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Commentary & Reply

From *Parameters*, Autumn 2000, pp. 126-35.

THE LANDMINE DEBATE

To the Editor:

Colonel John F. Troxell's précis of the landmine issue, "Landmines: Why the Korea Exception Should Be the Rule" (*Parameters*, Spring 2000), is in desperate need of clarification. As the organization that founded the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, coordinated it for its first seven years of existence, launched the US Campaign to Ban Landmines, and was a leader in the worldwide effort to gain compliance with the Ottawa Convention banning antipersonnel landmines, the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation is proud of the role it has played in both the NGO community and as a bridge to the US military in attempting to find a resolution to this humanitarian crisis. We have firsthand experience with this issue: we operate prosthetic clinics and conduct landmine awareness programs in war-recovering societies (Vietnam, Cambodia, Angola, El Salvador, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone) that treat landmine victims.

Colonel Troxell paints with a broad brush: "The [Ottawa] Convention served unique political purposes, rather than humanitarian needs. It was negotiated without any serious consideration to security concerns. It also was negotiated in a forum with large numbers of NGOs protesting aspects of the US negotiating position and otherwise criticizing the United States as being part of the landmine problem." This is a half-truth. The international ban movement did not write the Ottawa Convention: a number of important US NATO allies did. Additionally, this organization and many others worked diligently--and continue to work--to gain US acceptance of the treaty. We were critically aware of America's legitimate national security concerns and we would not have sought US participation if we believed that the ban endangered one American soldier. It does not. Moreover, we made certain that the convention did not ban antitank or command-detonated mines. In 1996, 15 senior retired military officers signed an open letter in *The New York Times* supporting our efforts.

The United States does not deploy non-self-destructing "dumb" mines and does not use them in combat. Those mines that it does have stockpiled in Korea will be used in the case of a North Korean invasion. But there is a lively debate inside the Pentagon on whether even those mines are needed to defend South Korea--and an alternative command-detonated system that is far more effective will soon be deployed to replace them. Other than this, the only thing keeping the United States from joining the landmine treaty is its deployment of "mixed" antitank/antipersonnel (AT/AP) landmine systems. These are illegal under the treaty. But far more lethal and effective anti-armor weapons are now being developed and deployed to replace them. We have no objection to the development of these weapons--they are discriminating and effective precision weapons that don't target civilians, don't maim children, and don't leave a battlefield strewn with dangerous submunitions at the end of a war that could endanger the lives of American troops. (For Colonel Troxell's information, these new weapons are far more effective tank killers than the mixed AT/AP systems we currently use.)

Colonel Troxell would have your readers believe that landmine ban activists are only interested in leading campaigns "to weaken the US military by having certain technologies or methods banned or proscribed." This is bunk. None of the organizations that led or are leading the landmine movement have targeted any other "weapon" or "method" for a new campaign. Instead, to be quite blunt, we want to use the landmine issue as a way of stigmatizing the idea that it is somehow acceptable to target civilians in war. We're not the only ones who think this is a problem--the US military also thinks it is a problem. Our military commanders go to great lengths to ensure that the weapons they deploy and the tactics they use minimize civilian casualties. We applaud this effort.

Parameters has done its readers a disservice by printing Colonel Troxell's misinformed polemic on the landmine campaign. He would have your readers believe that all humanitarians are recycled 1960s hand-holding radicals who

hate America and are just waiting for the opportunity to strip it of its defenses. The leaders and founders of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, who served their nation honorably in Vietnam--and who understand that the unalterable truth about landmines is that they kill American soldiers--would respectfully disagree.

Mark Perry

Associate Director, Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation
and author of *Four Stars*, a history of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff
Washington, D.C.

The Author Replies:

In response to Mr. Perry's letter, claiming to offer clarification and to rectify a disservice to the readers of *Parameters*, I will address two issues: the military effectiveness and necessity of current antipersonnel landmine (APL) systems, and the potential hazard of allowing single-focused, advocacy organizations to dictate US national security policy.

As I stated in the opening paragraph of my article, the APL issue is contentious and controversial. Therefore, it should not be surprising to encounter a range of views, even within the military community. Lively debate is good, but no one should doubt that the overwhelming majority of both active and retired military leaders support retaining some form of APL capability that is currently banned by the Ottawa Treaty. In the article I cite the "64 star" letter by 16 serving CINCs and service chiefs backing APLs. A similar stand was taken by 24 retired four-star Marine and Army generals in an open letter to the President in July 1997. And there are many more letters on the record by senior military leaders in support of APLs. In fact, two of the most prominent retired officers that signed the April 1996 letter to *The New York Times*, referred to by Mr. Perry, have since clarified their views. General Jones, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Carter and Reagan administrations, admitted that an exception for Korea was understandable "because that's obviously a special situation." (*The New York Times*, 16 May 1996) And General Norman Schwarzkopf told the *Baltimore Sun* on 8 September 1996 that he actually favors retaining smart landmines, which he described as a "military capability we can use." The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Shelton, as part of his confirmation process before the US Senate, reaffirmed the importance of APLs to the deterrence mission in Korea and stated that the military utility of mixed self-destruct mines is "in my mind, unquestionable."

Mr. Perry claims that alternatives will soon be available obviating the need for APLs. Unfortunately, the Ottawa Treaty does not allow for a transition period in which to develop and field these alternative systems. As current US policy states, as soon as alternatives are available the United States will be in a position to sign the Ottawa Treaty, but not until that time. Mr. Perry also points to the existence of "more lethal and effective anti-armor weapons" that would presumably take the place of the mixed self-destruct systems. The recent air campaign against Serb military forces in Kosovo calls into question the efficacy of putting all our eggs in one antitank basket. A lead story in *Newsweek* (15 May 2000), titled "The Kosovo Cover-Up," concluded that high-altitude bombing is overrated and that the "air campaign against the Serb military in Kosovo was largely ineffective." The debate on this particular issue continues and, although General Clark has stated "enough" tanks were destroyed in Kosovo, it is also clear that gaps in poor-weather coverage and targeting in dense and rough terrain limited US precision strike effectiveness. As I argue in the article, the promises of a "stand-off war" capability are certainly worth pursuing, but just as certainly the United States is not there yet. And even if the United States should eventually perfect and purchase a "fool-proof" precision strike capability, we cannot expect all of our future enemies to forswear an asymmetrical "hands-on war" approach to combating this unique US military capability. Antipersonnel landmines remain essential both to protect antitank mines and to defeat enemies that may rely on massive infantry assaults (e.g. Korea), or for use in an urban conflict. The prudent military commander knows that the threat of all the capabilities the United States possesses should always be held over the enemy in wartime.

Turning from the military efficacy of APL systems, let me address NGO involvement in national security issues. The broad brush that I am accused of wielding is in fact a direct quote from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. However, I do agree with their artistic style and particularly their conclusion that the Ottawa process represented "an environment where serious consideration of national security issues could not occur." To say that the VVAF and the International Committee to Ban Landmines (ICBL) was critically aware of "America's legitimate national security concerns" is disingenuous at best. The United States government sought only two changes to the treaty during the Oslo

convention in September 1997. First, we sought an adequate transition period to allow us time to identify and field APL alternatives; second, we sought to protect our mixed, self-destruct, antitank systems. The ICBL (and the VVAF) response to these modest "legitimate national security concerns" was clearly noted in their *Ban Treaty News--Issue 1*, 1 September 1997. The International Campaign expressed its "extreme concern" over the US government's decision to even participate in the negotiations, held a firm belief that "fundamentals of this treaty are non-negotiable," and wanted to keep the conference "free of the tyranny of consensus." Such positions do not offer much of an opportunity to debate legitimate national security concerns. And that is precisely the danger of abrogating the responsibility and accountability that legitimate governments have for national security to single-issue advocacy and activist NGOs. The potential for a "dynamic post-Cold War model of a new style of diplomacy" and, by inference, for additional campaigns that might affect US national security, is not something that I concocted, but a direct claim by the ICBL. It does not matter who leads or participates in such a potential campaign. What matters is the US ability to harmonize the role of the legitimate government with that of the NGOs. We must avoid the "rush to judgment" and ensure that the government exercises its responsibility to thoroughly analyze and address security implications. Ottawa did not allow that to happen, and consequently the President made the correct choice and declined to sign this flawed treaty.

I do not think that the ICBL or the VVAF hate America. In fact I specifically commended their efforts for bringing attention to this issue and assisting in the worldwide progress made to date in ridding the planet of indiscriminately sown minefields. But I do challenge Mr. Perry's implication that serious-minded opponents of an APL ban cannot likewise be equally strong proponents for humanitarian action. I could not agree more with the conclusion of the letter from the 24 retired generals mentioned above: "The responsible use of APLs is not only consistent with the nation's humanitarian responsibilities; it is indispensable to the safety of our troops in many combat and peacekeeping situations."

The VVAF has argued against the "tyranny of consensus," a consensus that was aimed at balancing both humanitarian and national security concerns. Evidently the organization would rather the United States accept the tyranny of the closed debate. My goal in writing the article was to invigorate and enrich the debate on this important foreign policy and defense issue. Thank you, Mr. Perry, for taking the time to reply. Far from being a disservice, our exchange, one hopes, has been enlightening for the readers of *Parameters*.

Colonel John F. Troxell

A LOOK BACK: ON BEING A SUPERPOWER

To the Editor:

Jeffrey Record's review of my book, *On Being a Superpower*, in the Summer 2000 issue of *Parameters* is pejorative and full of distortions and misstatements. In saying that the book is without documentation he ignores the extensive bibliography at the end of the book and the frequent references to its 88 entries, most of them major works, that are embedded in the text throughout.

His extract of my quotation from Sun Tsu, for comparison with Clausewitz, is incomplete. The total quote is: "To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill." Nowhere did I call Clausewitz a warmonger, as Record claims. I argue that simply planning to project force to bend our opponents to our will, based on Clausewitz's arguments, will not be a workable strategy in the future world where interests affecting our long-term security, but not our immediate survival, will be threatened. In many places I point out that resort to arms might at times be unavoidable, but that with appropriate anticipatory actions we can often, but not always, create situations that work in our favor while avoiding that necessity.

Nor do I say in the book that "China is the probable next peer competitor." I say that China's growing economic strength and assertiveness on the international scene will make China an international force to be reckoned with, among many others that I also treat in some detail. After noting some of China's recent actions I state that *if* China behaves in certain ways then China *could become* the "peer competitor" that replaces the Soviet Union as our rival for global power. Record's comments dismissing China as a serious potential military power because its development lags ours smack of the very complacency (reminiscent of the British in early 1942, feeling secure in their Singapore

fortress) about which the "descriptive . . . rather than prescriptive" text was designed to alert the reader.

Record also states that the book's "only detectable theme is the need for a large hike in military spending" but that I do not make the case for it. In the many pages in which I develop the arguments about military spending I indicate that *there would be* a need for a 25-percent spending increase to support the spectrum of military activities that our armed forces must now plan for, *unless* the nation takes many difficult steps to mitigate the cost: organizing our military forces more efficiently; eliminating the overhead of unneeded infrastructure; and changing our two-major-regional-conflict strategy to one that is more sustainable within the resources our nation appears willing to devote to national security.

Record ignores my extensive chapter on our country's national security strategy when he states that I believe that "*Joint Vision 2010* is . . . America's strategic Holy Grail." The book states clearly that I quote from *Joint Vision 2010* to illustrate that the US armed forces are ahead of our civilian leadership in understanding the kinds of armed forces that we will need, and to describe the kinds of operations our military forces plan to undertake in the future. The book also describes in great detail the problems of building armed forces conforming to the Joint Chiefs' "vision" so that they can meet the national strategy that does seem to be emerging.

Record sneers at the scenarios I present to show the reader how perverse the real world can be in not adhering to the set-piece scenarios that we see in formal defense budget planning. He is apparently so disturbed by my imagining that a female President must make the critical decisions in those scenarios that he fails to recognize that all the key decisions described in the scenarios are historically founded in actual events. Also in connection with "scenarios," Record apparently missed the point of my discussion of the Kosovo conflict, that the short-run political purpose of the war was lost because Serbia moved inside NATO's timeline, inevitable in an alliance operation where consensus must be reached and must prevail.

Finally, Record is derisive about my descriptions of the state of the nation and of the world, attributing them to a "radio-talk litany of . . . dislikes about American government and society." Had he read the book in a less biased way he would have seen that the discussions of government and society are based on facts that are before us daily, and that the discussions relate those facts to our future national security. Surely he must be aware of the political divisions and technological and social trends troubling our nation, or the plain facts that the armed forces are having difficulty holding their own, in recruiting, retention of people, and retaining budget share of our economy as the world advances into its post-Cold War "peacetime" state.

He asks whether I am suggesting "America's unworthiness as a superpower." No, Professor Record, I suggest (explicitly on pages 308-11 of my book) that without awareness of the larger trends in our society and economy, and in our relationships with the rest of the world, our nation stands in danger of letting hostile world forces whittle away the current huge advantage in economic strength, military strength, and alliances with other major powers that is America's ultimate guarantee of future security. The book is intended to be a wake-up call to meet that danger. Apparently, Jeffrey Record missed the point.

