

# The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

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Volume 30  
Number 4 *Parameters Winter 2000*

Article 6

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11-17-2000

## From the Editor

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### Recommended Citation

Robert H. Taylor, "From the Editor," *Parameters* 30, no. 4 (2000), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.2004.

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# From the Editor

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From *Parameters*, Winter 2000-01, pp. 2-3.

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## In This Issue . . .

Ralph Peters provides riveting insight into the information revolution. He challenges traditional views to determine there is a new destabilizing transnational threat, an "onslaught of information--a plague of ideas." His thoughtful analogy of this plague and traditional epidemics will leave the reader contemplating the origin of all political and social truth. The author chides the defense establishment with the warning that future information wars will not be about the electronic vulnerability of information, but rather what information is culturally permissible.

Vincent J. Goulding, Jr., leads us back to the future with his examination of asymmetric warfare. The author warns we must remember the lessons of asymmetric attack that doomed the Legions of Rome in the Teutoberger Wald in 9 A.D. Goulding posits it is the skill of soldiers of all ranks, not the nature of terrain, that decides the outcome of military operations.

Williamson Murray examines the latest innovation in professional military education at the US Army War College with his review of the Advanced Strategic Art Program (ASAP). The program immerses selected students in an intense, sometimes grueling, course of study. The goal of the course is to produce officers capable of functioning as strategic planners for the specified and unified commanders--and eventually commanding at the highest levels.

In the first of three articles related to the future of NATO, Ronald Scott Mangum provides a review from the legal perspective of NATO's air attack on Serbia. His insightful analysis raises the prospect of an emerging doctrine based on the norm of humanitarian necessity. Because this doctrine is yet to be codified in any official statutes, the author speculates that this one-time use of the new intervention criteria may simply have been an anomaly. However, he also acknowledges it could well portend the end of international law and order as we know it. Ryan C. Hendrickson provides our second look at the future of NATO with his acute analysis of the possibilities presented by the next round of expansion. He acknowledges that this upcoming round of NATO enlargement has been purposely kept off the American policy agenda. Congress on the other hand may be the driving force, with many of its members already staking out positions and building momentum for their favorite applicant state. The author notes that the prospect of the admission of Slovenia, Romania, or the Baltic states has already generated unwanted negative attention on the Alliance and may result in an overall downgrading of the entire enlargement issue. Kent R. Meyer follows up on Hendrickson's analysis with his systematic and detailed review of the efforts of the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to obtain NATO membership. Meyer contrasts the strategic interests of the United States against NATO's strategic and geopolitical needs to determine that a deliberate long-term policy recognizing the concerns of Russia is the best way to proceed.

Our second feature examines what many have described as the "forgotten continent--Africa." Since my arrival as editor I have endeavored to commission manuscripts on a part of the world that is continually overlooked in the establishment of US strategic priorities. Edwin S. Cochran provides the first of three articles attempting to rectify that omission with his examination of post-apartheid South Africa. Using South Africa as his regional focus, the author provides a critical analysis of the United States' African policy. The author concludes that Africa's problems are many, US resources are limited, and opportunities for productive engagement in the region are few. Therefore, we must take advantage of the opportunities presented by our relationship with South Africa to leverage policy objectives throughout the continent. In a second view of US-African relations, Richard G. Catoire provides a historical analysis of the Unified Command Plan to propose the need for a CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa. The author makes the case that the current plan cannot effectively protect America's security interests on the continent. His detailed analysis determines it is only through the consolidation of responsibilities presently divided among three unified commands that US objectives in the region will be secured. In our final look at Africa, Scott E. Brower and Anna Simons argue that if America continues to pursue a policy of ambivalence toward Africa we risk missing an opportunity for greater regional

stabilization. The authors examine the critical role of the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) as a strategic tool for meeting peacekeeping requirements throughout Africa. They readily admit that ACRI's establishment is proof of America's ambivalence. However, the authors also recognize that it is this type of organization that affords the best hope for controlling the many diverse threats to African security.

*Review Essays* by Larry M. Wortzel, who presents three new looks at China, and Russell W. Ramsey, with his look at strategic literature related to Latin American security, continue our efforts to keep readers informed of regional developments throughout the world.

### **Commentary & Reply**

One of the most certain measures of a journal's success is the interaction enjoyed among readers, staff, and authors. Those who are regular readers of *Parameters*, both in the hard-copy edition and on-line, have noted with the same great pleasure as the editors the exponential growth of the "Commentary & Reply" feature over the past year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have invested the time to make their views known. I would also encourage all our readers to continue providing their opinions and suggestions. It is only through such valuable exchange that we all benefit and grow intellectually. Keep those letters and e-mails coming.

### **Correction**

In the article "The New Mercenaries and the Privatization of Conflict" by Thomas K. Adams in our Summer 1999 issue, the author states that AirScan's website claimed they provide "day/night operational superiority." In fact the website does not make that claim, but states the company provides "day/night airborne security surveillance." We apologize to AirScan, Inc., for any confusion the misquote may have caused. -- RHT

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Reviewed 17 November 2000. Please send comments or corrections to [carl\\_Parameters@conus.army.mil](mailto:carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil)