British Empire Medal in 1993, and the award of the MBE to both officers and other ranks alike. As a result, whereas in 1993, just before these reforms, 61 MBEs were awarded to officers and 120 corresponding decorations to other ranks, in 1997 the numbers had dropped to 58 MBEs to officers and only 50 to other ranks as it was, and continues to be, the case that '*the more prominent nature of officers jobs*

will inevitably ensure that they are more likely to be identified and decorated, particularly in peacetime'.¹² The reforms to liberalise military society failed to take into account the true nature of both military society, its ethos and also its functional nature.

We must at this stage reiterate that it is not the case that military society can ever exist completely apart from civil society. It simply must not be co-equated. The more rational calls for change acknowledge the distinctive nature of military life and seek to reflect societal change in a militarily compatible nature. Lustig-Prean, a campaigner for the abolition of the ban on homosexuals in the armed forces acknowledged that 'I agree wholeheartedly that the Armed Forces should not be a vehicle for social experimentation or social change. I agree that the Armed Forces need to be different'.¹³ The case for the abolition of the ban on homosexuals was that the lack of acceptance in military society which would undermine combat effectiveness was no longer an issue. It was not argued that it was never an issue in most circles, simply that it was no longer an issue.

It is this question of combat effectiveness which must remain the over-riding concern and which for those with little knowledge of military matters is difficult to understand. The argument for the introduction of women into front line units is based almost purely on an egalitarian liberal concept of equality for all regardless of gender. It pays no heed to the requirement of combat effectiveness in these frontline units. The Army is forced to indulge in feasibility studies to try and explain in clear numbers a fact which those with no

understanding of military matters struggle to comprehend. There is a failure on the part of certain lobbyists in society and in politics to understand that 'liberal democracy depends on the well-being of institutions that cannot be refashioned on liberal lines without their effectiveness being greatly impaired'.¹⁴ Civil society seems to be forgetting that it is free to indulge in its own 'socially egalitarian, hedonistic, litigious and risk averse culture'¹⁵ precisely because military society is not. It is here that the relationship that ADP 5 refers to as the 'Military Covenant' is breaking down. Civil society is losing the respect for military society which is its side of the bargain, and which secures the sacrifice of the military.

* * *

THE GREATEST THREAT TO THE ARMY'S ETHOS IN THE next ten years is the breakdown in what ADP 5 defines as the 'Military Covenant', that bond between nation and military society which binds the Army in service to and for the protection of, civil society. The attempts to force a civil style societal system on the military would indeed be an 'error of some magnitude'.¹⁶ Dandeker concludes that the military must

'persuade civilian publics that any divergence from wider social values rests not simply on prejudice or the persistence of tradition but on sober judgment of what is required for a militarily effective organization'.¹⁷

It behoves the Army to ensure that this is the case.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- von Clausewitz, C, *On War*, Chatham: Wordsworth Editions 1997.
 Dandeker, C, 'New times for the military: some sociological remarks on the changing role and structure of the armed forces of the advanced societies', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol 45, Issue 4, December 1994
 Ficarrotta, J, 'Are Military Professionals Bound by a Higher Moral Standard?' *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol 24, No 1, Autumn 1997.
 Frost, G (ed), *Not Fit To Fight - The cultural subversion of the armed forces in Britain and America* London, The Social Affairs Unit, 1998.
 —, 'The folly of imposing a liberal vision on a necessarily illiberal society', *RUSI Journal*, June 1999

- Homer, *The Iliad* (trans Pope), London, OUP, 1919.
 Howard, M, *War in European History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977.
 —, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981.
 Jary, S, 'Military Ethos - What has happened to us?', *British Army Review* No 125
 Keegan, J, *A History Of Warfare*, London, Pimlico 1993)
 —, *War And Our World - The Reith Lectures 1998*, London, Pimlico, 1999.
 Lustig-Prean, D, 'People are discharged for one aspect of their private lives, not for any misconduct', *RUSI Journal*, June 1999.
 Army Doctrine Publication Volume 5 *Soldiering, The Military Covenant*, February 2000.
Serve To Lead, Prepared for the RMA Sandhurst.

