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From the Editor in Chief

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From the Editor in Chief

This issue of *Parameters* opens with a *Special Commentary* by Jacqueline Deal entitled “Disintegrating the Enemy: The PLA’s Info-Messaging.” Deal shows how the People’s Liberation Army’s involvement in political warfare, via info-messaging, opens a competitive space that does not favor Beijing. The United States needs to take advantage of this opportunity.

Our first forum, *COVID-19*, offers two perspectives concerning the shortcomings in how governments have dealt with pandemics. Nina Jankowicz and Henry Collis argue “Enduring Information Vigilance: Government after COVID-19” will help US and partner governments deny advantages to adversaries engaged in information operations against Western interests. In “The COVID-19 Enemy is Still Advancing,” Ryan Scott, Odelle Means, and Patricia Shields maintain US policy and military practitioners can draw lessons from the Spanish Flu pandemic to assist them in balancing the threat of COVID-19 vis-à-vis other strategic objectives.

The issue’s second forum, *Race and Inclusivity in the US Military*, consists of two contributions concerning the state of race relations in America’s armed forces. The first, “Two Worlds: African American Servicemembers, WWII and Today” by Douglas Bristol Jr., suggests viewing African American servicemembers as different stigmatizes them in ways that are discriminatory; solving this problem will require a collective response by African Americans. The second, “Toward a Racially Inclusive Military,” by Danelle Gamble, argues America’s armed forces may not have gone as far as they believe they have in terms of racial integration; she contends they must promote equitable relationships that acknowledge and challenge power imbalances and reevaluate the impact of cultural imperialism on standards and evaluations.

Our third forum, *Technological Innovation*, contains two articles discussing how we might leverage technological change. In “Technology and Strategic Surprise: Adapting to an Era of Open Innovation,” Audrey Kurth Cronin discusses the differences between open and closed innovation, and she urges the US Defense Department to leverage the advantages of the former. In “A Bizarre Pair: Counterinsurgency Lessons for Cyber Conflict,” Jason Healey claims counterinsurgencies hold many lessons for cyberwarfare, such as the principle of “winning hearts and minds,” and he proposes the Defense establishment consider them more closely.

Our final forum, *Regional Challenges*, deals with developments in the Middle East and the Pacific regions. In “Training Better Arab Armies,” Michael Eisenstadt and Kenneth Pollack offer ways for US security force assistance missions to avoid repeating the mistake of casting Arab armies in an American mold. In “The US Army and the Pacific: Legacies and Challenges,” David Finkelstein maintains the US Army would do well to draw from its rich institutional and operational legacies to support America’s strategic efforts in the Indo-Pacific Region. ~AJE

