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From the Editor

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From the Editor

Our Spring issue opens with a special commentary by Tami Biddle entitled, “Making Sense of the ‘Long Wars’ – Advice to the US Army.” Indeed, what should the US Army learn from its long campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan? Biddle tells us perhaps the most important lesson the Army can draw from this experience is to allow its officer education programs—or broadening opportunities—to work.

Our first forum, *US Leadership and NATO*, an overture to the July Summit in Warsaw, considers America’s role in European Security. Luis Simón’s “Balancing Priorities in America’s European Strategy” describes ways in which the United States can manage its regional and global priorities. Alexander Mattelaer’s “Revisiting the Principles of NATO Burden-Sharing” suggests the real issue lies deeper than defense spending; NATO members need to collaborate more with respect to military planning and come to an agreement on who should do what with regard to European security. John Deni’s “Modifying America’s Forward Presence in Eastern Europe” suggests Washington’s decision to send more US troops to reassure its NATO allies is an insufficient first step. What Eastern Europe needs are more capabilities designed to counter Moscow’s recent *modus operandi*. Magnus Petersson’s “The United States as the Reluctant Ally” argues America has been relegating NATO to an ever lower priority due to Washington’s rising commitments in the Middle East and the “Rebalance” to the Pacific. However, US leaders ought not to let this trend drift too far, lest a re-nationalization (fragmentation) of NATO’s security agenda occur.

The second forum, *Is Nation-Building a Myth?*, offers two articles which consider the feasibility of nation-building or state-building. Charles Sullivan’s “State-Building: America’s Foreign Policy Challenge” argues state-building is the primary, if not the only, way to counter the rise of what he calls radical-inspired states, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. The United States has no blue-print for such an enterprise, and it desperately needs one. In contrast, Chris Mason’s “Nation-Building is an Oxymoron” does not pull its punches; it argues, flatly, nation-building is a fool’s errand, and of the worst kind.

Our third forum, *Learning from Today’s Wars*, features three articles which draw lessons from contemporary conflicts. Ben Nimmo’s “Lessons from the Air Campaigns over Libya, Syria, and Yemen” argues air-power’s effectiveness diminishes over time partly because the targets eventually find countermeasures, thereby making civilian casualties unavoidable and post-conflict reconstruction an expensive but ineluctable necessity. Roger McDermott’s “Does Russia Have a Gerasimov Doctrine?” maintains the famed Gerasimov article has been misread; nor does Moscow appear to have the capability to replicate what it did in Donbas anywhere else. Erik Goepner’s “Measuring the Effectiveness of America’s War on Terror” attempts to identify some metrics by which to gauge US efforts in the fight against terrorism; perhaps the most important observation in his article is how surprisingly little has been done, to date, to assess this long and costly war. ~AJE