NOTES

- 1 Dandeker, *op cit*, p 650.
- 2 Jary, *op cit*, p 7.
- 3 ADP 5, *Soldiering*, p3-2.
- 4 *Ibid*, p1-2.
- 5 Howard, M, *War in European History*, *op cit*, p 55.
- 6 Ferenbach, T *This Kind of War: Korea, A study in unpreparedness*. Quoted in Frost, *Not Fit To Fight*, *op cit*, p 47.
- 7 *Ibid*, p47
- 8 ADP 5, p3-2.

- 9 Dandeker, *ibid*, p 644.
- 10 Ficarrotta, *op cit*, p 69.
- 11 Brazier, J, 'Who will defend the defenders? - How the ignorance of Parliament and the Judiciary undermines the military ethos', in Frost, *Not Fit To Fight*, p63.
- 12 *Ibid*, p 64.
- 13 Lustig-Prean, *op cit*, p 91.
- 14 Frost, 'Folly', *op cit*, p 93.
- 15 *Ibid*, p 93.
- 16 *Ibid*, p93.
- 17 Dandeker, *ibid*, p 652.

HISTORY

The Chindits and Special Forces Manpower

IN THIS ARTICLE I INTEND TO EXAMINE THE QUANTITY and quality of British Army manpower absorbed by Special Forces during the Second World War. Although in the autumn of 1944 only a very small proportion of the British Army's manpower was explicitly devoted to Special Forces (ie the Army Air Corps), appearances can be very deceptive. Two points need to be appreciated. A considerable quantity of manpower in the other arms, the Infantry especially, was in fact devoted to Special Forces. The quality of manpower devoted to Special Forces was out of all proportion to the quantity of manpower devoted.

As their name implies, Special Forces were forces trained and equipped to undertake special tasks, ie tasks believed to be beyond the capability of ordinary forces. At the beginning of the war the British Army had no Special Forces. During the war there was a proliferation of Special Forces in the British Army; many Special Forces were created and several grew to a considerable size. They were responsible for absorbing a large quantity of the high quality manpower at the British Army's disposal. They consequently distorted the British Army's manpower distribution and contributed to its manpower problems especially the shortage of infantry, which reached crisis proportions in the autumn of 1944.

Let me begin with a quote. Within the British Army during the war there were many calls on manpower besides the infantry, such as the RA, the REME, the RAC and the RE. All were 'legitimate' demands. What was 'not legitimate, or even sensible', in the view of John Terraine (a view which is shared by many soldiers and historians), was 'the creaming off' of good men 'into various "private armies" by means of which, it was naively supposed, set-piece battle with its heavy loss could be avoided'. These 'private armies' included: the Commandos ('most famous'), the Airborne Forces ('worst of all the "offenders", it must be said'), the Chindits ('aberration'), the Long Range Desert Group, the SAS ('though few in numbers, helped to "compound the felony"') etc...¹

* * *

IN THE LATTER PART OF WWII THE BRITISH ARMY HAD either in its Order of Battle or under its direct command a great number and a bewildering variety of Special Forces or 'private armies'. In mid-1944 the British Army's Order of Battle included nineteen Brigades of Special Forces. There were:

- Three Chindit Brigades (formed by the conversion of 70th Division, 14 and 16 with 3rd Indian Division; 23 with Main HQ Special Force but chopped to XXXIII Corps) in India;

- Four Commando Brigades (1, with three Army and one Royal Marine (RM) Commandos in NW Europe; 2, with two Army and two RM Commandos in Italy; 3, with two Army and two RM Commandos in India; 4, with four RM Commandos in NW Europe – plus one Inter-Allied Commando in NW Europe);
- Three Brigades (155, 156, 157 with nine battalions) in 52nd (Lowland) Division – plus one battalion (the Lovat Scouts) – in the mountain role in the UK;
- Seven Brigades (two Airlanding and five Parachute; with twenty-one battalions including one Canadian) in 1st Airborne Division (in the UK), 6th Airborne Division (in NW Europe) and 2 Independent Parachute Brigade (in the Mediterranean); and
- Two Amphibious Brigades (29 and 72 of the British Indian 36th Division) in India (with eight battalions).²

Not in the British Army's Order of Battle but trained, equipped and commanded by the British Army were six Brigades of Special Forces:

- 77 (Indian), 111 (Indian) and 3 (West African) Brigades, converted into Chindits;
- 1 (Polish) Parachute Brigade; the British-French-Belgian SAS Brigade; and
- 50 (Indian) Parachute Brigade, which was to be expanded into 44th Indian Airborne Division by the conversion of two Chindit Brigades when the Chindits were wound up in 1945.

77 (Indian), 111 (Indian), and 3 (West African) Brigades contained British, Gurkha, Burmese and Nigerian battalions. 1 (Polish) Parachute Brigade contained three Polish battalions. The SAS Brigade contained two British battalions, two French battalions, one Belgian company and one British squadron. 50 (Indian) Parachute Brigade contained one Indian and two Gurkha battalions. A grand total of twenty-five Brigades of Special Forces with ninety-one battalions or the equivalent:

- Twenty-five Chindit (seventeen British, three Nigerian, four Gurkha and one Burmese);
- Seventeen Commando (seven Army, nine RM and one Inter-Allied);
- Ten Mountain;

- Twenty-seven Airborne (twenty British, one Canadian, one Indian, two Gurkha and three Polish)
- Four SAS (two British and two French); and
- Eight Amphibious.

As there were nine rifle battalions in an Infantry division, in the summer of 1944, the British Army possessed, either in its Order of Battle or under its direct command, more than ten Infantry Divisions-worth of Special Forces.

* * *

AS THEIR NAME IMPLIES, THE ROLE OF THE LONG RANGE Penetration Groups (or the Chindit Brigades, as they were widely known) was to mount Long Range Penetration (LRP) operations, ie to penetrate deep behind enemy lines and attack enemy communications, being supplied by air throughout. Specifically, they were intended to penetrate behind Japanese lines and attack Japanese communications in occupied Burma. They were thus trained and equipped to operate in jungle terrain and tropical climate. After the Airborne Forces, the Chindits were the largest of Britain's private armies in WWII; they were, and remain the most controversial. Although the creation and expansion of the Chindits did not affect the manpower situation in North West Europe and Italy, the Chindits are not only paradigmatic of the British Army's Special Forces in WWII but they also seriously affected the manpower situation in the Far East. It should never be forgotten that, besides North West Europe and Italy, in 1944 the British Army was also fighting – and experiencing an infantry crisis – in India and Burma.

The inventor and first commander of the Chindits was Lieutenant-Colonel (later Acting Major-General) Orde Wingate, who arrived in Burma in March 1942 and who died there in March 1944. In June 1942 Wingate was allowed to form 77 (Indian) Brigade to test his theories of fighting the Japanese.³ In the first LRP operation (Op LONGCLOTH, February to June 1943) 77 (Indian) Brigade comprised: 150 special troops in No. 142 Commando Company (composed of volunteers from infantry and RE); 2nd Burma Rifles; 3rd/2nd Gurkha Rifles; and 13th The King's (Liverpool) Regiment. It had one mule transport company and eight RAF sections in support.⁴

In the run-up to Op LONGCLOTH, 250 men from the British battalion (including the Commanding Officer) were Returned to Unit (RTU), ie weeded out by Wingate. Despite suffering an effective personnel loss of 80% – out of 3,000 men who went in, only 2,182 came out and of these only 600 were fit for

further active duty; out of the 721 in the British battalion who went in, 384 came out in 1943 and 71 were released from Japanese captivity in 1945⁵ – the first Chindit operation was surprisingly judged a success. Another Brigade, 111 (Indian), comprising 1st Cameronians, 2nd King's Own and two battalions (3rd/4th and 4th/9th) of Gurkha Rifles) was added to Wingate's force by Wavell (Commander-in-Chief in India), an admirer of Wingate, while the operation was still in progress and its outcome unknown.⁶

Following Op LONGCLOTH (which, despite the appalling losses, at least showed that the Japanese were not invincible: which was more than could be said for the concurrent operations in the Arakan), Wingate was hailed by the British press as *'the Clive of Burma'*. On 24 July 1943 Churchill sent a minute to Ismay praising Wingate in glowing terms and requesting his immediate return home for consultation.⁷ Meeting, and being very impressed with Wingate on the evening of 4th August, Churchill decided on the spot to take Wingate with him that very night to the Anglo-American Conference assembling at Quebec.⁸ At Quebec, Wingate's advocacy and Churchill's backing resulted in a decision to create a Special Force to undertake LRP on a large-scale, supported by squadrons of the United States Army Air Force. Instructions were issued to GHQ India accordingly.

Wingate had originally asked for his force to be expanded to six brigades; he had subsequently amended this to eight. GHQ India was instructed to provide six brigades at once and two more later. Auchinleck (Wavell's successor as Commander-in-Chief in India) objected in a telegram dated 19 August 1943, a document termed *'moderate and masterly'* by Sykes, Wingate's most balanced biographer. The third section on the manpower question contained the strongest criticism. If the instructions received were met in full this could only be done by serious disruption of the existing forces, Auchinleck wrote, it would be necessary before anything else to break up 70th Infantry Division, which had a long and distinguished record. 1st Indian Division, being of the animal and motor transport type, would have to be similarly dislocated, and the provision of three British battalions would disorganise a third division, quite apart from what would follow the provision of about 3,500 RAF personnel, engineers, signallers and other specialist troops. This, Auchinleck remorselessly continued, was calculated on the assumption that 100% of the troops provided would be found suitable for Chindit operations, whereas experience showed that only 60% were likely to survive the test of training, and then further depredations would have to be made. The expansion would have a calamitous effect on proposed or future operations. Confusion would follow the establishment of an independent Force HQ. Having proposed the formation of a

brigade from 81st West African Division, Auchinleck urged that this should be the limit of expansion, and concluded with an eloquent plea for the withdrawal of a policy which would do grave harm to an army already suffering in morale from frequent reorganisations. In a second telegram dated 21 August 1943, Auchinleck proposed a compromise: the whole of 81st West African Division should be converted to LRP but without breaking up the formation, keeping it intact under its existing command and staff. This would increase Wingate's force to five Brigades but would leave 70th Infantry Division unmolested. Wingate rejected both telegrams in no uncertain terms. In reply to Auchinleck's first telegram, Wingate wrote:

'There are in India to-day, and have been for a considerable time, something in the neighbourhood of a million men under arms'.

Wingate was either displaying his ignorance or being disingenuous. There may have been a million men in India, but only a small number would have been both suitable and available for Infantry duty in Burma. In reply to Auchinleck's second telegram, Wingate said he would not accept a West African Division but would accept a West African Brigade. At Quebec, although Wingate's call for eight brigades was placed on hold, it was finally decided to increase Wingate's force to six brigades by the conversion of 70th Infantry Division and a West African Brigade.⁹

The force envisaged totalled 26,500: 19,000 British and 7,500 Gurkhas and West Africans. A modest expansion had of course already begun with the creation of 111 (Indian) Brigade. However, as Auchinleck emphasised, the creation of the new force would considerably strain British manpower resources in India, especially as 40% of the personnel of units earmarked for conversion were weeded out as unfit for the rigours of LRP. On 25 August the break up of 70th Infantry Division was ordered so as to create Wingate's Special Force, which was to be known for cover purposes as 3rd Indian Division. To complete manpower requirements it was necessary to transfer two more infantry battalions and break up two armoured regiments.¹⁰ When ready to implement his masterplan (Op THURSDAY) in March 1944, Wingate's Special Force comprised: 3 (West African), 14, 16, 23, 77 (Indian), and 111 (Indian) Brigades. With the addition of Force HQ and the large quantity of attached troops, Special Force numbered a little less than 23,000. This figure includes 23 Brigade, which (fortunately for its personnel, as events proved) was withdrawn and not deployed in Op THURSDAY because of the Japanese invasion of Assam, but excludes the brigade-sized 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), US Army (later widely

known as *'Merrill's Marauders'*), which was likewise withdrawn and deployed directly under Northern Combat Area Command. No 1 Air Commando, USAAF was not under command of Special Force but until its disbandment in May 1944 it was exclusively used in support of Special Force. Excluding the unused 23 Brigade and the various oddments, Special Force comprised twenty battalions: thirteen British (including one ex-RA and one ex-RAC); three West African; and four Gurkha.¹¹ If 23 Brigade and some fragmented units are included, the total rises to twenty-four battalions in the infantry role.¹²

Perry terms the creation of the Special Force *'The biggest organisational disruption which the British Army in India suffered'* during WWII.¹³ The creation of Special Force involved the break up of a good division with a good record: 70th Infantry Division, which was composed entirely of 1st or 2nd, ie Regular, battalions and which had successfully defended Tobruk in 1941. The re-organisation of 70th Infantry Division began on 6th September; it handed over its formations and units on 25th October; it was disbanded on 24th November 1943. Its 14 Brigade was part of Special Force from 25th October 1943 to 31st October 1944; from 1 February to 6 May 1944 it was assigned to 3rd Indian Division and deployed on Op THURSDAY. 16 Brigade was part of Special Force from 25 October 1943 to 31 March 1945; from 1 February to 6 May 1944 it was assigned to 3 Indian Division and deployed in Op THURSDAY. 23 Brigade was likewise part of Special Force from 25 October 1943 to 31 March 1945; from 1 February to 2 April 1944 it was assigned to 3rd Indian Division but not deployed in Op THURSDAY, being placed under XXXIII Indian Corps from 3 April to 10 August 1944 for deep operations against the Japanese thrust directed on Kohima and Dimapur.¹⁴

As there were nine infantry battalions in an infantry division, Special Force was equivalent to between two and a half and three infantry divisions. Yet Special Force did not have the combat power of two and a half or three infantry divisions. An infantry battalion converted to Chindits produced two columns each of four rifle platoons, ie eight rifle platoons compared to twelve in an ordinary infantry battalion – a reduction of 33% in combat power.¹⁵ Being smaller and more lightly armed than Infantry Brigades, Chindit Brigades (like Commando and Parachute Brigades) lacked endurance and robustness. The five Chindit Brigades which were actually deployed during Op THURSDAY, from the fly-in of

the force on 5th March to the capture of Mogaung on 27th June 1944, suffered appalling losses from the enemy, from sickness and from malnutrition, and were rendered hors de combat for many months afterwards. When the Chindits were flown back to India in August, many of them *'were utterly exhausted and suffering severely from disease'*.¹⁶

* * *

TO UNDERSTAND FULLY THE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION IN military circles in India to Special Force it is necessary to appreciate how drastically its creation depleted the infantry resources available in India. In mid-1944 there were sixty British rifle battalions in India,¹⁷ of which almost a quarter had been converted to Chindits. Understandably, those opposed to Special Force were particularly dismayed at the break up of 70th Infantry Division, containing nine Regular British rifle battalions. Slim (Commander of the 14th Army) wrote after the war:

*'I was convinced – and nothing I saw subsequently caused me to change my mind – that a battle-ried, experienced, well-knit British division, like the 70th, would have more effect against the Japanese than a special force of twice its size. Moreover, the 70th Division was the only British formation trained in jungle warfare. It was a mistake to break it up.'*¹⁸

However, not even Wingate's fiercest opponents could have foreseen that the Special Force would spend the period from the autumn of 1943 to the spring of 1944 in training;* would then see action for three or four months in the late spring and the early summer of 1944; would then spend the second half of 1944 and the first quarter of 1945 recuperating; and would then be judged superfluous and disbanded in the spring of 1945. It is a sad fact that, between its conversion from an ordinary brigade in the autumn of 1943 and the end of the war against Japan two years later, 14th Brigade – first Chindit, then Airlanding – saw action for a few months only.

Because of the heavy manpower wastage through sickness and battle sustained during the first half of 1944, by mid 1944 the British Army in the Far East was facing a manpower crisis. By that time most British infantry battalions in theatre were 18% below War Establishment. A proposal by Giffard (Commander-in-Chief of IIth Army Group) to increase the clearly inadequate infantry reinforcement pool in theatre was rejected by the War Office,

* It has been suggested that 111 (Indian) Brigade, which had been ordered to convert to the Chindit role in Summer 1943 (see above p 54) with a view to its being inserted in November 1943, was overtrained and declining in fitness when finally deployed (John Hedley (IO HQ 111 Bde), *Jungle Fighter*, Tom Donovan Publishing, 1997). Wavell's intention to alternate 77 and 111 Brigades in the LRP role made a great deal of sense; Auchinleck's proposal to convert one West Indian Brigade in addition would have made it possible to maintain a continuous LRP presence. Chindit operations on this basis, properly organised and conducting guerrilla, not main force operations, would have been sustainable and arguably would have produced results justifying the commitment. However, the success of Force 136 patrols in directing airstrikes on Japanese logistics in 1944-45, also described in Hedley's book, indicates that as much might have been achieved by very small numbers of high-quality SF. – Ed

who warned that they would not be able to maintain the existing level of the pool because of the demands of the war in Europe. In an attempt to improve the position, Auchinleck had already agreed to reduce the forces required for the defence of the NW Frontier of India and for internal security in India to well below what had formerly been regarded as the absolute minimum. Additionally, he had combed out all the AI men from garrison units and sedentary employment in India. There was consequently no further source on which to draw to meet the growing deficit in the Far East. By the end of June 1944 British infantry units in 14th Army were 3,500 short while the Special Force was 3,100 short: total 6,600. It was estimated that by 1 November 1944 infantry units would be 11,000 short while the Special Force would be 7,300 short: total 18,300 ie an increase of 11,700. As reinforcements in sight totalled only 7,100, the British Army in the Far East was facing a probable deficit of 11,200 in infantry units alone by the beginning of November. With the numbers at their disposal Mountbatten (Supreme Allied Commander in South East Asia) and Auchinleck found that it would be impossible to maintain the British infantry battalions allotted to Indian divisions, as well as the British 2nd Division, the British Indian 36th Division (technically an Indian division but comprising two British brigades), and the Special Force. They would therefore have to break up existing formations and units.¹⁹ Seen in the context of the acute manpower shortage – especially of infantry – which afflicted the British Army in the Far East during the latter part of the war, the disbandment of the Special Force in the spring of 1945 appears neither premature nor unjustified.

That infantry, especially British infantry, were at a premium in the Far East during the latter part of the war there is no doubt. Slim had to postpone his great offensive in autumn 1944 by two weeks partly because manpower, especially in British infantry, was becoming an anxiety. The flow of reinforcements from home was not nearly enough to keep my British units up to strength. As a result of dwindling numbers, British battalions in Indian divisions were becoming so weak that they could not be used equally with Indian units. This led to adverse comment from the Indians, who had to take a greater strain. Then, too, it was not possible to reinforce British battalions with men of their own regiments. This gravely detracted from the regimental spirit which has always been the strength of the British soldier, and morale was affected. So serious was the situation that divisional commanders were now calling for Indian battalions in place of British.

I asked that reinforcements from home should be speeded up, and that the several thousand British anti-aircraft artillerymen, locked up in the defence of

*rear airfields now unlikely to be seriously attacked, should be drafted into the infantry. I found that Admiral Mountbatten had this already in hand. In due course, the anti-aircraft gunners came, proving themselves to be worthy infantrymen. Even so, the strength of British infantry continued to fall, and I was more and more compelled to substitute Indian for British battalions in my divisions.*²⁰

* * *

SPECIAL FORCE SPENT THE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1944 TO March 1945 in India trying, unsuccessfully, to replace the heavy losses it had sustained in OP THURSDAY. As no task had been found for it, it was disbanded at the end of March 1945, a year after Wingate's death and nine months after its last major action. Two of its Brigades (14 and 77) had already been transferred to 44th Indian Airborne Division.²¹ The remainder of its manpower was transferred to other units. The more extreme supporters of the creation of the Special Force and the more extreme opponents of its disbandment tend to be startlingly ignorant of the contemporary manpower situation in the Far East. Wingate and the Chindits did not exist in a vacuum: British manpower, especially combat manpower, was at a premium in the Far East and there was never enough to go round. It is important to realise that the Far East had the lowest priority for manpower: during 1940–42 the defence of the UK had highest priority followed by the defence of Egypt; during 1943 it was the conquest of Italy; during 1944–45 it was the liberation of NW Europe. In short, the Burma campaign was fought with what could be spared from other theatres, if anything. The manpower situation in the Far East was compounded by three factors.

- Firstly, the remoteness of the theatre – hence the great time-lag between submitting reinforcement demands and, assuming any were available, receiving them. Hence also the need to recondition reinforcements after their arduous journey.
- Secondly, the unhealthy nature of the climate in theatre. Hence the appalling sickness rate which rendered whole units hors de combat for months on end. During 1943 14.5% of the personnel in Burma had to be hospitalised because of sickness, in more than a third of cases by malaria.²²
- Thirdly, the length of time which units had served in theatre. Hence low morale and disciplinary problems.

Eventually, in an attempt to improve morale and discipline, a home leave scheme was instituted by the War Office (PYTHON) – which severely disrupted the manning of units. Given the severe manpower problems experienced by the British Army in the Far East during the war, especially during the latter part, the creation of the Special Force was both unjustified and harmful in manpower terms while its disbandment was both justified and overdue in manpower terms. Referring to the disbandment of the Chindits, Sykes acknowledges that *'their disappearance is easily defensible on grounds of strategy and commonsense'*.²³

Rooney, one of Wingate's more extreme apologists, completely fails to take account of the fact that the British Army was short of infantry in every theatre during the latter part of the war and that the shortage was most acute in the Far East. Rooney, who attacks in an almost hysterical fashion anyone (be he a superior, a subordinate or an historian of Wingate) who has dared to criticise his hero, is either unaware of or chooses to ignore the fact that Wingate's was not the only private army to be criticised and then – for compelling practical reasons – to be axed or re-rolled in this period. When it suits them, supporters of the Chindits claim that they were not (contrary to their title) *'Special'*, just members of ordinary formations and units doing extraordinary things. However, as the wise man said: *"If it quacks, it's a duck!"*

The Special Force may well have been created by the conversion of the ordinary battalions of an ordinary division (although, in fact, the 70th Infantry Division was a good division with a good record). However, after Wingate had subjected them to very rigorous training; and after Wingate had weeded out 40% of their strength and after they had been given (in fact if not in name) their own private air force totalling eleven squadrons; they had surely ceased to be ordinary.

It is perhaps fortunate that Wingate died when he did, with his illusions unshattered. He did not live to see that the decisive step on the road to victory in Burma was not taken by the Chindits in the jungles of Burma but by the depleted infantry of 14th Army, which fought and routed large numbers of the enemy in pitched battles at Imphal and Kohima in Assam. He did not live to see the latter stages of Op THURSDAY, during which the Chindits endured many frustrations and suffered heavy losses. Unfortunately for the Chindits, during the latter stages of Op THURSDAY Wingate's plans proved seriously flawed. There is no substance in Rooney's contention that the trials and tribulations of the latter stages of Op THURSDAY were directly due to the death of Wingate and his replacement by a less forceful and a less inspired commander (Lentaigne).²⁴ As Liddell Hart wrote: *'Even before that tragic accident his over-elaborate yet rather ill-thought*

out plan was becoming disjointed'.²⁵ According to Sykes, Lentaigne

'acquiesced in the logic of events, and his course was, so far as anyone can see, much the same as Wingate would have had to follow in the end'.²⁶

Rooney's contention that during the war Slim was an admirer of Wingate but was persuaded to criticise him after the war is equally unfounded. Slim was never an admirer of Wingate and, in any case, he was not a man who could be persuaded to do something he believed to be wrong.

At the end of his life, it appears that Wingate was suffering from *folie de grandeur*, wishing to expand the Chindits to outlandish proportions. On 11th February 1944 Wingate wrote to Mountbatten, sending him a long paper on the subject of *'the prospect of exploiting Operation THURSDAY'*. *'If Operation THURSDAY is a complete failure,'* Wingate wrote,

'LRP will lapse. If, however, it has any measure of success, another good division now in India should be turned over to LRP... The best prospect for the India Command will be to concentrate on progressing to Hanoi and Bangkok by the use of Airborne LRP Brigades... A campaign of this nature would require some twenty to twenty-five LRP Brigades in being, a total strength of 100,000 infantry of good calibre.'

He went on to propose that by means of *'an LRP thrust'* the army in Assam could not only occupy the Indo-Chinese peninsula but go much further and join hands with the Americans in the Pacific; he suggested that a whole army group turned Chindit would

'carry a chain of defended airports across China to the coast where it would meet up with the seaborne forces'.

Sykes admits that this is a *'curious document'* and suggests two explanations for it. Either Wingate's power of judgement had been *'damaged'* by a premature return to duty following illness, or Wingate was intent on preserving the Special Force *'in the face of a sudden and unexpected reverse'* and thus *'put forward the most extreme proposals he could devise'*.²⁷

It is open to dispute whether Wingate had parted company with reality or else was deliberately exaggerating. That Wingate's paper contained many absurdities is however not open to dispute. Bidwell highlights some:

'Such a force approximates to ten airborne divisions exclusive of the garrison troops, and if organized on Chindit lines would also contain about 20,000 mules. In June 1944 the combined resources of the