Seymour J. Deitchman
Chevy Chase, Maryland

The Reviewer Replies:

Seymour Deitchman's book, *On Being a Superpower and Not Knowing What to Do About It*, speaks for itself more accurately than does his rejoinder to my review of it in *Parameters*. In that review, I quoted from the book carefully and in context. For example, Deitchman denies my assertion that he believes "China is the probable next peer competitor." Well, let's go to page 88 of his book: "But it is probable that, regardless of anything the United States does to help or hinder it, China will develop into a major independent economic and military power both able and eager to project force well beyond its borders."

And, yes, I still believe Deitchman is suggesting America's unworthiness as a superpower; how else to explain his book's very title? And, no, I do not believe, as Deitchman suggests, that the strategic outlook for the United States today is reminiscent of the British in Singapore in early 1942. Are we really already at war and on the verge of

surrender? America's present strategic outlook is hardly free of internal and external concerns, some of them serious, but our future security is hardly well served by gross abuse of historical analogies and by rhetorical "wake-up calls" based on sham scenarios.

Jeffrey Record

MORE ON AIR POWER IN ALLIED FORCE

To the Editor:

Dr. Earl H. Tilford's article, "Operation Allied Force and the Role of Air Power" (*Parameters*, Winter 1999-2000), presents an emotionally based and poorly supported diatribe against aerospace power in general and the US Air Force in particular. This time, he attempts to disparage the effectiveness and primacy of aerospace power in recent American combat operations. Tilford's arguments are so outrageously bad that they give readers a maliciously skewed assessment of the recent operations in Kosovo. Nevertheless, Tilford somehow manages to ask two relevant questions about the nature and use of aerospace power: Did aerospace power do what it was supposed to do in Kosovo? Is the purported use of "aerospace power alone" an empirically proven sound way of doing military business for the future?

With respect to the first question, the short answer is that aerospace power did the job. The final result speaks for itself, and in fact, Tilford agrees. The second bit--Is an "aerospace power alone" strategy, as Tilford suggests "we" have adopted, a good way to do the nation's military business in the future?--can also be answered quickly. Every sober, thinking airman from the Chief of Staff on down would say "No." Air Force doctrine, the service's officially sanctioned and codified warfighting beliefs, emphatically states in numerous documents that the arbitrary and exclusive use of aerospace power to win the nation's wars is not a wise course of action, now or in the future. However, as we all understand, politics, in this case, was not terribly interested in Air Force or joint doctrine. And war, whether it suits us or not, is an extension of politics.

That said, airmen would be the first to admit proudly that US Air Force aerospace forces constituted a large part of the military force used in Operation Allied Force. Dr. Tilford attempts to turn this into a pejorative, implying that Allied Force was a single-service fight. Quite the opposite. The substantial contributions of the other services and our NATO allies made this not only a joint fight, but a combined fight as well. Therefore, with both multi-service and multinational forces present, one might seriously question Tilford's logic and motivations when this supposed exclusive use of Air Force aerospace power did not happen.

Pushing aside Tilford's specious and tautological "arguments" (in which he creates his own unique brand of the logical self-licking ice cream cone), we airmen see Kosovo as additional evidence that supports the following hypothesis: *A strong correlation exists between the robust use of aerospace power in recent military conflicts in which America has been involved and a successful military outcome favorable to the United States.* What has become increasingly apparent is that aerospace power is an essential element for military victory in modern times. Aerospace power creates strategic, operational, and tactical effects that shape adversary behavior.

We airmen recognize that aerospace power should not be America's only military tool--our service doctrine states that clearly. The Air Force does not believe for a minute that ground forces are irrelevant. Allied Force is a clear example of the continuing need for light, lean, lethal, and rapidly deployable ground forces. The Marine Corps broke the code on this a long time ago.

Parenthetically, we find it particularly shameful and reprehensible on Tilford's part that he dare imply allied efforts and objectives during Allied Force were not worth "a single American life." This statement is as incredibly insensitive as it is myopic. Every allied airman, sailor, marine, or soldier who sortied, sailed, or patrolled represented one allied life at risk over Kosovo. Most of those lives, proportionally speaking, were American. We would therefore also emphatically assert that our objectives *were* worth those very precious lives, as demonstrated by the fact that we risked them by going "feet dry" time and again over Serbia. At the bare minimum, we risked American lives for 78 days over 38,000 times; 14,000 times over hostile territory.

Tilford's incessant bleating by way of shopworn and formulaic appeals to history leaves him once again drawing thin operational and tactical parallels, this time between Vietnam and Kosovo, as he has done before with Vietnam and Bosnia, or Vietnam and the Gulf War. He quibbles, much like the infamous body-counters of yore, over exactly how many tanks, trucks, artillery pieces, and vehicles the air campaign did or did not damage or destroy. We will put this argument to rest with the words of Army General Wesley Clark, SACEUR and CINC USEUCOM: "We destroyed and struck enough." The airman's focus is not on attrition-based, force-on-force measures of merit; we achieve effects.

If we were, however, to take up the issue of actual numbers struck, and accept the oft-made assertion that aerospace power did little damage to the Serb fielded forces, it begs another question: If the attacks against fielded forces had such little effect on Milosevic and Serb behavior as many surface force advocates claim, then what did? Obviously not surface forces. Perhaps the answer is in the balanced, cumulative, and corrosive strategic effects that resulted from applying aerospace power, as well as political pressure, and lack of outside support.

Furthermore, in our view, Kosovo was not "close" militarily, as Tilford asserts. "Close," as we ought to understand it in *combat* operations, occurs when the *military* (not necessarily the political) issue hangs in the balance, friendly military losses are high and exceed expectations, and the military resources expended either outweigh, or nearly outweigh, the anticipated political results. None of these factors is true of Allied Force military operations. Close in football is often determined by the final score; close in war is another matter. We are not, nor are any of our sister services, in the business of fighting "close" games. We might remind Tilford again of General Patton's advice with respect to who ought to die for whose country.

Tilford calls for balanced and flexible forces for the future. We airmen again agree unequivocally with that call. But we might ask, what military capabilities were more flexible than aerospace power in this instance? What other capabilities were as balanced as aerospace power to provide strategic, operational, and tactical effects quickly and efficiently across the spectrum of the Kosovo conflict? What he fails to ask for are *versatile* forces. There is a spot toward which the future ground forces of the United States should gravitate; the US Marines, again, are well on their way.

Finally, Tilford's piece lacks even remotely the polish, balance, and finish of a "great wine," and reeks more of sour grapes. We can, however, find buried therein a small, and important, kernel of truth when he states, "In some operations . . . aerospace power will and should be the primary and supported instrument." Concur as written, no argument.

Major Frederick L. "Fritz" Baier, USAF
Headquarters, Air Force Doctrine Center
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

The Author Replies:

"Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?" (Job 38:1)

Dr. Earl H. Tilford, Jr.

(Editor's Note: Dr. Tilford, a retired Air Force officer, provided a lengthy reply to an earlier Commentary published in the Summer 2000 issue of *Parameters*, and at this point chooses to let his article stand on its own merit. -- RHT)

ON TURKISH STRATEGY

To the Editor:

I was especially pleased to see the article by Michael Hickok, "Hegemon Rising: The Gap Between Turkish Strategy and Military Modernization," in the Summer 2000 issue of *Parameters*. As a Turkish Foreign Area Officer with a 26-year history with Turkey, I found Dr Hickok's article to be interesting and timely as discussions take place in Turkey over the future of defense spending, military modernization programs, and the role of the Turkish military vis-à-vis

entry into the European Union.

However, a few points require clarification. One of the most significant changes to the defense procurement process, not mentioned by Dr. Hickok, was the creation of the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM), a semi-autonomous agency under the auspices of the Ministry of National Defense, created as a result of Act 3238 and funded primarily by the luxury taxes. A primary purpose of the Undersecretariat is to ensure that Turkey builds its own defense industrial base, by gaining significant technology transfer with the award of every major defense contract. Consequently, it has been actively involved in the decisionmaking process for the selection of most new major weapon systems, including future procurement of a new main battle tank and attack helicopter. Prior to SSM's establishment in the late 1980s, the Turkish General Staff procured what it decided it needed with little outside interference. Thus, there has developed a degree of competition between the General Staff, the Ministry of National Defense, and SSM over who has authority to decide what will be procured and how.

