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From the Editor

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From the Editor

From *Parameters*, Spring 1998, pp. 2-3.

In This Issue . . .

Walter F. Ulmer suggests that indicators of morale problems, apparently caused or exacerbated by high operating tempo, changing expectations about quality of life, and similar potential disincentives to a military career, deserve serious attention from senior Army leaders. After comparing executive development concepts and practices in the Army and in business, he concludes that Army leader development could be enhanced by adjustments in the Army's education and promotion systems; in reporting unit readiness, and in policies and techniques for learning leadership on the job.

Richard K. Betts examines the tension within intelligence-gathering organizations between detecting what nations or individuals are doing, and answering questions about where, when, and why a crisis of interest to the United States might occur. He then explores the basic functions of an intelligence community--collection and analysis (he calls the latter the "more subjective, artful, and uncertain" of the two)--in terms of their relative cost, risk, and value to political and military decisionmakers at different phases of a crisis.

Ralph Peters describes an analytical structure, based on seven characteristics common to any society, that could be used by government and the private sector to enhance regional and national strategic assessments. Advocating the careful study of other cultures, he concludes that when dealing with non-US counterparts, "military operations and business partnerships are like dating--the advantage goes to the player who sees with the most clarity."

Russell W. Glenn evaluates the process by which US Army operational doctrine presently is being revised. His historical survey and assessment of the current process suggest that there is still time to change the composition and some definitions of the principles that will guide US soldiers in the conduct of land force operations involving armed conflict, humanitarian support, or both.

David G. Harris and Richard D. Stewart review US maritime surge capacity and the assumed participation of ocean shipping in strategic deployments that support US national security strategy. They conclude that the decline of the US-flag fleet and changes in international treaties and conventions governing ocean transport may be eroding US capacity to support an operation similar to the 1990-91 Gulf War, to say nothing of carrying out the "two MRC" strategy.

Timothy L. Thomas uses US and Russian sources to explore the importance of the human in a "system of systems." He notes fundamental differences between US policy and that of the Russians, who center their analyses on the vulnerabilities of the individuals within the communications and automated data management systems upon which US theories of future conflict depend.

Lewis Sorley explores several aspects of senior leadership in his article on US strategy in Vietnam. His account of the activities of General Harold K. Johnson and the team of colonels who supported the then-Army Chief of Staff during a particularly difficult period is a compelling tale of the art and science of strategic leadership at the highest levels of government.

Robert P. Haffa, Jr., and James H. Patton, Jr., provide a concise summary of the enduring value of wargames to the US armed services. They show how and why such activities can contribute substantially to the evolution of US national security strategy and to the development of the doctrine and materiel that will emerge during the first decades of the next century.

Robert B. Killebrew looks at the Army's new family of wargames, the Army After Next series, and analyzes the purpose, conduct, and outcomes of the first two games. He observes that the games seek "to describe a range of

capabilities that the future joint and combined force will bring to operations in the first decades" of the 21st century.

Review Essays in this issue include Lawrence G. Kelley's account of reassessments of Germany's role in World War II that have recently appeared or are still appearing in that country and elsewhere as books, a photo display, and television documentaries; an examination of recent books on Korea by Donald W. Boose, Jr., accompanied by a lengthy essay on trends in Korean historiography by James I. Matray, and Russell W. Ramsey's fourth annual appraisal of strategic thinking on Latin America.

The Best-Laid Plans of Mice and Men . . .

Plans can go astray because of outdated, flawed, or forgotten assumptions. Several of the authors in this issue examine--explicitly or implicitly--the importance of assumptions in the development of policy or strategy and in the ensuing strategic or operational planning. Walter F. Ulmer, for example, asks if our officer evaluation system should continue to be based on the premise that the observations of one's superiors in the chain of command are both necessary and sufficient to prepare a performance evaluation, or if we ought to examine closely the benefits that business and industry claim to derive from peer and subordinate input in the evaluation process.

Beneath Ralph Peters' foray into cultural comparison lie the unstated assumptions of which we are all prisoners when we confront people from other cultures. David G. Harris and Richard D. Stewart explore the stated or implied assumptions that conditioned the most recent (1995) official review of US surge sealift capabilities. They discuss in detail recent changes in key assumptions related to the US Merchant Marine that could affect our ability to carry out national security strategy.

Finally, articles by Robert B. Killebrew and by Robert P. Haffa, Jr., and James H. Patton, Jr., are about the durability of strategic and operational assumptions and the need to identify and evaluate them in an orderly and productive manner. The documented benefits of the wargames and associated planning conducted by all the US armed services between 1920 and 1940 demonstrate that such activities are much more than expensive peacetime intellectual exercises. For information on managing and reviewing assumption-based planning, see pp. 137-38.

Morale . . .

Several articles in the issue refer directly or indirectly to morale as a significant leadership challenge. Yet one must ask whether advocates of conflict at a distance understand the importance of the morale of those who serve in the active and reserve components of the US armed services. That we should take advantage of technology that gives US forces decisive advantages--strategic, operational, and tactical--goes without saying. But in the struggle for resources, who is the advocate for the morale of the servicemen and women who are to use the technology? Admiral Ernest J. King opined, "Machines are nothing without men. Men are nothing without morale." Perhaps Russell Glenn's proposal that "morale" be added to the Army's principles of operations merits serious consideration. -- JJM

Reviewed 11 February 1998. Please send comments or corrections to carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil