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Information Age Army or Empty Rhetoric?

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Miranda that *Military Review* needs to devote more time to it.

Clifford C. Nelson,
Cooper City, Florida

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Since 1922, *Military Review* has provided a forum for the open exchange of ideas on military affairs within the Army community. Its mission has been, and still is, to focus on concepts, doctrine and warfighting at the tactical and operational levels of war and support the education, training, doctrine development and integration missions of the US Army Combined Arms Center and the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth.

After 51 years as a monthly publication, *Military Review* is transitioning to bimonthly production. This retrenchment has resulted from across-the-board cuts in the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) operating budget. Time and again, America has been criticized for its lack of strategic insight in both business and governmental decision making. The Army, faced with a budgetary policy that is strangling its professional journals, can now be accused of strategic myopia also.

In an attempt to cut away excess fat, vital muscle and organs have now been severed because of short-sighted budgetary policy. Much has been mentioned about Force XXI and its envisioned "overwhelming competitive edge against any enemy through the application of America's superior information-age technology," as outlined in the *Army 1994-1995 Green Book*. However, contrary to the establishment of an information age Army, the vital neural net embodied in *Military Review* and other Army publications required to create that farsighted vision, is now in a process of being dismantled.

Other official Army publications, such as *Parameters*, *Armor*, *Infantry* and *Army RD&A Bulletin*, which already operate on either a bimonthly or quarterly schedule, are also facing this new round of budgetary tightening. I was unable to obtain even limited research support from *Armor* because of its lack of staffing. Why the Army is now overlooking the value of information that exists off the battlefield and on another plane—one where ideas concerning doctrine and warfighting principles are generated—is beyond comprehension.

For decades, Army leadership has ensured that its major publications were properly staffed and

budgeted. That this budgetary decision is taking place now is even more paradoxical, given that retired General Frederick M. Franks Jr., former TRADOC commander, wrote in the same edition of the *Green Book*, "Ideas must change first when reshaping our Army to remain a relevant strategic force capable of decisive victory. It is in doctrine that we record those ideas about warfighting and the conduct of operations other than war."

I agree with the general's sage insights. The revolution in military affairs is not only about advanced technology and real-time battlefield information—it is about new ideas to incorporate and efficiently use the byproducts of emerging weaponry and command, control, computers, communication and intelligence technologies into basic Army force structure and doctrine for the purpose of warfighting. Billions can be spent on the research, development and acquisition of advanced technology hardware. However, if the Army cannot properly use these tools of war on the battlefield, this capital investment in America's future will have been made in vain.

Arguments can be made for the Army's continued commitment to the innovative Battle Command Battle Lab (BCBL) program that,

continued on page 104

Notice to Subscribers

This issue is the largest yet for *Military Review*. Our one-time tri-monthly issue combines December 1994 with January-February 1995 to recapture increased paper costs and to cut our three-month printing delay without sacrificing the number and quality of articles and features. So that paid subscribers will get the same number of separate issues, we are extending subscription dates into the next two-month period. Thank you for your patience and support.

Letters continued from page 3

as Franks stated, is "an institutional approach to experimenting with the ideas of where battle and other operations appear to be changing." Because these ideas are institutionalized, they are not open to candid and constructive criticism as they would be in Army journals. Therefore, the resulting ideas are liable to reflect a corporate mind-set that, if left unchallenged, may cause more harm than good to the Army's 21st-century modernization program.

Military Review's critical role toward the successful creation of Force XXI cannot be understated. New ideas, specifically those freely expressed and not subject to an institutional mentality, are the driving force behind successful implementation of Force XXI. With its wide range of contributor backgrounds and experiences, combined with the innovative BCBL program, the Army possesses a two-prong approach to the 21st century—an approach that creates an intense synergy between both institutionalized and noninstitutionalized ideas. One look at the references found in TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5, *Force XXI Operations*, and this fact is confirmed.

If *Military Review* had gone bimonthly at the beginning of 1994, instead of 1995, information representing approximately 50 percent of the journal's 1994 contents would not be available to the Army community. To portray this significant information loss, the contents of the January and July 1994 issues are listed below. The informational equivalent of four other issues would also not have been published.

January 1994 Issue:

- GEN Gordon R. Sullivan, USA. "Ulysses S. Grant and America's Power-Projection Army."
- LTG John H. Tilelli Jr., USA. "Force Projection: Essential to Army Doctrine."
- LTG Robert L. Ord III, USA, and MAJ Ed Mornston, USA. "Light Forces in the Force-Projection Army."
- Graham H. Turbiville Jr. "Operations Other Than War: Organized Crime Dimension."
- COL William W. Mendel, USA (Ret). "The Haiti Contingency."
- LTC Geoffrey B. Demarest, USA. "The Cuba Contingency."
- MAJ Francis A. Galgano Jr., USA. "The Landings at Anzio."
- MAJ Robert M. Puckett, USARNG. "The Rapido River Crossings."
- COL Peter F. Herrly, USA. "The Army's Light Divisions: Where Next?"

July 1994 Issue:

- GEN J. H. Binford Peay III, USA. "Building America's Power-Projection Army."
- LTG Carmen J. Cavezza, USA, et al. "A Bridge to the Future."
- LTC Mark Gerner, USA. "The Draft in Reverse: The Training Base and the Individual Ready Reserve."

- MAJ Darien L. Kearns, USMC. "The Need for Criteria in UN Peace Operations."
- LTC Lester W. Grau, USA (Ret). "From the Ashes: A Russian Approach to Future Maneuver War."
- COL Richard M. Swain, USA (Ret). "Adapting to Change in Times of Peace."
- LTC Donald R. Faint, USA. "Contingency Intelligence."
- COL Cole C. Kingseed, USA. "Operation Cobra: Prelude to Breakout."
- LTC Myron J. Griswold, USA. "Focusing Combat Power: Seeing is Winning."

These articles represent new ideas that generate intellectual discussion on doctrine and warfighting within the military community, as well as in the government and academic communities. Given the journal's past operating budget, only \$126,000 annually, the preceding articles represent a very cost-efficient means of facilitating the Army's transformation to Force XXI. Also, when compared to the Army's weapon systems modernization programs, which were collectively budgeted for more than \$750 million in 1994, the journal's budget was minuscule.

Because *Military Review* will reduce its frequency to only six issues a year, many new and innovative doctrinal ideas and concepts may not be publicized in 1995—thus lengthening the time between article acceptance and publication. As witnessed by how quickly aspects of the June 1993 US Army Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, have become outdated, such lengthened publishing lag time is unacceptable. With the revolution in military affairs, the rapid flow of information is more critical now than ever.

Information has long been recognized as a vital sinew of war. Since the "Warring States" period in ancient China, there has been an accepted truth that in war the last thing a nation or its army does is cut off its own information flow. The goal is to blind the enemy—not one's self. In the post-Cold War world, a rapidly changing national security environment must face the specter of endemic non-Western warfare. By relegating *Military Review* to a bimonthly publication, and at the same time reducing its other publications, the Army is partially blinding itself. Why such a policy that goes against 2,500 years of strategic military thought and the Army's self-acknowledged information age metamorphosis was implemented is a mystery.

Instead of denying itself the immense advantages that the neural net of Army publications provides, the Army should consider establishing a centralized structure within TRADOC to ensure these publications are properly supported and the ideas they generate—from within and outside the Army—are effectively directed toward the fulfillment of the Force XXI vision. As an initial step in this regard, it is my opinion that *Military*

Review should return to monthly publication so that it can continue to carry out its vital mission as the focal means of transmitting the open exchange of ideas on doctrine and warfighting.

Robert J. Bunker, *Claremont, California*

Specter of My Lai Haunts US Military

I commend *Military Review* for its August 1994 article "Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Rights" by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey F. Addicott and Major Andrew M. Warner. It addresses a subject seldom considered in professional military journals. I do not, however, share the authors' belief that US forces are known to countries around the world as having "functioned superbly under a rule of law."

The authors, like most of my fellow officers, appear to forget the blackest day in US military history, which occurred 27 years ago. On 6 March 1968, soldiers of Charlie Company, Task Force *Barker*, Americal Division, entered the Vietnamese village of Son My, better known to Americans as My Lai-4. By day's end, US forces had murdered over 500 unarmed villagers.

Their "simple, direct and brutal tactics" included raping and killing mothers in front of their children, children in front of their mothers; executing the village's Buddhist priest in front of his followers; and then, mutilating the bodies of the dead or dying. The soldiers of Charlie Company received no hostile fire from the village and sustained no casualties except one self-inflicted injury.

The documented evidence from the official Department of the Army inquiry conducted under the late Lieutenant General William R. Peers, along with trial transcripts and personal testimonies, is overwhelming. Ronald Ridenhour, the courageous soldier who exposed the massacre and its subsequent cover-up to the US Congress, called it "a Nazi kind of thing." Documented actions against My Lai civilians were even more savage than the Nazi actions against the villagers of Oradour, France, during World War II.

I am not bemoaning the failure of our military and civilian justice systems to hold specific individuals accountable for an atrocity committed a quarter century ago. I am ashamed, however, of my profession's failure to address the factors existing in the participating commands before the massacre.

One factor listed in the official US Army inquiry was the "permissive attitude toward the treatment and safeguarding of noncombatants." Investigators also found that hostility toward anyone not of a European or Judeo-Christian culture was common among officers. Unfortunately, these attitudes are common today among my peers.

The report also noted a "lack of emphasis in training" on the Geneva Conventions, handling and safeguarding of noncombatants and rules of engagement.

Rather than engendering a self-examination by military professionals of the law-of-war training, this required training has remained the most stale and least emphasized. US Army Field Manual 27-10, *The Law of Land Warfare*, dated 1956, is probably the oldest manual in the inventory. The little training I have received in this area, as both an enlisted soldier and officer, has been pathetic. The curriculum of the US Army Combined Arms and Services Staff School, US Army Command and General Staff College, did not even address the laws of land warfare.

Addicott and Warner posit that "the United States has traditionally promoted by treaty, declaration and action [emphasis added] the fullest possible range of meaningful human rights." How can professionals in a US military that cannot address its darkest human rights failure make such a claim? Our failure to address our own past in any official medium and our subsequent failure to learn from it does not lend credibility to the authors' claim that "US Armed Forces have functioned superbly under a rule of law" President George Bush was premature when, after the Gulf War victory, he declared the Vietnam Syndrome buried forever. Until my profession faces the specter of My Lai, the Vietnam Syndrome will haunt my profession and its ethical veracity.

I asked whether the Army would recognize the 25th anniversary of the My Lai massacre. Finally a letter from the Office of the Secretary of the Army, chief of Media Operations, was sent to Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, saying there are "no such events which have been or are presently being planned to commemorate this incident." Many of my peers have never heard of My Lai, and far too many even consider William Calley a misunderstood "American Hero."

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Compelling Belligerents is Tricky

Retired Lieutenant Colonel John Hunt's article, "Thoughts on Peace Support Operations" (October 1994 *Military Review*), was superb. Hunt's insights clarify this often confusing subset of operations other than war. There are two points I would question.

First, when discussing peace enforcement operations, Hunt notes that inserting neutral military units into the area of conflict can be a challenge. One option he suggests is entering via an air or sea port controlled by a belligerent party after gaining that party's consent. He further notes, "Accompanying psychological operations (PSYOP) must persuade the other belligerents that the intervening force is not arriving to support [the party which allows the insertion]."

This is absolutely right and practically impossible. Except in exceptional circumstances, one cannot gain