It should be noted that the Ministry of National Defense does not exert command and control over the General Staff, and that the Chief of the General Staff (a four-star army general), is ranked higher on the official protocol list than the civilian Minister of National Defense. Additionally, the Ministry is not comparable to our Defense Department; it is more of a defense acquisition agency. Its current structure, roles, and responsibilities are under review due to the European Union requirement and democratic principle of civilian control of the military. Such a sea change will require a revision of the current Turkish constitution and a historic organizational shift in the entire Turkish military structure, but this is required if Turkey truly wants to join the European Union.

In terms of the future defense budget, both the General Staff and the Ministry of National Defense recognize that the ambitious \$150 billion defense modernization program of the mid-1990s may no longer be realistic. Together, they are reviewing the entire program based upon current and future threats, the most critical defense modernization needs, NATO requirements, and the overall effect on the Turkish economy.

I must disagree with Dr. Hickok's prediction that "if the military fails to regain the confidence of the Turkish people there may well be increased domestic unrest and the possibility of a military takeover." I submit that it is not the military that must regain and maintain the confidence of the Turkish people, but the civilian government. The Turkish military has not lost the confidence of the Turkish people. To the contrary, it is the most highly respected organization in Turkey. The general public looks to the military for stability and a sense of direction in unstable times. But Turkey today is extremely stable when compared to the late 1970s and the events which led to the September 1980 military coup. Those conditions do not exist today. Yes, inflation is still too high, but I am optimistic about the bright political and economic future of Turkey. The transition of the Presidency from Demirel to Sezer was seamless, the Prime Ministry of Ecevit is still strong, the economy is growing, human rights awareness and initiatives are advancing, and the terrorism of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) is waning. Turkey is working hard to improve on all fronts; a clear example is the warming of relations with Greece. The words of Ataturk, the father of the modern Turkish republic, continue to ring true: "Peace at Home, Peace in the World."

Lieutenant Colonel Paul S. Gendrolis, USA
TRADOC Liaison Officer to the Turkish Army
Ankara, Turkey

The Author Replies:

It is always gratifying to discover that people have read and thought about your work. Lieutenant Colonel Gendrolis brings interesting nuances to the points I tried to raise in the article. I wish, however, he had made a more careful reading.

For example, Gendrolis argues that "one of the most significant changes to the defense procurement process, *not mentioned by Dr. Hickok*, was the creation of the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM), a semi-autonomous agency under the auspices of the Ministry of National Defense, created as a result of Act 3238 and funded primarily by the luxury taxes." I would refer him to pages 111-12 of my article, with the paragraph beginning, "The roots of Turkey's modernization program go back to the reorganization of the defense industry order by Act No. 3238 in November 1985. . . . The fund's revenues were drawn largely from taxes on luxury goods."

Although it was not the underlying purpose of the article, Gendrolis adds a good point about how the structure of defense acquisitions limits the role of civilian oversight of the military. He is absolutely correct in pointing out that the civilian Minister of Defense does not exercise command and control of the Chief of the Turkish General Staff. In theory, the Chief of the General Staff is answerable to the Prime Minister and the President, though even this gets a bit hazy in times of national emergency as set out in the constitution. As Gendrolis notes, the national command authority in Turkey is neither like the American version nor like that of any other NATO ally in the area of civil-military relations.

This leads to the difference in opinions about where I think the underlying problem in Turkish military culture lies. Comparing Turkey today with the Turkey of two or three decades ago is a bit misleading. By suggesting that the military maintains the confidence of the people because most Turks trust military officers more than civilian politicians, Lieutenant Colonel Gendrolis holds the military to an unfairly low standard. The Turkish General Staff did force the Islamist-led coalition from government in 1997. The military did organize a secret "Western Working Group" to monitor domestic political activities. The military continues to dominate the National Security Council, largely through better staff work and information. The military came under intense public criticism in 1999 for its late response to the catastrophic earthquake in Izmit.

Lieutenant Colonel Gendrolis is on target when he suggests that in the last two decades Turkey has improved its economy, human rights record, and the situation in the southeast. But in comparison to other NATO members, the role of the Turkish military in society and government remains an anomaly that more and more Turkish citizens appear willing to question.

As a final quibble, the idea that the transition from President Demirel to the President Sezer was "seamless" belies the months of behind-the-scenes negotiations to amend the constitution to allow Demirel to serve an additional five to seven years and the fact that the National Assembly required three contentious votes before settling on a little-known judge as a compromise candidate for President. I do agree that President Sezer may open a bright chapter in Turkish political history, but to argue that his road to the presidency was stress-free is to emulate Candide.

Dr. Michael Robert Hickok

Reviewed 16 August 2000. Please send comments or corrections to carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil