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## From the Editor

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# From the Editor

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## *In this issue...*

Those more discerning readers of the journal will notice some modest changes in our cover and internal layout. The changes were made in an effort to allow readers to readily recognize what a particular author or reviewer is offering. The topical headers and author's names that accompany each page of a particular article are designed to permit readers rapid access and recognition of a specific article. The editorial staff hopes these revisions in style and presentation will add to our readers' enjoyment and efficiency.

**J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr.**, provides a revisionist's assessment of attrition strategy in "The Issue of Attrition." The author believes the word "attrition" has earned an unjustified reputation in the realm of the strategic planner, due mainly to a number of unstated assumptions regarding its application. He analyzes the strategies of annihilation, attrition, and exhaustion in relation to their military application to support his thesis that the attrition form of strategy may be the most efficient in some types of warfare or when specific political objectives are the goal. Bartholomees provides historical examples of the application of the various strategic forms to conclude that strategists should not habitually discount a strategy of attrition without fully considering all of the potential benefits and costs.

"Counterinsurgency and Beyond" is a thematic presentation highlighting three works related to the future of counterinsurgency doctrine and its application. The first piece, "Integrating Civilian and Military Activities," is **Richard A. Lacquement's** attempt to remind leaders and planners that in our effort to deny success to the insurgent we need to ensure that we are seeking comprehensive solutions and strategies spanning the political, economic, and cultural elements of the afflicted society. Success in these environments requires civilian and military efforts focused on a comprehensive solution. The author provides a framework designed to assist military and civilian leaders in meeting the challenges associated with a successful counterinsurgency. **Peter Charles Choharis** and **James A. Gavrilis** provide our second article in this feature, "Counterinsurgency 3.0." The authors posit that even though counterinsurgency doctrine has gone through two specific phases, a substantial doctrinal requirement remains. They believe that a new doctrine (COIN 3.0) is required if we are to ensure a move forward from the tactical methods that cultivate and develop tribal alliances to the strategic use of international aid in insurgencies. Choharis and Gavrilis outline a program whereby small-scale, micro-development projects based on corporate social responsibility practices, rather than traditional foreign aid programs, will have a greater and longer lasting impact on Islamic insurgents. The final article in this feature is **Chad Serena's** "Combating a Combat Legacy." Serena presents a thesis based on the belief that the combat-centric legacy of the post-Cold War Army is alive and well, even after the events of 9/11 and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. That legacy endures not only in organization, doctrine, and equipment but also in the Army's training, education, and cultural structure. The author concludes that the hard-fought lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan are being rejected by an institutional Army still focused on conventional war. He supports his thesis with a number of examples indicating a return to the legacy force via "mod-

ernization” and “rebalancing” initiatives. Serena closes with a warning that instead of focusing on these rebalancing programs the Army should be inculcating the lessons learned from the more recent “unconventional” experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan if we are going to create a full-spectrum force capable of supporting America’s national interests and strategic requirements.

**Thomas R. McCabe** examines the strategy and tactics employed by al Qaeda in “The Strategic Failures of al Qaeda.” The author analyzes a number of recent defeats suffered by that organization and other jihadi extremists to determine that there are five critical reasons why these movements never succeed. McCabe stipulates in his introduction that these groups are often successful, even brilliant, in their operations at the tactical level, but at the strategic level they are woefully ill-informed and blatantly unprepared for strategic success.

Four authors from the RAND Corporation, **Barak Salmoni**, **Jessica Hart**, **Renny McPherson**, and **Aidan Kirby Winn**, provide a timely analysis of the emerging operating environment and the characteristics required of joint force leaders in “Growing Strategic Leaders for Future Conflict.” Basing their recommendations on a series of extensive interviews with senior officers, the authors detail the characteristics required for effective senior-level leadership in this challenging strategic environment. Recommendations highlight the characteristics, educational experiences, and types of assignments required to develop a cohort of leaders capable of operating in the unpredictable environments of today and tomorrow.

**Bart Schuurman** joins the chorus of military and academic observers calling for western armed forces to realize that the nature of war is rapidly changing and it is critical that today’s military adapt to this new paradigm. “Clausewitz and the ‘New Wars’ Scholars” is an examination of the principles underpinning the “new wars” school of military thought and the contribution it makes to a greater understanding of why conventional military superiority has limited value in a strategic environment dominated by terrorists and ragtag militias. The author suggests that in our haste to develop joint force leaders for operational and strategic assignments we have developed a number of misunderstandings related to war’s fundamental characteristics and the relationship between historical and contemporary warfare. Schuurman focuses on these misunderstandings in an attempt to highlight the faulty reasoning upon which they are based and to develop a more nuanced and robust intellectual framework for the study of warfare.

The final article in this issue provides the insight of three authors related to “Our Visual Persuasion Gap.” **Martin Gurri**, **Craig Denny**, and **Aaron Harms** join forces to give readers a greater understanding of just how extensive and intrusive visual media has become in our lives. The authors make a convincing argument that images are rapidly becoming ever more pervasive, and that many more people are paying a disproportionate amount of attention to them. One only need recall the images of Abu Ghraib or the death of Neda Agha-Soltan (shot in Tehran) to understand the impact of visual media. The authors conclude with the warning that it is at our own peril that US policy-makers fail to gain a more effective understanding of the use of visual media and its impact on the world. – RHT □