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Baltic Defence College Workshop on the New NATO Strategic Concept, 18 February 2010

By Baltic Defence College faculty

Introduction

On this date, the Baltic Defence College hosted a workshop in which members of the Baltic states defence and foreign ministries, Baltic Defence college faculty and some invited foreign guests from the military and diplomatic sphere came together to listen to some formal presentations and also to carry on some organized discussions about advice that they would give to help shape the New Strategic concept that NATO will be debating in this next year.

This workshop was intended as an academic discussion, a useful forum in which government officials and military and civilian experts and Baltic Defence College faculty could meet together and present their ideas. The atmosphere and organization of the workshop was informal and operated under traditional rules of free academic discussion. By this means, we were able to have a very positive and fruitful academic discussion and we learned a great deal from each other and helped refine our personal views on NATO's new strategic concept. Therefore, this workshop discussion, even though carried out by some people in official positions, is not an official document, nor does it reflect the official position of any government or institution. It should be taken by the reader as simply a group of very well informed people sharing their views and giving advice.

By the means of workshops such as this, and reports such as this, we hope to further the progress of the debate on the new NATO Strategic concept. As people who are all part of NATO states and who work with NATO in various capacities, the participants in the workshop are all highly committed the NATO Alliance and the work it does. Everyone in the workshop has strong hopes for NATO and NATO's future. By means of a free and open discussion, we intend to help strengthen the work of NATO.

1. Comments of the various speakers

Notes on the presentation by Dr. Arunas Molis of the Baltic Defence College

Dr Molis' talk centered on a discussion of the Baltic States and new NATO member states need for security reassurance in the context of developments since the last NATO strategic concept.

Since the last NATO strategic concept much of the optimism of the early 1990s for the post Cold War world has faded away. The conflict over Kosovo, the conflict in between Georgia and Russia in 2008, the cyber attacks on Estonia, the confrontation over energy supplies have all been evidence that the cooperation with Russia has not worked out as was hoped for a decade ago. Those are all situations that have made the European security environment somewhat strained.

In the face of an uncertain security environment as exists today it is important that NATO remain a central player in European security. The continued active involvement of the US in European security needs to be maintained at its current level and not reduced. The larger NATO nations ought to take measures to improve alliance military infrastructure and reinforcement capabilities in the newer member states. NATO ought to allocate resources for contingency planning and exercises in the newer NATO member states with the aim of improving the coordination and response capabilities within the alliance.

Measures such as these will improve the capability of NATO Alliance members and infrastructure and will enhance NATO's ability to respond to security threats.

Remarks of Dr. Martin Hanz, German Ambassador to Estonia

Dr. Hanz provided a positive assessment of the state of NATO and Western nation support for the Baltic nation partners. He did not see that there is a need for concern about NATO's support for, and solidarity with the Baltic States as full NATO partners. While there are always frictions within the NATO alliance on policy issues, NATO as a whole remains

firm on the core values and issues. NATO is fully committed to the security of its full members.

Remarks of Mr. Paul Teesalu

Mr. Teesalu noted that partnership and enlargement questions are central to all the debates about NATO.

Per the Oslo discussion, there are two main points to be stressed: First of all, NATO must make it very clear as to just what NATO's interests are—especially in terms of conducting actual operations. Secondly, in order to be truly effective, partnerships have to be value-based partnerships.

Both elements have to be carefully balanced. In order to facilitate cooperation with Eastern neighbors, it is also important for NATO to use MD and ICI formats in order to gain a better understanding of the interests and situation in North Africa and the Middle East.

Remarks of Mr. Vaides Augunbas

The history of partnerships in the NATO contact was discussed. There are different types of NATOP partnerships. For example, the PfP has operated as a path to NATO membership.

Another form of partnership: Austria, Finland and Ireland are all Nations interested as regional security partners with NATO—but these countries are not desirous to join NATO as member states. New Zealand, Japan and Australia also work together with NATO as partners.

Two questions are important:

1. NATO needs a realistic agenda for engaging with partner nations.
2. What should the NATO approach to Russia be? The NATO-Russia relationship is not completely negative. But in light of the Georgia conflict in 2008, it can certainly not be said to be positive.

2. Speaking notes on NATO's role in defence against the most relevant threats to transatlantic security

By Jonas Daniliauskas¹

Change of security environment and NATO's Strategic Concept

The global security environment constantly develops and changes. NATO must adapt to the changing international environment. It has done it successfully over the decades. It has done it by expanding its agenda, by changing policies, by enlarging, by adopting new Strategic Concepts.

Adoption of each new Strategic Concepts by NATO was preceded by some major change in global or European politics:

- 1949 - first SC: just after creation of NATO
- 1957 – second SC: after Germany entered NATO
- 1968 – third SC: after France withdrew from military structures of NATO
- 1991 – fourth SC: after Cold War ended
- 1999 – fifth SC: after first round of enlargement to CEEC and on the occasion of 50th anniversary of NATO
- 2010 – sixth SC will respond both to changed security environment over more than a decade and to its own enlargement since 1999

Main threats to transatlantic security and NATO's role/response

Brief outlook at current threats to transatlantic security and NATO's response to them:

Threat	NATO's response
Conventional or nuclear military attack	Article 5. Collective defence (never used in practice) and deterrence (works effectively)
Espionage against NATO and its member states	Intelligence sharing, counter-intelligence activities
Terrorism	Article 5 invoked after 9/11.

¹ Speaking on personal capacity.

	Operation in Afghanistan
WMD proliferation	Nuclear deterrence, Ballistic Missile Defence policy
Illegal arms trade	Limited NATO role
Instability in neighbouring states and regions	Partnerships, enlargement
Failing states, military conflicts in the neighbourhood or strategically important regions	Out-of-area operations
Piracy	Out-of-area operations
Threats to energy security and energy supply	Growing NATO role
Cyber attacks	Growing NATO role
Climate change	Limited NATO role
Illegal or large scale international migration	Limited NATO role
Organized crime, including trafficking of narcotics and humans	Limited NATO role
Economic and financial crisis	Very limited NATO role
Violation of human rights and liberties	Very limited NATO role

The role/mandate of the new Strategic Concept

Sometimes we hear that the new Strategic Concept will somehow reinterpret Article 5 or that it will give us an answer what Article 5 really means today. This is some kind of misperception about the task and mandate of the Strategic Concept. The task of the new Strategic Concept is not to rewrite the North Atlantic Treaty. The new Strategic Concept should not and will not question the core tasks and principles of the Alliance.

What the new Strategic Concept will do? It will:

- set guidance for NATO for next decade
- reaffirm the core purposes of NATO and identify the most urgent and major threats and challenges for the Allied security

- set a direction for policy planners and decision makers how NATO should develop, what priorities of the Alliance are, and what capabilities, mechanisms, and instruments are needed to ensure the Allied security in the most effective way
- identify the practical means and measures to ensure Article 5 in practice: exercises and training, defence planning, infrastructure, intelligence sharing
- identify the major new threats and challenges for transatlantic security and commit resources needed to address them
- ensure the continuity of open door policy, as the most effective way to secure security and stability in Alliance's neighbourhood
- envisage the most effective policy of partnerships with other main global players: the major international organizations [UN, EU, OSCE], major traditional partners [Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Korea], major partners in terms of common interests [Russia], major partners in terms of growing influence and importance [China, Brasil, India].

Challenges/obstacles

Different perceptions - emphasis on different threats. There is no secret that there are certain cleavages / division lines within NATO. Americans and Europeans view the world slightly differently and have a "different order of threats". Americans are more concerned about global threats, first of all non-proliferation and terrorism, and eventually on such states like Afghanistan, Iran. Old members also have different security agendas than new members. New members tend to be more concerned with conventional threats and security and stability in the Eastern neighbourhood and the potential threats originating from this region, including Russia. While old European members are much more concerned with post-modern agenda (climate change, migration) or domestic issues (economic crisis).

Different perceptions - different responses. Different level of ambitions and political will, different instruments. Europeans are much less inclined to deliver actual contributions to Afghanistan. Last Transatlantic trends survey shows that 77 per cent of Europeans are against sending more troops to Afghanistan. However, 55 per cent of Europeans are willing to increase economic contribution to Afghanistan. Similar picture regarding Iran: 48 per cent of Europeans are willing to increase diplomatic pressure

but rule out military option, while only 12 per cent are for increase of diplomatic pressure but keep the military option. Thus, Americans prefer traditional and active involvement, while Europeans want to keep out, just to contribute financially if really needed. The result is an example of Afghanistan – ISAF is officially a NATO operation, de facto it is US-dominated operation, where some non-NATO members contribute more than NATO Allies.

Different perceptions – different defence spending. Americans and Europeans are also divided by quite an impressive gap in terms of defence spending. The US defence spending is 4 per cent of GDP, while European average is only 1,7 per cent of GDP, and quite a significant number of European allies spend just around 1 per cent of GDP, not to mention the difference of American and European defence budgets in absolute numbers. Current economic crisis and different domestic agendas / priorities of Europeans will not diminish this gap.

EU military ambitions. NATO-EU relations are almost in a deadlock. Instead of improving them, instead of reaching a real synergy, where NATO contributes with military capacity and the EU – with civilian ad development capabilities, some EU countries are speaking about European army. This risks in ending up with duplication, resource overstretch, especially for small countries.

Agenda overstretch. Ironically, more politicians try to respond to their societies needs to make NATO relevant to post-modern agenda by trying to include such issues like climate change and migration on NATO agenda, more they are putting the Alliance at risk of overstretching and ineffective.

Possible solutions

Transatlantic consensus. Fortunately different threat perceptions across the Atlantic are not the fundamental differences. These are more about tactics, not strategy. Since NATO is about solidarity and consensus, these differences result in discussions and different emphasis on different threats and different but not diverge national policies. NATO was, is and will remain the main forum for transatlantic discussions, decisions and common actions.

Realistic agenda. NATO should not do everything. We should ask not what NATO can do, but what NATO should do. Thus, NATO's agenda has to remain limited at what NATO can do best – collective defence and deterrence, i.e. its core functions and in addressing some new threats like non-proliferation, terrorism, threats to energy and cyber security together with other international organizations and major global players. NATO should contribute in addressing global threats, but not all threats should become only NATO responsibility.

Comprehensive approach, job sharing, cooperation, synergy with other international institutions. NATO cannot do everything itself. It cannot be “a global threat countering organization”. It already cooperates with other international organizations, i.e. with UN on issues of terrorism, crisis management, climate change; with the EU on issues of terrorism, crisis management, arms control; with IAEA on issue of nuclear non-proliferation; with Interpol on issue of terrorism; with OSCE on issues of terrorism, arms control, border management, security sector reform, organized crime; with important partner states such as Russia on issues of stabilization in Afghanistan, terrorism, non-proliferation and others. Thus, NATO is developing its comprehensive approach and this creates a kind of job and responsibility sharing with other major players on international scale. The exercise of developing the new Strategic Concept proves an unprecedented openness, transparency and inclusiveness of this process. Not only partners are involved in the process of consultations, but also other international organizations and NGOs. It is also worth mentioning that the first three Strategic Concepts were primarily military documents, approved by MC and were classified. Only starting from 1991 the SC is approved by NAC and became a public document.

NATO remains a value-based Alliance. Finally, we should not forget that NATO is not just a simple toolbox. NATO cannot be simply instrumental and just interest-based. NATO first of all, is about shared values and solidarity. This is what bounds NATO together. This is the main reason of NATO strength. NATO proved to be the most successful political-military alliance in the history because it is based on common values and solidarity. And it will continue to be such an alliance as long as values and solidarity prevail.

3. Remarks of Lt. General Friedrich Wilhelm Ploeger, German Air Force, Commander of NATO combined Air Operations Centre 2

NATO Air Policing with a focus on the Baltic States

As the Commander of NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre 2 (CAOC 2) in Uedem, Germany, it is a privilege for me to share some thoughts with you today on one of the Alliance's most important tasks and challenges of i.e. the Air Policing mission. I would like to take this opportunity to briefly go over the history of Air Policing and explain to you in general terms how we conduct Air Policing in NATO. This will then allow me to go more in depth on some specifics related to the Baltic Air Policing mission. I will conclude my lecture with some personal thoughts related to the future of Air Policing in the Baltic States and in NATO in general.

Introduction

The concept of using airpower to maintain or produce civil order was initiated by the Royal Air Force during the period between the wars, 1919-1939, and was referred to as "air policing." The discussion at the time revolved around the thought as to whether airpower could be as effective as ground power. As a matter of fact, the term "air policing" was first used to describe the British mission in Mesopotamia (now part of Iraq) where aircraft effectively replaced the more traditional army approach of "boots on the ground." This was the first time air power had been used for this policing task or, in other words, to bring about or to maintain civil order.

Background of NATINADS

Looking into the history of the Alliance now, we notice that in the 1970s, NATO nations participating in the military structure realized that national air defense systems operating independently could not effectively protect NATO airspace. In fact, the change in NATO's strategic concept from "Massive Retaliation" to "Flexible Response" and "Forward Defense" led especially in the then Central Region to a more integrated and multinational organization of defense. NATO then created a "NATO Integrated Air Defense System" the so-called NATINADS. This system

combines national assets supplemented as necessary by NATO elements, to include sensors, command and control (C2) facilities and weapons systems such as ground based air defense and fighter aircraft.

Today, NATO members jointly and collectively conduct air policing to preserve the integrity of NATO's airspace. Being aware of the fundamental importance of air policing and the requirement to have air defence assets available at short notice, NATO has at its disposal a comprehensive system of air surveillance and airspace management means as well as quick reaction alert fighter aircraft. NATO exploits these facilities to react within shortest time to air traffic incidents in the Allies' airspace and employs, when required, fighter aircraft to assist in the identification of unknown aircraft, to assist aircraft in emergency situations and to act if necessary against non-NATO military aircraft which could include using weapons. In addition, and since September 2001, this capability is also available for a first reaction against possible Renegade aircraft, a capacity which I will later explain in more detail.

NATO Air Policing is executed from wide spread QRA(I) bases with different types of fighter aircraft, interconnected ground radar and surveillance assets, linked Control and Reporting Centers (CRCs) and subordinate to Combined Air Operations Centers (CAOCs).

The interconnecting data-link systems enable the free and open exchange of a Recognized Air Picture (RAP) from North Norway to Eastern Turkey. NATINADS has been, and remains, the cornerstone of a visible expression of the Alliance's solidarity and cohesion.

CAOC's Role in Air Policing

NATO's airspace is divided into several Air Policing Areas (APAs). As the Commander of CAOC 2, a multinational and modernly equipped CAOC in NATO, I am responsible for the Air Policing Area 2 (APA2), which comprises the airspace of 10 European nations from the BENELUX countries in the West, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia in the center, to the Baltic Nations Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in the North-East.

At CAOC 2 all data from the subordinate APA2 CRCs, including CRC Karmelava in Lithuania, are collected and combined with the data from the civilian air traffic authorities. This provides a permanently current

Recognized Air Picture or RAP that shows all the flight activities in this specific area of responsibility. If any situation occurs that is not in compliance with the rules and regulations stipulated by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the CAOC Commander is authorized to scramble the QRA(I) aircraft assigned to NATO by the member nation in whose airspace the incident takes place.

When two NATO member states agree a respective convention, the QRA(I) aircraft are also permitted to cross national boundaries to fulfil their mission. *(This is the case, e.g. only in CAOC 2's western Area of Responsibility AOR comprising the BENELUX and Germany.)*

The reasons for possible incidents may be a disruption of radio communications between the aircraft and the air traffic control, not sending a proper transponder code OR that aircraft alter the pre-established route, altitude or speed. In these instances the QRA(I) approaches the aircraft that caused the incident from astern to obtain the information needed.

I will now focus on the eastern and north-eastern part of my Area of Responsibility with an overview and update of NATO's Air Policing mission in the Baltic States.

New Baltic NATO Members Challenge to NATO

In March 2004, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia joined NATO. As new members, these nations became entitled to participate in NATO's collective security and defense umbrella which includes routine policing of all NATO airspace. As some nations were only operating small air units comprising a few helicopters and a handful of jet trainers, but no combat fighter aircraft, NATO faced a significant operational challenge with regards to providing air policing for these new members. The capability for the Baltic States air policing was established by deploying NATO fighter aircraft to the former Soviet air base Zokniai, outside of the Lithuanian city of Šiauliai. In addition, the Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET), an indigenous radar surveillance and command and coordination system, was seamlessly integrated into NATINADS.

On March the 30th 2004, a group of Belgian F-16s landed at Zokniai or Šiauliai Air Base and began the Baltic Air Policing Operation that continues to this day. From that time, 14 NATO nations rotated 22 times with a variety of fighter aircraft ranging from Romanian MiG21 to the German Eurofighter and protected the Baltic Nations' sky. Until today more than 1750 Tango (training) missions were flown. In addition to that about 30 Alpha-scrambles (real missions) were flown to identify civilian aircraft flying without communications, to identify unknown aircraft or to intercept Russian military flights, without proper flight plan or entering NATO airspace (*on ELINT missions*).

All these missions were successfully controlled by the personnel of the tri-national Regional Air Surveillance Co-ordination Center (RASCC) in Karmelava, which was renamed and reorganized to CRC Karmelava on 13 Jan 2007.

As far as future rotations are concerned, NATO extended its Baltic QRA commitment until 2014, with slots already filled for 2011. The German Air Force until today deployed three times to Siauliai, which is more than any other NATO nation. In the autumn of 2009, Germany, very successfully and for the first time, deployed Eurofighter Typhoons.

Infrastructure updates: BALTNET Efforts and Development

Let me elaborate on some infrastructural updates, more specifically related to the military airbases and the BALTNET efforts and development.

The requirement to update its infrastructure was the biggest challenge facing the Baltic Nations and NATO when the air policing mission began in 2004. The airfield at Siauliai was in poor condition. The runways at Siauliai required upgrading to allow 3rd / 4th generation aircraft (e.g. F-16s) to operate safely from the airfield.

Since 2004 Siauliai is the only airbase available for NATO Quick Reaction Alert Interceptor. During the last years a huge modernization program was realized including the reconstruction of the two runways, the installation of navigational aids, and two arresting gears and the availability of a new Wing Operations Center. The construction of new shelters, additional fuel storage facilities, new parking aprons, arming/disarming areas and the general build up of AB Siauliai as future DOB for a squadron of allied

fighters, AAR aircraft or strategic transports is part of the ongoing ambitious modernization program.

On the other hand, Airbase Siauliai is the only fully QRA(I) suitable military airbase. No alternate airfield in the three Baltic States can provide a cable engagement capability. That sometimes has a direct impact on the scramble availability of the QRA(I) at Siauliai. Alternates are the International Airports at Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn with only one mobile mid-field barrier. The heavy investment in Amari AB in Estonia and Lielvarde AB in Latvia as QRA(I) alternates including a cable engagement capability is highly appreciated and in the long run required to keep the availability status of the deployed QRA(I) at a high level.

In addition to the airfield construction at Siauliai Air Base, also the C2, Command and Control, facilities required upgrades. Fortunately, most of the upgrades were already in place when the Baltic Nations acceded to NATO in 2004. In order to enhance their own airspace C2 capabilities, the governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania established a Baltic Joint Airspace Surveillance Network (BALTNET) in 1998. BALTNET consolidates air surveillance data to form the Recognized Air Picture (RAP). The procurement of new systems vastly improved BALTNET and prepared it for integration into the NATINADS in April 2004.

BALTNET's RAP is now transmitted from CRC Karmelava to CAOC 2 in Uedem, Germany, to provide full command and control coverage of Air Policing Area 2. Since joining the NATINADS in 2004, BALTNET has added European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company (EADS) radar systems (*TRML-3D*) to improve the performance and coverage over its territories. I gladly notice that all Baltic Nations are planning to exchange the old Russian radar systems (*P-18*) and to buy additional modern 3-D radar systems from this year until 2014. We assume that from 2014 onward, all three Baltic Nations will assign only solid state modern 3-D radars to the BALTNET and NATO, making the Baltic airspace surveillance system compatible and equal to other NATO air defense systems.

As an integral part of the NATINADS, CRC Karmelava is an operational NATO CRC with an adequate number of personnel, well trained according to NATO standards. Modern equipment and communication

systems complete this CRC and make it a reliable CAOC 2 subordinate ASACS unit.

An operational national Control and Reporting Post (CRP) in Amari, Estonia with air surveillance and weapons control capability to act as a backup for CRC Karmelava is a solid basis for continuous and at least regional operations and redundancy. Similarly, Latvia established a new and modern national CRP at Lielvarde Air Base.

Last but not least, training and personnel skills are one of the main efforts to maintain current operations. Regional and NATO exercises are used to support a solid weapons controller and track production officers training programme. Noteworthy is the CC-AIR Ramstein initiated Baltic Region Training event (BRT-E), formerly known as Baltic Air Sovereignty Training Event (BAST-E). This unique multi-national exercise focuses on enhancing Air Policing training, interoperability and integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and neighboring countries. Noteworthy are the astounding public and media interest in these events with the specific interest in show of force e.g. by flybys. CAOC2 will continue to support these exercises together with the sending nations' Detachments at Siauliai Air Base.

I would now like to expand on two issues related to Air Policing in general and the Baltic region in particular. At first there is the Renegade issue and secondly, I would like to talk about our (CAOC 2) reaction against Russian Federation and Belarusian aircraft.

Renegade Issues

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, on 11 September 2001, not only changed the nature of protecting American airspace forever, but also had a profound impact on the operations of NATO air defense fighters in regard to Air Policing. The unconventional character of the attacks constituted a new threat that did not fit into the traditional role of air policing. This poses one of the biggest challenges to NATO air policing operations within the Alliance and is even more significant in the Baltic Area.

The use of a civilian aircraft as a weapon for terrorist attacks represented a new threat requiring a new term, the so called "RENEGADE", which

presents a number of complex issues. These include not only the categorization of the attack (military or civilian in nature) and the associated jurisdiction, but also the issues of national airspace and national carriers. Moreover, the differentiation between a hijack situation without an intention to attack, an aircraft in an airborne emergency situation, and an actual RENEGADE situation may be extremely difficult to determine, and might be impossible in certain situations. In the case of “RENEGADE”, elements of doubt will probably remain throughout the entire decision making process.

Any decision to employ weapon systems and/ or engage a RENEGADE aircraft must be authorized by the appropriate national authority that has jurisdiction for the airspace within which the aircraft is operating. Further more, lethal force against civil aircraft posing a possible terrorist threat can only be dealt with nationally. Consequently, additional procedures need to be established to enable NATO Commanders, to provide the alert and coordinating functions necessary to transfer responsibility and assets for actions taken against terrorist aircraft back to the nation concerned. NATO will continue to monitor the flight path of these aircraft and inform adjacent nations which may also become involved.

Any potential air threat to the Alliance will be investigated as a normal Peace Time air policing measure. In the specific case when this air threat is suspected or determined to be a “RENEGADE” platform, the responsibility for all subsequent actions rests with the appropriate national authority that has jurisdiction of the national airspace within which the aircraft is operating. This ensures that nations are not restricted in maintaining the full range of acceptable options in responding to such an incident. It requires a clear delineation of responsibilities between NATO and national agencies / authorities.

The Baltic Nations present some unique challenges in that regard. As mentioned before, non-national forces provide NATO air policing for the Baltic Nations. This works fine as long as incursions are committed by military aircraft. However, in a Renegade scenario, the Baltic Nations can only direct the QRA (I) fighters to engage (*with deadly force*) if a bi-lateral agreement between the respective Baltic Nation and the nation providing the QRA (I) forces exists that allows weapons employment.

CAOC2 Reaction on Russian Air Activity

Let me now elaborate on a second issue, perhaps related but completely different, and that is the NATO philosophy, and therefore CAOC 2's philosophy on reactions against Russian Federation and Belarusian military aircraft in the Baltic airspace.

For that matter, the question whether NATO should react to Russian State aircraft flying in international airspace on a valid flight plan in a manner different than that for other non-NATO nations state aircraft flying in international airspace on a valid flight plan was answered by the Director of the International Military Staff (DIMS) in January 2006: *“At this time neither the Military Committee (MC) nor the North Atlantic Council have issued directions that Russian state aircraft should be reacted to any differently than state aircraft from other non-NATO nations”*.

As per current directives no A-scrambles (real launch of the QRA(I) aircraft) will be undertaken against traffic flying standard Air Traffic Control (ATC) profiles (valid Flight Plan, communications with ATC, appropriate transponder settings) - and this includes Russian Federation and Belarusian aircraft.

When aircraft display a non-standard profile (no Flight Plan, no communications with ATC, no valid transponder setting(s), intelligence info confirming Intel Collection Flight (e.g. COOT-A)), an A-Scramble will be initiated by CAOC 2 for an interrogation.

I sincerely hope that there is no doubt in anybody's mind that despite this perhaps perceived or assumed reserved reaction by CAOC 2, this is fully in line with current NATO directives and guidance. Additionally, and rest assured, these same directives and guidance allow us to react firmly in case of doubt and / or non-adherence to the standard profile.

Air Policing – The Way Ahead

I would like to conclude now by presenting my thoughts on how I see the future of Air Policing in the Baltics and more generally in NATO.

As far as the future of NATO's Air Policing mission in the Baltics is concerned, it is my view that in the near future NATO Nations will continue to provide air policing assets when requested to do so during the Force Generation Conferences at SHAPE. However, I am not really convinced that this is the most sustainable solution for the long run, considering the tremendous burden on the Sending Nations. There is a considerable financial toll, without mentioning the further burden on personnel.

There are a myriad of options being studied by the Military Committee right now. Possible solutions may vary from continuing with the "Interim Air Policing Capability" to a similar solution like for Iceland or even rely solely on the collective defense umbrella as stipulated by Article V of the Washington Treaty.

Since 2004 the Baltic States have demonstrated with distinct enthusiasm and engagement a substantial progress towards standardized Air Policing and to have a credible Air Policing capability in the Baltic Nations' airspace. A lot of challenges on the way to independent air policing capabilities were already mastered e.g. the intensive and ongoing modernization programs, the step from foreign training support to tri-national and national training programs, as described before. The infrastructural investments and efforts done and ongoing at Airbase Siauliai on its way to NATO Standards and a future Deployed Operations Base are noteworthy and positively recognized in NATO. Nevertheless the biggest challenge remains to procure own fighter aircraft. However, rather than investing in an expensive fighter capability, it is perhaps wiser to continue to develop niche capabilities on the basis of which you can participate in peacekeeping operations (*as stated by NATO's Sec Gen De Hoop Scheffer in Apr 2004*).

As far as Air Policing in NATO is concerned, it is perhaps a perception that the post Cold War role of air policing NATO's airspace has not changed. NATINADS is the primary protector of NATO airspace throughout the Alliance. Aircraft still maintain the QRA(I) posture as part of an integrated Air Defense system, awaiting intrusion by a hostile, military enemy. Command and Control assets are in place to watch the skies and send the QRA(I) forces airborne to meet the challenges. With new members who accede the Alliance, we can expect the NATINADS will continue to grow.

It is important to realize that behind all these integrated air defense systems there is a much more important factor: Solidarity and cohesion the cornerstone of NATO. NATO is firmly built on collective defense, cohesion, interoperability and standardization between the members of the Alliance. Take it away and you will remove the backbone of NATO. I therefore expect no change and NATO to continue to support the NATINADS, at least in the immediate future.

Furthermore, we cannot deny that after 9/11 a new threat appeared on the horizon for which only a robust system as NATINADS could meet the initial challenges. RENEGADE is a threat perceived by all member nations and beyond. Even if we would remove the NATINADS system, Nations would still be required to maintain a similar system in place, albeit based on national requirements and more than likely linked by bi-lateral or multi-lateral agreements with other nations.

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Christopher Eger, Baltic Air Policing by NATO – Protecting the Space of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia 2004-Present, Nov 4, 2009

Charles J. Butler, Major, USAF, A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements Instructor: Dr. Mary Hampton Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 11 April 2006: "NATO AIR POLICING: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE ROLE"

LtCol Steffen, CAOC2 member of Baltic Operational

4. Summary Comments – NATO Strategic Concept Workshop

By Dr. James Corum, Dean, Baltic Defence College

These concluding remarks are an attempt to try to develop a consensus as to what the participants think would be an appropriate Baltic view of the new NATO Strategic Concept. It is an important moment as this is the first time the Baltic States will have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the NATO Strategic Concept.

Some senior visitors here have been very helpful in telling us how our contribution would fit into the work of the committee. They have provided a clear and useful context of the workshop to begin discussions. Especially important, they have outlined some of the most vital issues that a new NATO strategic concept must work under, and some of the issues that need to be addressed. Some senior visitors have been very useful in pointing out some of the areas where NATO needs to improve its cooperation with partners and coordination among member states.

Mr. Paul Teesaly noted that the partnership and enlargement questions are central to all the debates on NATO. Per the Oslo discussion, there are two main points to stress: first of all, NATO must make it very clear as to just what NATO's interests are, especially in conducting active operations., Secondly, partnerships, to be effective, have to be value-based partnerships. These two elements have to be carefully balanced. In addition to the cooperation with Eastern neighbours, it is also important for NATO to use MD and ICI formats in order to gain a better understanding of the situation in and relations with North Africa and the Middle East.

Mr. Jonas Daniliauskas provided an excellent summary of the threats that NATO faces. Almost all NATO member nations and participants can agree on the list of threats. As to what priority those threats hold will be a matter of personal views, national perspectives, shared regional perspectives, Europe versus trans- Atlantic views, and so on.

While we are not in a position to determine the “proper” priority of each threat—nor would it be expected that all agree—but it is nonetheless a very good starting point to agree on the list of threats and their nature.

Having framed the context of the debate and of the challenges facing NATO we moved to a discussion of practical issues. Dr. Arunas Molis pointed out that the new member states have some grounds for concern given several incidents over the last few years. He outlines some areas where NATO might make a more visible effort to develop alliance infrastructure in new member states.

General Ploeger provided us with an excellent example of effective cooperation in the Baltic region with the Baltic States integration in to the NATO air defence system and the active participation of NATO air forces in the defence mission. In a joint regional and NATO effort, the Baltic States have contributed to infrastructure improvements and a highly effective programme has been put into place. This alone ought to demonstrate that NATO has not forgotten the Baltic States and that infrastructure improvements and defence improvements can be made even in a time of limited defence spending.

Speakers pointed out that the NATO Strategic concept must reaffirm the traditional mission of NATO as a defensive military alliance. Although the other issues such as demographics, economic crises, environmental concerns etc. are all notable concerns that directly affect security, NATO needs to concentrate on the core missions—primarily military ones—but with cyber security and counter terrorism also added. Trying to do too much in too many spheres would undermine the real effectiveness of NATO. Other international organizations are better suited to these concerns,

The issue of partnerships was also a core theme of the workshop. NATO has many forms of partnership. It is also essential that the partnerships not be based solely on common interests, but for partnerships to truly work they have to be based on common values. Thus, NATO best operates as an alliance of European and Trans –Atlantic democracies with a common view of government and human rights.

At the time of the last Strategic concept (1997) the expansion of NATO was a central issue. In fact, NATO has expanded considerably. However, today it is not an urgent issue; there are no nations on the horizon that will be ready to join NATO for several years. In the meantime, partnerships through the PfP and other organizations are working well. NATO ought

not to overextend—but remain true to its nature as an alliance primarily concerned with military security and defence. Some out of area operations are necessary—Afghanistan is an example of this. But caution must be exercised in getting NATO involved in operations too far from the European/Transatlantic region.

The issue of responding to Russia is also central for NATO. The NATO/Russian relationship has its positive points. For example, Russian cooperation has been vital in securing overland and air transit of logistics for the NATO force in Afghanistan. Russia has been cooperative on such issues.

On the other hand, the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, the Russian arms and technology deals with Iran, the Russian protests against NATO ballistic missile defence, and especially the new Russian doctrine that sets NATO in the context of a threat are all negative developments and are rightly seen as leading to worsening NATO/Russian relations. NATO will certainly work with Russia whenever possible, but in light of some recent Russian actions, NATO should also be firm in its commitment to territorial defence.

One of the general areas of agreement was that the traditional mission of territorial defence is still a valid one for NATO and must still remain a core mission of the organization.

Measuring Progress in Reconstructing Afghanistan

By *Christiaan Davids, Sebastiaan Rietjens & Joseph Soeters*

Abstract

In this article we focus on measuring the progress of the Afghan reconstruction process, in which the international military of 42 countries and many different international and local humanitarian organisations are engaged. We present data of the so called Afghan Country Stability Picture, a database that contains detailed information on approximately 85,000 projects (e.g. water, energy, education, governance) in Afghanistan over the period 2002-2008. Using this quantitative database we reveal descriptive findings and explanatory relations with respect to project characteristics such as donor, timeframe, location, costs, the security situation and learning experiences. The analysis shows that indicators based on these projects may be suitable to develop a wider framework for measuring progress with respect to the creation of stability and prosperity in (post-) conflict situations. Nation building and developmental policies in general can no longer do without carefully analyzing what has been achieved with the resources that have been used. However, it is prerequisite that this information is shared and discussed with the local stakeholders, i.e. politicians and general public alike.

1. Introduction

The international community is frequently called upon to stabilise countries and regions affected by conflict. In these operations military and civilian workers operate alongside each other in countries where local civil administration and security organisations perform inadequately and basic public services are lacking. Whereas peacekeeping in the Cold War era was limited to monitoring ceasefires between two parties and manning buffer-zones, nowadays Western nations have developed an interest in achieving more ambitious goals, that is to (re-)build a nation in post-conflict situations (Kang and Meernik, 2004; Ghani and Lockhart, 2008). These goals include elements of stabilisation, humanitarian aid, post-war reconstruction, economic and social rehabilitation, security sector reform and democratisation.

Although nation-building and reconstruction attract a lot of attention these days, it is not quite new. In the history of foreign relations of the U.S.A.

and a number of European nations, historical experiences in for instance South Korea, Japan, Haiti and East Timor have preceded the current activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, with more or less satisfying results (e.g. Fukuyama, 2006). Even in Afghanistan previous attempts to modernize the country's infrastructure and security sector testify that the ambition to develop a nation from outside is not a new phenomenon (Cullather, 2002).

Assessing the progress of nation building activities may not be new either, but it is highly important. It is an attempt to go beyond strategic advising, the formulation of visions and decision-making, and to focus on the actual implementation and delivery of (collective) goods and services (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008). By assessing such progress it may be possible to improve the coordination, communication and accountability of the activities of the contributing organizations and countries (Diehl, 2008; Fast and Neufeldt, 2005).

Currently there is widespread attention to performance measurement in conflict literature (e.g. Chauvet & Collier, 2008; Donini, 2007; Freeman, 2007; Rietjens & Bollen, 2007). Assessing this literature, however, we contend that there is no widely used framework to interpret the progress that is achieved and the performance of organisations in nation building (e.g., Rietjens and Bollen, 2008). Nor is there a solid set of numbers for measurement to frame an understanding of the raw data (Clancy and Crosset, 2007). Many policy evaluations in this field are built on qualitative descriptions and assessments of the developments under study (e.g., Tondini, 2007). Of course, these evaluations are invaluable, but such approaches lack the insights and reliability that go beyond the inherent limitations of the individual evaluator.

This article presents an attempt to measure progress in nation building and reconstruction in Afghanistan with the help of quantitative data. It is based on data from the Afghanistan Country Stability Picture (ACSP), a database that contains information on reconstruction and development projects from all over the country. The result is a dataset with information about approximately 85,000 projects in Afghanistan in the period 2002-2008. For each project ACSP records several characteristics such as start date, costs, location and under what pillar of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) the project is grouped (e.g. governance, infrastructure or health and nutrition).

Using the ACSP to measure the progress and the performance of organisations in nation building and reconstruction can be advantageous. The database is widely supported by both military and civilian actors in Afghanistan, which minimises frictions in the civil-military relations. Updating ACSP requires little resources and therefore minimises the extra bureaucracy load. And the project records in ACSP are relatively simple, objective, quantitative data that give little space for discussion. Despite these advantages a limitation of ACSP is that it focuses on efforts and outputs, that is the projects, rather than the outcomes such as the health situation of the Afghan population in a certain province. Therefore, ACSP does not provide the answers to all the questions that may rise, despite its important contribution to measuring the progress in nation-building and reconstruction in Afghanistan. There is room for improvement, as we shall see at the end of this article.

All in all, this article aims *to provide new insights and understanding of reconstructing activities in Afghanistan through a quantitative analysis, and to contribute to the development and use of progress and performance measurement in nation building and reconstruction in general.* To reach this objective the next section provides an overview of our understanding of progress and performance measurement in the public sector in general and in nation building and reconstruction in particular. Section three outlines the methodology of our analysis. The fourth section provides descriptive and explanatory analyses of the ACSP dataset. The article ends with conclusions pointing at future ways of improving both the data and the way they are used for policy evaluation and guidance for the country's future.

2. Measuring progress and performance in nation building

Measuring the progress and the performance of organisations that participate in nation building and reconstruction is important for several reasons. First, such measurements are likely to create transparency and can thus contribute to increased accountability (Noordegraaf and Abma, 2003; Thiel and Leeuw, 2002; de Bruijn, 2007). Through measurement individuals (e.g. fieldworkers but also politicians) and organizations can make clear what and how many products they have provided in the course of time and which and how many resources were used (Glenn and Gayton, 2008). Second, such measurements enable the evaluation of outputs and,

therefore, the strengthening of effective administration (Noordegraaf and Abma, 2003). Based on this evaluation, military commanders or civilian leaders can reallocate (part of their) resources or adjust their strategic planning. Third, such progress measurement enables organizations to learn what they do well and when improvements are possible (de Bruijn, 2007). A final reason is that such measurement can improve the communication between participating organisations such as NATO, United Nations and host nation authorities. This can contribute to aligning expectations of the international community with those of the host nation stakeholders, something that has been coined by General David Petraeus as ‘managing expectations’ (Petraeus, 2008).

An early attempt at measuring progress in nation building is found in a 1997 DFI International study on effective transitions in United Nations peace operations (Blechman et al., 1997). To date, efforts to establish measures of progress in nation building operations have been disconnected from each other and a range of terminology and disparate methodologies have been employed (Cohen, 2006). One example of such efforts is the World Bank’s Low-Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) Initiative’s transitional results matrix that has sought to measure progress in a variety of countries, including Liberia and Haiti. The Fund for Peace developed a comprehensive model that was applied to Iraq. Furthermore, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies’ developed a model for measuring progress and applied it to both Iraq and Afghanistan’s reconstruction (Cohen, 2006).

Currently several organisations such as NATO that is leading the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, have implemented their respective effect measurement methodologies. In case of ISAF this methodology is entitled an effects-based approach to operations (EBAO). In general, EBAO seeks to create a holistic picture of the operational environment to enhance military planning, the conduct of operations, and the assessment of the efficacy of those operations (Prescott, 2008). Within this broader view, commanders and staffs at all levels should then be able to synchronize their efforts with those of other governmental, international, and non-governmental organizations.

Evaluating the literature with respect to organisational tools and methodologies like EBAO, the concept of management accounting and control systems is important. The aim of a management accounting and control system is to produce relevant information for planning, decision-

making and evaluation (Merchant and van der Stede, 2007; Widener, 2007). Bisbe and Otley (2004) refer to such a system as a set “of procedures and processes that managers and other organizational participants use in order to help ensure the achievement of their goals and the goals of their organizations”. So far, management accounting and controls systems have received little attention in the context of defence organisations and nation building activities (i.e. Grönlund and Catasús, 2005; Lambert, 2002). This is to be regretted because lessons from this field of expertise may be useful for the measurement and evaluation of nation building activities.

Applying accounting and control concepts and measurements to activities in the public sector - of which nation building is a grand example – would lead us to see severe difficulties, including but not limited to the following. Despite an increased focus on metrics within many institutions (Thiel and Leeuw, 2008), selecting the right measures is difficult. Organisations must increasingly balance the desire to maintain simple, easily assessed, comprehensible metrics that provide adequate measures of effectiveness with the kitchen-sink approach, in which increased data collection and subsequent analysis attempt to satisfy all prospective users’ requirements (Glenn and Gayton, 2008).

Second, finding a causal relationship between actions and the effects or outcomes is difficult in general, but particularly in nation building and reconstruction. To establish causality (essentially: action A results in outcome B) requires that very specific, in fact impossible, conditions be met. Hence, within nation building there are huge difficulties to determine outcomes and identify causal relationships between these and an organization’s actions (Glenn and Gayton, 2008). A commander of an American military unit observed, “*even if we can successfully measure an outcome, it’s extremely hard to know what caused the outcome. There are so many things happening at once that causal relationships are next to impossible to identify. There is a certain amount of guessing and operational art in measuring success*” (Glenn and Gayton, 2008).

Third, measurement easily increases bureaucracy. When an organization emphasises performance measurement it often assigns considerable resources to producing data and information on performance results and - if possible- impact. This can increase the load of bureaucracy enormously. Power (1994) even refers to this as the “audit explosion” or “audit society”.

Finally, the complex relationship between civilian agencies, such as non-governmental organisations and donor organisations, and military actors hampers an integrated attempt to measure the performance of nation building. Although many researchers and practitioners support the idea that successfully coordinated or integrated civilian and military efforts are a key to successful nation building (Rietjens, 2008), there is a great risk for civilian agencies of being associated with a potentially unwelcome military force, and thereby losing the protective patina of neutrality (Donini et al., 2004; Macrae, 2002; Wheeler and Harmer, 2006; Hasegawa, 2008). Since civil actors and their military counterparts frequently have different objectives and different ways of achieving these (Rietjens, 2008), they look favourably on cooperation as long as they expect it to serve their best interests (Seiple, 1996). This can easily lead to opportunistic behaviour. Moreover, the differences in organisational culture, expertise, resources and timeframes between the two sets of actors also contribute to this complexity (Abiew, 2003; Bollen, 2002).

Afghanistan is an exemplary case of nation building in which many military and civilian organisations operate and consequently try to measure the performance of their own activities and the progress of the country in general. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) uses EBAO, while USAID, the United Nations Mission of Afghanistan (UNAMA) and other civilian agencies use their own control systems. All of the difficulties raised above regarding performance measurement do also apply to the attempts of these single actors. This often results in incorrect, incomplete and politically motivated presentations of the performance regarding various aspects of nation building (Rietjens, 2008; Glenn and Gayton, 2008).

This article uses the Afghan Country Stability Picture (ACSP) to develop new insights and understanding of nation building activities in Afghanistan. The ACSP is an information set, a management control systems tool, to manage and control progress and performance during nation building. This can be managed and controlled not only for and by one organisation (i.e. ISAF) but - in theory - can be used to synchronise efforts between organisations since the wider development community contributes to the ACSP with their own information.

3. Methodology

The first part of our research consisted of interviews, briefings and the participation in meetings with NATO officials during deployment of the first author to Kandahar in southern Afghanistan from July to November 2007. We developed a wider understanding of the background, the architecture and relevance of the ACSP. ACSP is a geospatial information system of which the mapping system is connected to a database that provides countrywide information about reconstruction & development (R&D) activities in Afghanistan. It holds information of projects ranging from the reconstruction of roads, bridges, dams and schools to the development and introduction of basic health packages in Afghanistan. To this end, information of the Afghan government, donors, provincial reconstruction teams and other international and non-governmental organisations is used. The ACSP's primary purpose is to enable widespread situational awareness and coordination throughout the Afghan government, NATO and the development and governance community to align and assess the strategic programs in Afghanistan. It is a tool to support the comprehensive approach and is updated through NATO officials². The dataset we collected in 2007 was further analysed and discussed during 2008 using relevant literature. We then recoded the initial dataset for statistical testing and examined the collected data.

A second and validating part of our research was conducted during a field visit of the second and the third author, in January 2009. We again met with different NATO officials in Afghanistan (both in Kabul and Kandahar) and updated our ACSP dataset. This second part proved to be valuable in regards of our earlier developed understanding of the context of the operation, the organisation of the operation and the content of the ACSP. Therefore we were able to conduct interviews in much more detail, discuss our earlier findings with practitioners and eliminate gaps.

² NATO officials use more than 140 sources different sources such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams, USAID and the Afghan Government to gather information on R&D projects in Afghanistan. In 2008 a website is launched where different stakeholders can analyse and consult ACSP data through the Internet.

3.1. Data

The ACSP dataset which served as input for our research consisted of 84.641 project records. We took several measures before using the dataset. The original dataset holds 25 variables, including identification and information processing characteristics that are less relevant for our purpose. After analysing the dataset in combination with interviews, briefings, meeting reports and literature we decided to use eight of the 25 variables as the basic set.³ “Start date”, “end date”, “region”, “cost”, “status”, “Afghan national development strategy (ANDS) sector” and “implementing partner” proved to be relevant variables for our research. In addition to these eight variables we defined two new variables: “days completed per project” and “turnover per project per day” to address the absorption capacity in Afghanistan.

As a second measure, we recoded the variable “region” to a new variable named “security situation” using polling data we collected during our field visits. From 2006 to 2008 eight polls (N = 5650) were conducted throughout Afghanistan to develop insight in the perceptions of the Afghan people on security⁴. We used the polling question “How is the security situation in your area?” that scored the situation between 1 and 10 to classify the five NATO regions: capital (Kabul and surroundings), north, east, west and south. The examination of the polling data showed one region with a mean of five, two regions with a mean of seven and two

³ The ACSP database consists of four main data groups that are combined in one database: CIMIC (i.e. the projects of ISAF units), the projects of the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), USAID and miscellaneous. The individual project records are updated using 25 variables. These variables are specified in annex A. To focus this research and point our analyses we screened all 25 variables on usefulness and uniqueness. For example, strategy measurement and regional differences are notable for performance measurement of nation building. Differences between the financial support of donor countries are for this research less useful. Since the dataset is large, approximately 85.000 project records, the variables were screened rigorously to give way to clear analyses. Calculation and recoding of variables were then necessary steps to further detail our research findings. For example the variables “cost”, “start date” and “end date” have been used to calculate the variable “mean turnover per day” to analyse the absorption capacity as a performance measurement indicator.

⁴ MRA Institute & ISAF (2008). *ANQAR 1.0: Afghanistan Nationwide Quarterly Assessment Research*. Final presentation COMISAF. November 8, 2008

regions with a mean of eight. We cross referenced the polling date with Gauster (2008) and Asia Foundation (2007) and coded the regions in three security classes: unsecure (south), medium secure (east and west) and relative secure (north and capital).

Third, we recoded the variable “project status” to the indicators completed, ongoing, cancelled / suspended and unknown. In this way time-related analyses are possible and differences between e.g. regions can be analysed. Subsequently, a dichotomous variable was created to indicate local participation. We therefore recoded the variable “implementation partner” and used the participation of the Afghan community as the indicator for local participation.

The fifth measure we took was the creation of dummy variables to be able to conduct a regression analyses with the variables “security situation”, “Afghan participation” and “military (CIMIC) versus non-military (USAID)”. We then validated the ACSP variables with graphs and descriptive analyses to identify outliers and cells that contain erroneous data (i.e. start date before 2002 or after 2009 and days completed less than zero). The ACSP database holds data that are updated at different intervals. To eliminate possible effects that data have not been updated near the end of 2008 and to eliminate projects that are not monitored after initial registration we do not use projects with missing cells on “start date” and projects started after 2007. On the basis of these examinations we discarded 23.418 records, which decreased our final dataset for further analysis to 61.223 projects ranging from 2002 up to 2007.

4. Findings.

Projects and strategies

As a first source of information table 1 indicates in which regions the projects have been carried out in the period 2002-2007. Of the 61,223 projects in the database, over 44% have been executed in the capital and the eastern part of the country. This is not surprising since the activities of the international community, both military and civilian, have commenced in Kabul and its immediate environment in the northern and eastern part of the country. Another obvious reason is that in these regions the density of the population, and therefore the need for support, is highest. As of 2004, the military and development activities have started to unfold on a

larger scale, first in the relatively safe northern and eastern parts of the country, and later in the relatively insecure southern areas.

The above information of the ACSP can be used to illuminate if planned strategies to commence projects in a larger area is successful. Further, in-depth analyses of plots on maps and information collected during interviews show that there are hardly any projects in the regions immediately bordering Pakistan, the so-called Federally Administered Tribal Area in particular. Clearly, in these regions much fighting is going on (e.g. Rashid, 2008; Johnson and Mason, 2008), preventing safe working conditions for military personnel and development agents alike. This shows that in implementing projects so-called *structural holes* may occur as a consequence of understandable lopsided attention of the international and national community to the 'easier' parts of the country (Burt, 1992).

Table 1 shows that more than 61,000 projects have been executed in the period 2002-2007, starting with some 200 projects in 2002, going up to ten times that number in the subsequent year, increasing substantially up to 12,318 projects in 2004. Hence, in the first three years there is a steep raise in the numbers of projects that have been initiated and executed, stabilizing at the 2004-level in 2005 and 2006, but going up again to staggering numbers of projects in one year, i.e. almost 22,000 projects in 2007.

Table 1: Projects in different regions per year

During the most recent years the number of projects in the west but particularly in the south and the north, have increased dramatically, accounting for the general step-up of the projects in the country. The number of projects in the east has remained high ever since the mission's outset. In general, the number of projects in the west is relatively low, which can be explained by that region's low population density, the limited number of ISAF troops as well as by the large distance from the nation's political centre.

In connection to table 1, figure 1 shows the mix of projects in Afghanistan. Information about the mix of projects and its developments in time can be important to be able to understand if early strategies like quick impact change in time to, for example, projects that support the Afghan government with a long term focus. Figure 1 indicates that the majority of the projects (almost 45%) relates to the development of infrastructure and natural resources (roads, water supply, power). Second in place are projects

in the field of agriculture and rural development (20%), followed by educational projects and projects in the field of social protection and health. Projects in the field of good governance are still relatively scarce, possibly reflecting the stubborn political and cultural characteristic of the social fabric in the country. The number of projects relating to private sector development is also low. This indicates that the institutional conditions for western-style economic development in the country are still weak, but this fact may also point at the general inclination of military organizations and NGOs towards the public sector: military personnel and aid workers in general have no or little entrepreneurial experience. In general though, this breakdown of data shows that over the last decade predominantly attention has been paid to activities that are considered to be basic conditions for economic development and a nation's reconstruction (see: Ghani and Lockhart, 2008).

Figure 1: Projects and the Afghan National Development Sector Strategy

Organisations follow different strategies and plans to establish their goals. In this respect we analyse differences in projects' focus between the military in their CIMIC framework and activities performed by USAID – those are the two largest contributors accounting for almost 20,000 projects together. A breakdown (table 2) of the projects into activities conducted shows the following. USAID is particularly strong in conducting projects in the field of agriculture and rural development (about 40% of their total of projects) and education (17%), whereas the military focuses on infrastructure and natural resources (27% of their projects), but also on education (17%) and social protection (almost 18%). The relatively few projects relating to private sector development are initiated five times more often by USAID than by the military. All these differences are significant (Chi-Square-test, $p=0,00$). The focus of projects conducted by ISAF may be explained by the military 'can-do' culture as well as their engineering orientation and focus on quick fixes and tangible results, which may also be partly related to the relatively short stay of military personnel in the mission area. Infrastructure, natural resources (in particular energy) and to a lesser extent also education are well suited for these so-called quick-impact projects.

Table 2: CIMIC and USAID Projects

4.1. Absorption capacity

The expenditures that are spent to conduct the projects can be seen as a product of the implementing power of the donors and the absorptive capacity of the beneficiaries. The absorption capacity can be used as one of the indicators to measure progress in an area of operation or of an organisation. The mean turnover per day per project in the different regions remains rather stable in the years 2002-2005, yet shows a sharp raise in 2006 (up to almost 2,500 U.S. dollars). However, in the southern regions and in the capital of Kabul the ensuing year 2007 demonstrates a steep decline in mean turnover of costs for the projects. The expenditures in the other regions (west, north and particularly east) stabilize or even grow somewhat more. The fall of expenditures in the South and in Kabul is undoubtedly effected by the dramatically deteriorating security situation in those areas since 2006 (Rashid, 2008), which is underlined by the results of polling among the local population in the various regions of the country⁵.

Figure 2 demonstrates in this respect that in the east and the west - relative safe areas - the highest mean turnover per project per day is reached over the years, whereas the lowest costs are made in the south, which again may be seen as an indication of the problematic security situation in that part of the country. In Kabul and the northern part of the country the mean turnover of costs is twice as high as in the south but significantly lower than in the east and the west. The non-parametric tests show significant differences between the ranks mean turnover per day (Chi Square-test; $p=0,00$).

Figure 2: Mean turnover per day and security situation

4.2. Afghan Participation

An important aspect of conducting reconstructing activities in a conflict-ridden country such as Afghanistan is the legitimacy of the activities conducted by the international community. This legitimacy is likely to grow when local partners participate in the formulation, development and implementation of the projects for reasons such as sustainability, local

⁵ MRA Institute & ISAF (2008). *ANQAR 1.0: Afghanistan Nationwide Quarterly Assessment Research*. Final presentation COMISAF. November 8, 2008

ownership and capacity building (Natsios, 2005; Narten, 2008; Rietjens et al., 2009). Developments in and information on the participation of local partners is therefore an important aspect in measuring progress in nation building and the performance of organisations.

We distinguished projects that are the sole responsibility of international actors (line “0” in figure 3) and projects that have been conducted by or in close cooperation with local, Afghan institutions and agencies (line “1” in figure 3). Figure 3 demonstrates that during 2002 Afghan stakeholders participated in only very few projects. Starting from 2003 this gradually increases and from the beginning of 2004 the projects with Afghan participation even outnumber the projects without involvement of Afghan stakeholders. The setback of local participation in 2006 is remarkable and not really comprehensible other than by pointing again at the decrease in the safety situation during that period.

Several reasons may be identified why many projects have been conducted without the involvement of Afghan stakeholders. While the central government holds extensive constitutional authority over the provinces, Kabul’s limited ability to intervene and its accommodation of local power brokers have left factional chiefs in control of local government (Jalali 2006). This makes it very difficult for international actors, both military and civilian, to identify reliable and legitimate Afghan partners for the executed projects. Another reason may be the attitude civilian actors hold towards foreigners, most notably the military. There are numerous examples of local villagers being threatened, injured or even killed, after interacting with foreign troops. These dangerous precedents clearly have a negative impact on the willingness of local Afghans to participate in ISAF, but also USAID projects. A final reason probably is the timeframe. Civilian organizations, especially development organizations, are sometimes prepared to stay in the area for a period of five to ten years, whereas the military will often have a time horizon limited to two or three years. Most ISAF units rotate their personnel every four to six months, which most civilians regard to be a short timeframe. This short frame and rapid military turnover is likely to hamper the interaction with Afghan stakeholders in the entire project cycle.

Figure 3: Local participation

Table 3 shows that the distribution of Afghan participation in the various regions differs significantly (Chi Square test; $p=0,00$). In particular the southern region contains relatively few projects in which Afghan stakeholders were involved (4,8% as opposed to 15,1 in which no Afghan stakeholders were involved), while this is opposite for region north (in 15,0% of the projects Afghan stakeholders are involved versus 7,3% of the projects without Afghan involvement). These differences can be explained by the problematic security situation in the southern region, which hampers both the military and civilian agencies to freely move through the area and consultate with Afghan stakeholders on a frequent basis. Besides, as mentioned before, Afghan participants in the Southern districts may feel more threatened to participate in projects initiated by the international (military) community.

Table 3: Local participation and regions

4.3. Experience and learning

In addition, we have tried to reveal how long it takes for projects to be completed. This is an important aspect because after organisations set foot in war torn societies, the first steps are difficult. Experience has to grow in that specific area of operation and the needs have to be understood. After the first period, the performance of organisations is expected to grow with respect to the reconstruction and developments projects. In general and within limits, in time comparative projects can be faster implemented. Information about the days in which projects are completed cannot be understood in isolation. Such information becomes valuable when combined with for example the followed strategies, plans and resources that have been used or an assessment of the effects that are achieved.

Figure 4 shows highly interesting results in this regard. We have calculated the average number of days per project in the various years. It shows that during the period 2003-2004 there is a gradual increase in the duration of the projects, declining sharply in the two following years and after stabilization in 2006, declining again in 2007.

Figure 4: Experience curve

This curve clearly resembles the so called *experience* curve known in economic theory. This curve indicates systematic reductions in production costs and time over the life of a product, for instance in the aircraft industry. There are two phenomena explaining this: learning effects and economies of scale (e.g. Hill, 2001). Learning effects refer to cost and time savings that come from learning by doing and repeating the same activities. Labour productivity increases over time as individuals learn the most efficient ways to perform their tasks. Equally, management learns how to manage more efficiently over time. Economies of scale refer to cost and time reduction achieved by producing larger numbers of a product. Fixed costs and time occur during the set-up of a production system, and these will be lowered once the number of production activities increases. We can see both effects quite clearly in the projects in Afghanistan. In the beginning of the peace support and reconstruction activities in early 2002 the international organizations needed to learn how to operate in the new, foreign environment. Apparently, after this start-up stage they quickly learned how to act in dealing with local participants, and correspondingly one sees a rapid decrease of the average time before completion of the projects. A stabilization in this experience effect occurred in 2006, which most likely was the consequence of the new hostilities in the area, with which the military and the developmental agents had to deal with in - again - a learning-by-doing way. But in 2007, the experience effect occurred again as can be seen from the decreasing number of days per project in that particular year. This is an important finding, since it generates confidence in the success and speed of the reconstruction process. Indeed, this is so important that we wanted to test the effect in a robust multivariate model.

In this analysis, the time-related experience effect turned out to be the most important factor in explaining the variance of the duration of the projects ("days completed"). To avoid artificially high correlations, we conducted this analysis on the projects that commenced before 2007 and did not last longer than 365 days; hence, the relatively shorter projects (about 7,000). We conducted this analysis using "start date" (beta = -, 37; sign.), a dummy variable concerning the security situation in the country (beta = -,03, sign.), the "Afghan participation" (beta = 0,003, non-sign.), and a dummy variable "CIMIC-USAID" (beta= -,13, sign.) as independent variables. This analysis (adj. R square is 0,197) indicated that the duration of this set of relatively shorter projects (average 142 days) is very strongly influenced by - as said - the net effect of the start date (the more recent,

the shorter), slightly by the security situation (shorter in safer regions), and somewhat strongly by who has initiated the project (the military projects focussing on infrastructure took on average almost 30 days less to be completed than the USAID projects). Afghan participation does not play a significant role in this analysis. This regression analysis shows the strength of the experience curve over the other significant variables in the analysis, i.e. the safety situation and the type of projects indicated by the difference between the military and USAID projects.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Over the last period performance measurement has become increasingly important in public sector administration. Politicians and the general public ('tax payers') alike want to know what results are achieved with the resources that are expended by the government on their behalf (de Bruijn, 2007). In fact, they want to know what effects are generated in society-at-large through the activities of government. Hence, over the last decades we have seen a gradual but clear shift in public administration from input-management to output- or results-management. So far, however, this development has not been very strong in the field of foreign development assistance and aid policies. The cry for help from disaster-struck and conflict-ridden regions in the world is often so heartbreaking that asking for insight into efficiency and effectiveness seems to be almost inhuman. Therefore we know surprisingly little about where aid and assistance money flows, and how well it is actually spent (e.g. Collier, 2007). The same applies to the military. Military commanders are first of all interested in conducting their operations and saving their people's lives.

Yet, given that developmental assistance and current military operations are *policies of choice in regions of choice*, these activities will increasingly have to compete with policy expenditures at home, such as improving the national economy, the national education and national health care. Therefore, one needs to prove – or at least demonstrate - the value of the activities that are accomplished in those far-flung regions. However, proving the value of such activities is difficult, like proving the value of everything that organizations do, particularly in the public sector. As we have seen previously, in the public sector measuring the progress in the delivery of policies is more complicated than in business. There are more stakeholders in the political arena who all have their own views, perceptions and

ambitions, there is no clear-cut market- and price- mechanism to determine the value of things, and the goals and ambitions are less tangible and more interrelated. As a consequence, introducing performance measurement in the public sector comes along with rebuttals pertaining to among others the mushrooming bureaucracy and paperwork that people detest.

All this applies the more to nation building and reconstruction in (post-) conflict areas, such as currently in Afghanistan. Yet, it is inevitable in such endeavours that some sort of progress and performance measurement will be used in order to provide at least an indication of what is being reached. In this article we have used a database consisting of quantitative data concerning the projects that have been implemented in the framework of nation building in Afghanistan, in the period 2002-2008.

We have been able to show that there is a gradual but strong growth in the number of projects over the years; that the projects are increasingly more evenly spread over the regions in the country; that a threatened security situation plays a hampering role; that Afghan participation in the projects is not small but effectiveness of this legitimacy could not be revealed; that the projects are executed faster over the years, commensurate to the experience the nation-builders are gaining; and that the military and the civil assistance workers seem to have developed a division of labour since they focus on different sorts of projects.

All this seems to be good news. However, the ACSP database contains no information on the real value that the completed projects constitute in the eyes of the local population; no information on how the results of the projects are in fact being used, and by whom in particular; and no information about completed projects that are being destroyed again. For these reasons, it is important to expand the data with a number of other characteristics. But, first of all, it is prerequisite to share the results of these data with the local stakeholders (also at the regional level) and to come to common interpretations and sense-making as to what the completed projects actually mean to ordinary people in everyday life. Too much, it seems, such project information stays at the upper echelons of the international civilian and military workers, whereas it would seem profitable to discuss this information together with the political fora of the local communities (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008). In nation building enhancing the 'local footprint' (Rietjens et al., 2009) seems to be needed in

all stages of policy making, not the least in progress and performance measurement.

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Figures and Tables

Table 1: Projects in different regions per year

StartYear	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Region							
Capital	22,6%	6,5%	4,5%	6,0%	4,8%	5,4%	5,3%
East	36,0%	48,0%	42,7%	46,5%	45,1%	28,5%	39,1%
North	8,8%	24,9%	20,2%	25,0%	18,7%	23,9%	22,3%
South	22,6%	12,2%	23,6%	9,1%	10,2%	30,0%	19,8%
West	9,6%	7,4%	8,7%	12,6%	20,7%	11,1%	12,7%
Unknown	0,4%	1,0%	0,3%	0,8%	0,6%	1,1%	0,8%
Total	239	2232	12318	12279	12481	21674	61223

Figure 1: Projects and the Afghan National Development Sector Strategy

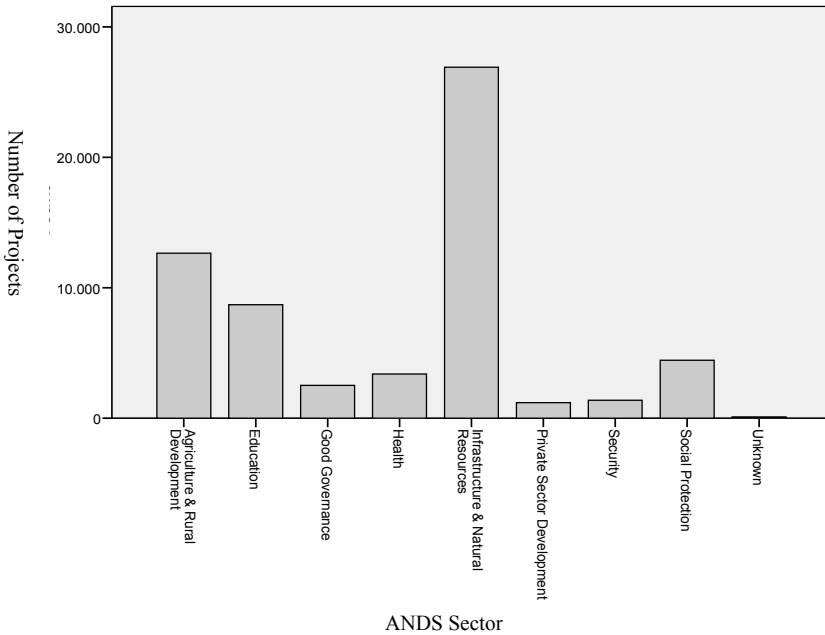


Table 2: CIMIC and USAID Projects

ANDS Sector	CIMIC	USAID	Total
Agriculture & Rural Development	7,1%	40,7%	30,4%
Education	17,4%	17,3%	17,4%
Good Governance	9,7%	9,0%	9,2%
Health	10,1%	8,6%	9,1%
Infrastructure & Natural Resources	27,7%	9,7%	15,2%
Private Sector Development	1,3%	6,6%	5,0%
Security	6,9%	0,5%	2,4%
Social Protection	18,3%	7,6%	10,8%
Unknown	1,5%	0,0%	0,5%
Total	6114	13869	19983

Figure 2: Mean turnover per day and security situation

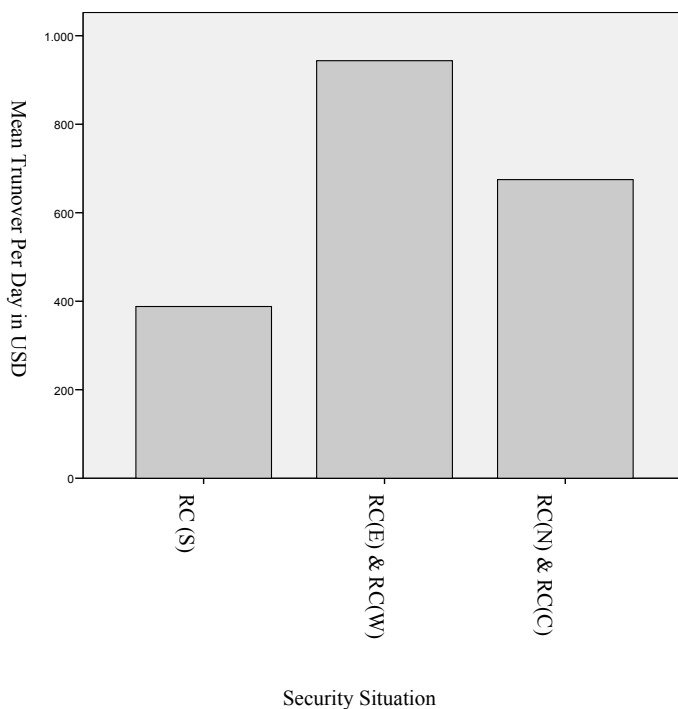


Figure 3: Local participation

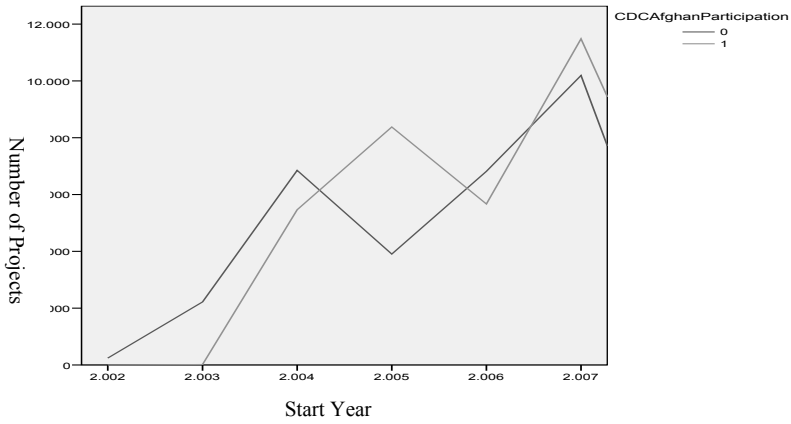
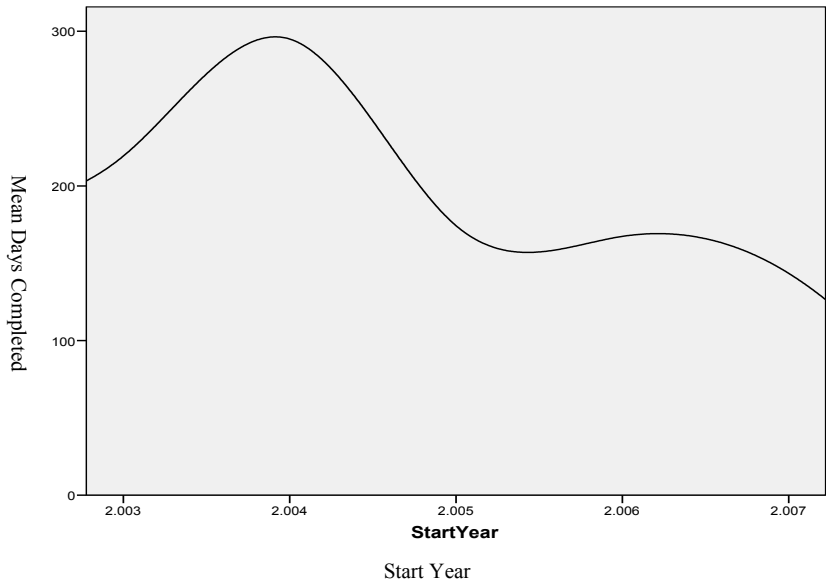


Table 3: Local participation and regions

Region	Afghan Participation		Total
	No	Yes	
Capital	3,2%	2,1%	5,3%
East	17,0%	22,1%	39,1%
North	7,3%	15,0%	22,3%
South	15,1%	4,8%	19,9%
West	5,9%	6,8%	12,7%
Unknown	0,7%	0,0%	0,7%
Total	30217	31006	61223

Figure 4: Experience curve



ANNEX A ACSP VARIABLES

Number	Variable	Description	Used in Research Database
1	ID	Identification Number	N
2	HQ_ISAF URN	Identification Number	N
3	PROJECT NUMBER	Identification Number	N
4	REGION	ISAF Region	Y
5	PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team	N
6	ANDS SECTOR	Afghan National Development Strategy	Y
7	ASIC SECTOR	Afghanistan Standard Industrial Classification	N
8	ASIC ACTIVITY	Afghanistan Standard Industrial Classification Activity	N
9	CURRENT ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Description of activities	N
10	PROVINCE	Afghan Province	Y
11	DISTRICT NAME 2	Specification in Province	N
12	VILLAGE	Village Name	N
13	LATTITUDE	Latittude	Y-only plots during research
14	LONGTTITUDE	Longitude	Y-only plots during research
15	LOC MGRS	Military Grid	Y-only

		Reference System locator	plots during research
16	COST	Costs in US Dollar	Y
17	MINISTRY ABBR	Abbreviation of Ministry Policy Area	N
18	IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	Partner of ISAF for implementation of a project	Y
19	STATUS	Status of project	Y
20	START DATE	Start date of project	Y
21	END DATE	End date of project	Y
22	DONOR	Donor for project	N
23	INFO DATE	Date records are updated	N
24	SOURCE	Information Source	N
25	REMARKS	Remarks	N

“A matter of the most vital importance”: Military Aviation in the Netherlands 1914-1920

By *Wim Klinkert*

Throughout the First World War the Netherlands remained a neutral country. The necessity to closely follow the developments in the manner in which the war was waged was constantly present for the duration of the war. There was a real danger that the Netherlands would be drawn into the struggle against its will. In that case, the Dutch armed forces would have to have sufficient military means and tactics at its disposal in order to have a reasonable chance of success. The military command made a sustained effort to keep up with technical and tactical developments. Dutch military aviation provides an illustrative case-study of this.

The questions presenting themselves are first and foremost how, in the particularly difficult circumstances of isolation resulting from its neutrality, the Netherlands managed to deploy aircraft in a military role. The problems facing the Dutch military command were the purchase of aircraft – the Netherlands did not have a national industry for military aircraft – and the need to keep up with the rapid technological and tactical developments in the belligerents’ use of the air weapon. Secondly, attention is paid to the question how the Netherlands made use of the war developments in order to attain a stronger and more independent position in the field of military aviation in the future. The importance of this matter was undisputed in military circles. Together with the machinegun, the aircraft was the single most important weapon of modern warfare in the eyes of the Dutch military.

The foundation of the air branch

In 1913 the Dutch Parliament approved the foundation of a military aviation service as a subdivision of the army. A year and a month later this latest addition was part of the mobilised armed forces contributing to safeguarding Dutch neutrality by way of aerial patrols. From August 1914 the *Luchtvaartafdeling (LVA)* comprised seven French Farman reconnaissance aircraft and two planes built by the Dutch aircraft manufacturer Marinus van Meel (1880-1958)¹.

Right from the first day of mobilisation, Dutch pilots made reconnaissance flights along the frontier. In the border-towns Dutch banners, flown from church spires and public buildings, indicated the location of the frontier, also to enemy pilots. The Belgians did the same.² The first report, dating from 20 August 1914, was of an engagement over Western Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, where a German aeroplane landed. The pilot was interned in Alkmaar and the aeroplane was taken to the artillery workshop in Delft.³ The same thing happened to a British aeroplane that came down near Breskens in December that same year.⁴ This set the trend for the following years. Pilots of the warring states were an important source of information and were interned after their capture.⁵ Their aircraft underwent a thorough technical analysis, new inventions were copied, parts were re-used, or entire aircraft were incorporated in the Dutch air fleet. The captured British plane, for example, carried a bomb, a step not yet taken by the Dutch Aviation Service, which therefore aroused much interest.⁶

It did not take long before the military leadership and the *LVV* realized that the Dutch air fleet had to grow in numbers and that the Service had to perform other tasks besides reconnaissance. The first tasks to be developed and practised were: spotting for the artillery, aerial photography and aerial combat. A task that was quickly added was observing (enemy) troop movements from the air for the benefit of senior troop commanders in the event of war. Where the purchase of materiel was concerned, the Dutch military leadership opted for the creation of a national aircraft industry, foreign acquisition and the purchase of interned aircraft. The question arose whether this would guarantee an air fleet of sufficient quality, if the Netherlands was to become involved in actual fighting.

Walaardt Sacré and Wijnmalen

Since 1913 the *LVV* had been under the command of Hendrik Walaardt Sacré (1873-1949), an engineer officer with a passion for flying. From 1910 onwards he was actively involved in the foundation of a Dutch military aviation organization. In preparation, Walaardt Sacré had visited France in 1912 and recommended the Farman as the most suitable aeroplane, much to the dismay of aircraft manufacturer Anthony Fokker (1890-1939), who was in want of orders at the time. Walaardt Sacré was very well-acquainted

with the Dutch supreme commander General Cornelis Jacobus Snijders (1852-1939). This was to give him essential support as Head of the *LVA*.

Henri Wijnmalen (1889-1964) was one of the first Dutch aviation pioneers. In 1910, shortly after having received his pilot's licence in France, where he had made the acquaintance of Louis Bleriot (1872-1936) and Henri Farman (1874-1958), he flew demonstration flights in Holland, some of which were attended by General Snijders. Wijnmalen also established the world record for high-flying (2,780 metres) on 1 October 1910, which he continued to hold for some time. By winning a flying contest, a return flight Paris-Brussels, he gained a considerable amount of money that same year. The following year he joined the Aviation Company Ltd of his uncle, motorcar manufacturer J.F. Verwey, as an instructor. In that capacity he worked in close cooperation with another important Dutch aviation pioneer, Frits Koolhoven (1886-1946)⁷, who left the Netherlands in 1911 to find employment in Paris. The existence of the flying school at Soesterberg was short-lived. At the end of the summer of 1911 Wijnmalen was in France and, a couple of months later, in Germany. After having tried his luck in Belgium in 1912, he returned to his native country in December 1913 with the intention to start an aircraft factory – on a Farman licence – with a guarantee from *LVA* for the purchase of his aircraft. Although slightly overstepping the mark, Wijnmalen did receive certain facilities that enabled him in March 1914 to start a factory on the *LVA* site at Soesterberg⁸, which was already used by a small factory of Van Meel⁹, who Wijnmalen was well-acquainted with. Just like Wijnmalen, Van Meel had worked together with Farman, and was working for Verwey. In 1913 he had built the first Dutch military aircraft. After having served in the military for a short spell, Van Meel withdrew from military aviation altogether, leaving Wijnmalen on his own as other Dutch aircraft manufacturers had found employment abroad by 1912, Fokker in Germany and Koolhoven in Great-Britain.

On the insistence of the military authorities Wijnmalen moved his factory to Amsterdam in October 1914, which meant that the Netherlands had its first military aviation industry situated within the protection of Fortress Amsterdam.¹⁰ In December 1914 he vowed to General Snijders to deliver one aircraft every month. That turned out to be too optimistic a promise, despite the assistance and knowledge of Belgian refugee craftsmen, in particular from the renowned Antwerp bicycle, motorcycle and automobile factory Minerva.¹¹ Wijnmalen soon had to admit that a shortage of raw

materials prevented a rapid delivery of the numbers required.¹² Early in 1915 he travelled to London to get spare-parts, but to little avail.¹³ His first aircraft did not leave the factory until June 1915, followed by the second one month later. Then production got underway to some extent. Wijnmalen produced about fifteen Farmans, and that was all the *LVA* received till the end of 1916. The table below shows the number of aeroplanes the *LVA* had at its disposal. The decrease of the number of Farmans was the consequence of materiel wear and crashes. In the first few years of the mobilisation the *LVA* depended on Wijnmalen's factory and on occasional foreign aircraft that were interned after landing on Dutch soil.

Month/year	1	2	3	4
December 1915	18	5		23
January 1916	18	6		24
February 1916	19	6		25
March 1916	20	6		26
April 1916	21	6	7	28
May 1916	20	4	9	29
July 1916	19	4	9	28
August 1916	18	1	13	31
September 1916	18	2	13	31
October 1916	17	5	14	31
November 1916	14	6	14	28

Survey of aircraft present¹⁴

1= number of Farman aircraft

2= number of interned aircraft

3= number of interned aircraft taken over by *LVA*

4= total number of aircraft at the disposal of *LVA*

Moreover, the problem occurred because the knowledge and materials to build aircraft engines were a scarce commodity in the Netherlands. This soon became a sticking point. In June 1915 the Secretary of War, Nicolaas Bosboom (1855-1937), was granted permission to buy Gnome aircraft engines in France.¹⁵ It would take until August 1915 before eleven of them arrived, and it was not before April 1916 that the following eight were delivered. In the course of 1916 the situation became critical when Wijnmalen's production threatened to come to a standstill, which happened just at the time when Walaardt Sacré and the Dutch military leadership had come to realize the vital importance of military aviation and

its rapid development. In the meantime, Wijnmalen's Farmans had become utterly obsolete as their engines were seriously lacking underpowered.¹⁶ Should the Netherlands have had to pit its strength against the belligerents, it would have stood no chance at all in the air. That had dawned on the military leadership in early 1916. Something just had to be done.

Dark clouds gathering

In May 1916 General Snijders urged War Secretary Bosboom to buy new combat and reconnaissance aircraft in France that would be able to match the quality of the belligerents' aircraft. He called it a vital importance for the Dutch armed forces. General Snijders' urgent request had been prompted by the analysis Walaardt Sacré had made of the necessity of modern fighters armed with machineguns, reconnaissance aircraft and aircraft used for observation for the artillery. Bombers were no priority for the time being. This was the perfect time for Walaardt Sacré to table his wishes for modern equipment.¹⁷ He estimated the budget for modernization at one million guilders, to be spent in France. Although realizing the importance of this, Bosboom responded that large amounts of money should not be invested too hastily in such a rapidly developing weapon. Still, he was willing to put out his feelers.

In order to develop contacts with the French Government and industry, General Snijders appealed to an old acquaintance, Lieutenant Jacques Labouchere (1884-1966)¹⁸, who recommended the purchase of Nieuport aircraft with Rhône engines, and Saulnier and Caudron aircraft. The other Parisian contact was Paul Koster, who worked as unofficial military attaché of the Dutch Government for the acquisition of military materiel.

The matter became a long-term project. In July General Snijders had to report that Labouchere was still unsuccessful and insisted on Dutch compensation in this "matter of life". In August more positive news came from Koster saying that the French were prepared to deliver ten Nieuport and Caudron aircraft. Only eight Rhône engines were delivered in October. Nothing else came for the time being and waiting would not be rewarded.

Simultaneously, the situation in the Netherlands was growing darker and darker. In July Wijnmalen expressed his intention to close down the factory, which the military Cabinet members and General Snijders

definitely wanted to prevent.¹⁹ Wijnmalen's proposal was to turn the factory into a state-owned enterprise with a yearly production of as many as three hundred motorcars and one hundred aircraft! Even if this were possible where raw materials were concerned, it would in any case be financially unacceptable to the Government. But the aircraft factory was simply not allowed to vanish. The Government started negotiations with Wijnmalen, in which the Munitions Agency²⁰ mediated. In September the Government made an offer of 1.3 million guilders to Wijnmalen for the annual production of one hundred motorcars and fifty aircraft. In November War Secretary Bosboom agreed to the financing of twenty-two motorcars – cars in procession and ambulances for the *LVA* – and forty aircraft.²¹ The aircraft Wijnmalen had to produce, under *LVA* supervision, were not the old Farmans anymore, but modern fighters that could be fitted with a machinegun, and reconnaissance aircraft copied from the British Sopwith. The Sopwith was a good plane and easy to construct, with an interned specimen serving as an example. In the budget for 1917 Bosboom made funds available for the first ten aircraft, three for aerial combat, three for reconnaissance purposes and three for artillery spotting.

The autumn of 1916 was characterized by gloomy future expectations on the part of both General Snijders and Walaardt Sacré. In September Snijders thought that if this situation lasted for much longer, Dutch military aviation would soon cease to exist altogether. Walaardt Sacré was starting to feel somewhat desperate and described the sorry state of Dutch military aviation to Snijders. He regarded the interned aircraft as accidental assets, which also brought a substantial number of logistical problems with them. Ten aircraft for aerial combat, armed with Lewis machineguns, and ten for reconnaissance tasks were absolutely essential additions in the short term. He was hoping Wijnmalen would be able to manufacture them. In essence, forty aircraft were required. General Snijders in turn hoped to have at his disposal thirteen aircraft for reconnaissance, thirteen for aerial combat and four for artillery spotting by mid 1917.

To the outside world this gloom will hardly have been noticeable. On 15 March 1916 the *LVA* organized a national air tour for the public. The pilots gave demonstrations over the beach of Scheveningen, in the presence of the Queen, the Secretaries of War and for the Navy, and General Snijders. The air tour was given much publicity as a sportive event, but it also served as a try-out of the forces' deployability in the event of war. Snijders wanted the *LVA* airmen to take part in as many exercises

of the army as possible²², either divisional manoeuvres²³ or exercises held in Oldebroek, in which the central focus was on cooperation with the artillery. On the basis of aerial observation the artillery aimed and fired at “enemy” positions and trenches.²⁴ All across the country exercises with military units were taking place together with the artillery.

Technical innovation

Concerns about the expansion and modernization of the air fleet did not prevent technical innovation from taking place in various fields, reflecting the developments abroad. On all these points the *LVA* had to start from scratch.

The *LVA* did not incorporate bombers in its air fleet, but that did not mean that bombing was impossible. Reconnaissance planes could be employed for that purpose. After the initial phase of dropping darts or flechettes, experiments began with test bombs and hand grenades²⁵. In August 1915 the Ordnance Factories supplied the first live bombs, to which War Secretary Bosboom was keen to add incendiary bombs.²⁶ The first substantial order was placed in 1916. A Utrecht Steel factory which had already made deliveries to the Munitions Agency, received an order for five hundred aircraft bombs. Their delivery proved to be a slow process. The following order for ten thousand bombs was formidable. They were to be produced at a Machine Factory in The Hague, already a major supplier to the War Ministry. The choice was made to manufacture seven thousand shrapnel bombs and three thousand incendiaries. It was decided not to produce gas bombs.

In order to be able to drop the bombs accurately an aiming device was developed in 1915, which was thoroughly tested in 1916. In April the first forty went into production and in early 1918 the device worked satisfactorily.²⁷

Machineguns fitted on aircraft were yet another new phenomenon. The machinegun in use by the Dutch army, the Schwarzlose, was far too heavy for that purpose. The interned aircraft provided the solution. The *LVA* came into the possession of a Voisin aircraft from France, fitted with a Hotchkiss machinegun²⁸ and a British plane with a Lewis. Late 1915, Delft construction workshops designed a rack, a contraption used to fix a

machinegun to the side of an aircraft.²⁹ This made it possible to practise with a weapon purchased in Denmark, the Madsen machinegun, which was also used as an anti-aircraft weapon fired from the ground. The disadvantage of the Madsen was its slow rate of fire. The most suitable machineguns came from the belligerents and in the final years of the war a number of them could be acquired. Some had to be adapted, so that Dutch ammunition could be used. The Lewis gun appeared the most suitable for firing from the side of the aircraft, whereas the Vickers machinegun could be placed on top of the fuselage of the Nieuport and Fokker aircraft. The Rumpler aircraft carried a Spandau machinegun. Both the Vickers and Spandau could fire through the propeller-blades. Eventually, by the end of the war the *LVA* was to have at its disposal 41 Spandau machineguns, an equal amount of German Parabellums, seven Lewis and three Vickers machineguns.

Practised commonly since 1915³⁰, aerial photography also went through a rapid development, also due to an interned aircraft. A German aircraft with photographic equipment had landed near Venlo on 1 September 1915. Towards the end of that year, photographic records were systematically made of the so-called New Dutch Water Defence Line. In 1916, an authentic Dutch aircraft was commissioned, especially designed for aerial photography. Eventually, the *LVA* developed wireless radio telegraphy for communication between pilots and ground forces. On 1 December 1915 a German Albatross touched down in Zeeuws Vlaanderen with radio equipment on board, which initiated the Engineer Corps, to research this communication possibility. Until then, pilots had used small canisters containing data from aerial observation, which were thrown or shot from the aircraft, or sent Morse signals written in sooty smoke from the engine exhausts. By using the latter method a pilot returning from a mission often descended from the aircraft all covered in black soot. Both methods obviously had their shortcomings.

On the basis of tests on the radio equipment ordered in Germany, the production of ten “radio telegraphy signal machines” could be started in early 1917. By February three of them had been completed, but it took a lot of time and effort before the equipment worked well. In April 1917 signals could successfully be sent to an aircraft for the first time. The tests continued throughout the summer. With the help of reception equipment, discovered in a Sopwith aircraft, it was not only possible, during an exercise, to send a radio message, but also to receive a reply from the pilot.

In the course of 1918 there was functional sending and receiving equipment available.

Rescue from abroad

At long last, in 1917 foreign purchases were made, producing tangible results. Airman F. van Heyst (1883-1975) and LVA engineer Vreeburg left for Sweden in January and did business with Enoch Thulin (1881-1919), managing director of *Enoch Thulins Aeroplanfabrik* in Lanskröna. They ordered aircraft parts and ninety engines, and the first deliveries were made as of March, comprising Thulin engines to replace the outdated Gnôme engines. The Swedish deliveries took place until March 1918.

Walaardt Sacré also focussed his attention on Germany. After the failure to buy ten modern Albatross aircraft in early 1917, War Secretary Bosboom ordered pilot J.G.C.Duinker (1892-1919) to go on a study-tour to Germany to the *Inspektion der Fliegertruppen* in Charlottenburg. He reported about the possibility to buy the Fokker D-III. Pilot Willem Versteegh (1886-1975) travelled to Schwerin in July to try out the aircraft and to negotiate in Berlin. In October 1917 he returned with ten Fokker aircraft, which was a successful foreign acquisition at last. That same month Versteegh flew a number of test flights at Soesterberg. At the end of the year he presented his impressions about German military aviation in a report to Walaardt Sacré.³¹ That same year a delegation of Dutch officers visited the German Army, both in Berlin and on the Western Front. Engineer officer and aviation connoisseur W.H.Cool reported on German aviation, after visiting an airfield close to the front at Montmédy and flying in a German aircraft. In order to safeguard Dutch neutrality, the ammunition had previously been removed from the machinegun mounted on the aircraft.³²

Besides the purchases made in Sweden and Germany, the LVA remained active in France. Walaardt Sacré kept hoping that after protracted negotiations Wijnmalen would be able to fulfil his promises. In France Labouchere continued to work feverishly to secure the delivery of five Caudron and five Nieuport aircraft, together with 46 Rhône and twenty Hispano-Suiza engines, while offering tugs in compensation. For Walaardt Sacré all this was taking far too long, particularly because the German contacts did seem to yield results at short notice. Eventually, this was also

the outcome of the French negotiations, but with considerable delay. In October 1917 the cargo ship *Rhea* could be loaded with fifteen aircraft – more than the original amount – and twenty engines. In mid-December the vessel lay anchored at Vigo (North-West Spain), after which it was held up by the British at Gibraltar, only to be released by the middle of 1918. The British lived in constant fear that military deliveries to the Netherlands would be resold to Germany. Eventually, three years after the orders had been placed, the planes arrived in the Netherlands.

In the meantime, Wijnmalen was using a two-tier production system in Amsterdam. The Munitions Agency had begun to act as a regulating body to turn the Amsterdam factory into the desired modern national aircraft industry yet. This meant the end of the production of Farmans. Instead, original designs had to be developed and modern foreign aircraft copied. The first original design was a fighter plane, the Spyker V1. In May 1917 Van Heyst took it up for a test flight, but it was never put into serial production. The performance of the weak Thulin engine made it unsuitable, in fact.

The other tier of production was copying foreign aircraft. Initially, attention had focussed on a modern version of the Sopwith. That changed when in February and March 1917 new types of Sopwith and Nieuport fell into Dutch hands. Secretary Bosboom then opted for the serial production of twenty Nieuport fighters powered by Thulin engines, possibly at a later stage to be followed up by the Sopwith. This process could not go swiftly enough for Walaardt Sacré, who wanted fighters (Nieuport) as quickly as possible, “otherwise we will be powerless against any enemy”.³³ Moreover, he wanted them in much larger numbers than had been approved by Bosboom. He deemed the rapid production of forty aircraft desirable, to be extended to 60 with the addition of twenty Sopwiths. When the Nieuport fighters were finally delivered in 1918, they were already somewhat outdated. They were hardly used.³⁴

Other additions consisted of the purchase of interned aircraft. In September 1917 the *LVA* had bought thirty interned aircraft. In total more than a hundred belligerent aircraft landed in the Netherlands during WW1, but not all of them were suitable for acquisition by the *LVA*. Thirty of them were in such bad repair that they could only be stripped of the still useable parts. An equal number was made part of the air fleet as registered *LVA* aircraft. This number was equalled by the number of different types

of aircraft. The diversity was instructive, but not always practical where maintenance and spare parts were concerned. After the Armistice of 1918 almost all these aircraft were scrapped.³⁵ A single one was still used in 1919 for the purpose of giving Dutch pilots the experience of flying abroad.

In June 1917 General Snijders drew up the balance. If all the orders³⁶ would arrive, the *LVA* would have ninety “front” aircraft at its disposal by the end of the year. However, that was still not sufficient, as General Snijders wanted the *LVA* to possess 116 fighters, 132 reconnaissance aircraft and forty training aircraft. These numbers would have to be accomplished in 1918-1919, which was quite a long wait. Yet there was light in the dark. The newly-appointed War Secretary, Bonifacius Cornelis de Jonge (1875-1958), wanted to make a serious effort to create a national aircraft industry³⁷ in which he was willing to invest. He added another million guilders to the budget of the Dutch War Ministry, as he was none too pleased about the dependence on foreign deliveries. He used the Munitions Agency, more than was the case already, as an instrument to rouse the interest of more companies in aircraft production. Wijnmalen would have to face national competition and the contracting out of the production of ammunition to private companies had provided the Munitions Agency with many contacts and much experience. Walaardt Sacré was enthusiastic about this, as Wijnmalen’s slowness and steep prices had often annoyed him

The factory that showed an interest was Van Berkel’s Patent³⁸, a Rotterdam factory. With Hispano-Suiza engines Van Berkel would primarily concentrate on manufacturing navy seaplanes on the basis of a German aircraft (W-12). The first Van Berkel W-A got airborne in June 1919. At the time, a workforce of three hundred labourers, including some Germans, worked at the factory especially built for this type of aircraft. In June 1921 all work stopped for want of orders.

In Rotterdam the Dutch Aircraft Factory AVIA, presented his biplane in Rotterdam in December 1918. There was no follow-up.

The third manufacturer was Joop Carley, who started an aircraft factory in Ede in 1917. He built a number of aircraft and, also after the Armistice, his factory continued to produce training and passenger aircraft. 1922 saw the closure of his enterprise due to a lack of customers.

In order to be independent from foreign countries, for a short spell the *LVA* took to designing its own aircraft. In 1918 Vreeburg started with the A.2M bomber, which was finished in 1919. Versteegh flew it during the ELTA, the major aviation exhibition held in Amsterdam from August to September 1919. As its Rhône engine was not really powerful enough, no more aircraft were made and the existing one was demolished in 1921. So aircraft production without the involvement of Wijnmalen was rather small-scale, but the War Secretary and the *LVA* were not altogether dissatisfied with the effect it had on Wijnmalen's exclusiveness.³⁹

Another development took place when the Dutch Naval Air Service (*MLD*) became independent in 1917. Both General Snijders and Walaardt Sacré regretted this dissipation of strength and tried to turn the tide. However, the Dutch Royal Navy, referring to its colonial tasks, insisted on the desirability of having an air service of its own and did not flinch.⁴⁰

Goals unaccomplished

Initiatives to stimulate other firms to compete with Wijnmalen, a company with a workforce of one thousand in 1918, were of little avail, as we have seen. There was little else for the *LVA* to do but to turn to neighbouring countries again and to support Wijnmalen. The Amsterdam factory made a serious effort to improve quality, but really could not handle the new order from the Government. With setbacks, such as when the British withheld aluminium destined for Amsterdam in December 1917, followed by months of negotiations, the situation went from bad to worse. On the Dutch part it was suspected that the British were deliberately frustrating Dutch aircraft production.⁴¹ More and more the Munitions Agency determined the production goals and mediated in the difficult relationship between the grumbling *LVA* and Wijnmalen. The ambition to create an independent aircraft industry continued in 1918 with the order given to Wijnmalen to manufacture two hundred Clerget aircraft engines. The contract of March 1918 stipulated the delivery of the first fifty before 1 January 1919, the remainder following in August 1919 that same year at the latest. Eventually, the first fifty were overdue for inspection and, besides that, rejected by the *LVA* on technical grounds. In 1919 the Government wanted to cancel the order altogether. The factory was to receive 1.1 million guilders in compensation without ever delivering. The engines left the factory as scrap. Despite the compensation he pocketed, Wijnmalen

suffered a huge financial loss because of the rejected and unwanted engines.

After the fighter-plane, Wijnmalen delivered his first, self-designed, Spyker training aircraft, the V-2, in April 1918. The company received the order to build 56 planes for the *LVA* and 40 for the Dutch Royal Navy. Production culminated in 1918-1919, which may be regarded as the peak of Dutch aircraft production until then. It was the first time Dutch aircraft went into serial production. The first flight took place in April 1918, and the highest production output was at the end of 1918.

The final order of the *LVA* for the V-3 fighter propelled by a Clerget engine was placed late October 1918. Its production would total 72. The first V-3 was to leave the factory in July 1919. Flown by Versteegh, it was shown at the ELTA air exhibition, but the order was cancelled. Thus, efforts to expand Wijnmalen's factory into a modern Dutch aircraft industry by mediation of the Munitions Agency utterly failed. The major problem had been the supply of raw materials, but lack of knowledge, in general, and commercial insight on the part of Wijnmalen in particular, must have contributed to this failure.

In January 1918 the Paris envoy sent reports about the possibility to buy aircraft in France, originally destined for Russia. It concerned Sopwith aircraft propelled by Rhône or Clerget engines. Walaardt Sacré wanted to have a go at it, but General Snijders was reluctant. Fed up with long delivery periods, he put his cards on Germany, with which experiences had been excellent in 1917.⁴² Therefore, in 1918 Versteegh again left for Berlin to purchase 24 Rumpler aircraft, which were also suitable for aerial photography and wireless radio-telegraphy. In August they appeared to function well, so that delivery could take place. Besides money the Germans also desired horses as means of payment, but that did not happen. By the end of October forty aircraft were delivered, with Spandau and Parabellum machineguns and ammunition.

Straight after the war these aircraft would come under scrutiny due to the relatively high number of crashes. Pilots Duinker and C. Land (1888-1919) lost their lives in this way on 14 May and 1 November 1919, respectively. Prince Hendrik, the Queen's consort, was more fortunate: on 6 June 1918 his flight in a Rumpler, piloted by Van Heyst, ended safely. Alibert Cornelis Visser van Yzendoorn (1858-1924), Liberal MP, blamed the *LVA*

for purchasing defective material, but Walaardt Sacré objected, arguing that although the Rumplers may not have been the most modern aircraft, they certainly were the best possible buy at the time. In 1919 the aircraft stayed on the ground most of the time and a committee researched the matter in 1920. The aircraft were eventually superseded by Fokker C VIIIs.

The expansion of the *LVA* envisaged by General Snijders and Walaardt Sacré could neither be realized by acquisitions abroad, nor by national Dutch aircraft production. Walaardt Sacré even lamented in June 1918 that the interned aircraft were the backbone of the *LVA*. In the final months of the war the purchase of these aircraft was stopped altogether, because there were too few parts available to keep them in the air. General Snijders regretted this because they were the most modern aircraft he could get.

The *LVA* calculated in 1918 that, in the event of war, there would be a shortage of one hundred fighters and eighty reconnaissance aircraft.⁴³ By the end of the same year the state of affairs was:

number	make	origin	period of use
10 fighters	Fokker	Germany	1917-1920
20 fighters	Nieuport	Wijnmalen	Hardly
10 fighters	Nieuport	France	1918-1925
5 recon. aircraft	Caudron ⁴⁴	France	1918-1920
40 recon. aircraft	Rumpler	Germany	1918-1920

The goal was still to have 116 fighters and 132 reconnaissance aircraft available by the end of 1919. Evidently, achieving that goal was still a long way off. Even General Snijders' own calculation made in June 1917 fell far short of that.

Where aircraft engines were concerned, the delivery from Sweden was rather stable. Besides that, some twenty engines could be ordered from Oberursel, a Fokker subsidiary in Germany, while Van Berkel was working with Hispano-Suiza. Wijnmalen's Clergets have already been mentioned. The calculated requirement for 585 engines late 1919 was not fulfilled by far.

Exit Wijnmalen, enter Fokker

After the Armistice, demand dropped rapidly and aircraft manufacturing in the Netherlands changed dramatically. On the one hand, there was the wish of many to have a national aircraft industry; on the other, Wijnmalen's reputation was not exactly glowing, and the political demand for economies was beginning to play a role. Besides, Fokker returned from Germany.

The collapse of Imperial Germany signalled the moment for Fokker to bring his aircraft to safety in a spectacular way. He was able to repurchase a number of aircraft from the German Government at a reasonable price. Together with what he had in stock, this amounted to 220 aircraft.⁴⁵ In March 1919 he managed to take them into the Netherlands, loaded into 350 railway carriages, to be safely stored in Amsterdam. Fokker had only one goal, which was to carry on with his factory in the Netherlands. The first step was to come to an agreement with Wijnmalen, so that this company could act as the official importer of the aircraft that had arrived. Fokker's return is therefore closely connected with Wijnmalen's demise.

In April 1919 Fokker received publicity again in the Netherlands. He was back into organizing air shows and founded a flying school in May 1919.⁴⁶ In June he started to organize round tours from Scheveningen and entered into contact with Wijnmalen in order to establish a national aircraft industry.⁴⁷ For the time being this was limited to founding the Dutch Aircraft Factory Ltd in Amsterdam in 1919 with Fokker as its managing director. In order to make the enterprise as Dutch as possible he made Joannes Benedictus Van Heutsz, the general officer who had secured a Dutch victory in the Aceh War, and the affluent entrepreneur Fentener van Vlissingen, members of the Board of Commissioners. Fokker also wisely avoided advertising his own name. Van Heutsz was rather taken by the idea of an independent Dutch aircraft industry and gave Fokker his wholehearted support.⁴⁸ In the Netherlands Fokker's initiative was greatly stimulated by ELTA, which prompted him to disguise the military character of his aircraft as much as possible, all the more because Fokker was given permission to build his factory on the ELTA site.⁴⁹

In the meantime Fokker had to dispose of the aircraft he had smuggled out of Germany. Thus, Fokker ended up with Wijnmalen and the War Ministry

again. In January 1920 these parties reached an agreement for the delivery of 92 D VII fighters and 92 reconnaissance aircraft C I. Any feelings of joy were short-lived, however. Already in April economies impelled the Government to reduce the initial order to twenty D VIIIs and sixty C Is to the amount of 600,000 guilders. In the years that followed it would give Fokker great pains to sell the remaining aircraft abroad. That was not the end to the matter for the Government: Wijnmalen had to be given compensation.

The Dutch Government wanted to be relieved of the responsibilities by which it was bound by contract to Wijnmalen because, as Secretary George August Alexander Alting von Geusau (1864-1937) declared, more modern means had become desirable in the meantime. The buying-off took place in December 1920 and caused a bit of a stir in the Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament. Wijnmalen received 1.1 million guilders in total for the engines - which were all sold for scrap – 0.8 million as down payment for the delivery of 73 fighters (V 3) and 118 reconnaissance aircraft (V-4), which were never delivered, and 1.8 million in compensation for the cancellation of the purchase contract by the State. All in all, a total sum of 3.7 million guilders was involved, for which the State got very little in return apart from a heap of scrap steel. A motion, introduced by the Liberal Hendrik Coenraad Dresselhuys (1870-1926), to investigate these financial transactions into some depth could not change anything. The injection of millions of guilders could not save Wijnmalen. Nor could the, in the meantime internationally, renowned aircraft manufacturer Koolhoven, back in the Netherlands since 1919 and lodging with Wijnmalen. It was now becoming clear that Wijnmalen was a better aviator than a commercial entrepreneur. Fentener van Vlissingen stopped giving financing support in 1922 and Wijnmalen resigned in May that same year. Koolhoven, who had primarily occupied himself with Spyker motorcars, also took his leave in May. Baumhauer, the engineer behind the aircraft designs from 1917 to 1919, went to Van Berkel to design seaplanes for the Dutch East-Indies. Mechanic Vannehard went to work in Joop Carley's aircraft factory. In 1926 Wijnmalen's bankruptcy was definite.

The close of the First World War and the ensuing economies made plans for a national aircraft industry an illusion. The *LVA* did business with Fokker, but its purchases were far from substantial. Fokker aircraft replaced the Rumplers and the remaining Farmans, which were used for

instructional purposes or sold. Subsequently, the aircraft were sold to Carley's aircraft factory in Ede⁵⁰ in 1920-1921.

But there were also other players who, in the turbulent post-war years, tried to get their share in the aircraft industry. It was not just Fokker, with his German background, who was involved. The British also tried to obtain a firm footing, even literally, in one instance. In January 1919 there was talk of the location of a British airship base on the Dutch coast. The RAF was looking at locations near Hook of Holland and Duinrell (Wassenaar), but cancelled the plan a month later.⁵¹ Great Britain was also the first country where the *LVA* tried to obtain the latest knowledge. In October 1919 a delegation was formed to make the journey across but, due to all kinds of difficulties, it never went forward.

Far more structural was the interest displayed by the British aircraft industry, especially Vickers. In Britain, Fokker's activities were eyed with suspicion. On 14 March 1919 the belligerents had met in Brussels and reached an agreement to ban the export of all war materials from Germany. On the basis of the cease-fire agreement of November 1918, which was being worked out in detail in the Versailles Treaty, and about which negotiations were going on at the time, all German war materials were considered war booty. This concerned an estimated 20,000 aircraft. Fokker's aircraft should therefore never have left Germany, nor should the Netherlands have accepted them, the British argued. Although the Netherlands were no party in the negotiations with Germany, accepting the Fokker aircraft was a blemish on the image of the Dutch Government, even more so because the British were eager to take possession of the Dutch aircraft market themselves. They feared that the Germans would soon saturate the market in neutral countries with their aircraft. Their fear was not totally unfounded. The Junkers factory, for example, had hidden 24 dismantled aircraft in Nijmegen from 1919 to 1920, while newspapers contained many advertisements in which German aircraft were offered for sale. Such manoeuvres also went on in the Scandinavian countries.

What was the British perception of what was going on in the Netherlands? In March 1919 British envoy W. Townley demanded an explanation about forty Fokker aircraft that were supposed to have arrived in the Netherlands. Five days later he reported that the Dutch Government was intent on buying two hundred Fokker aircraft, which were rumoured to be there already. On its own initiative, the Munitions Agency entered into

contact with the British, who took the formal stance of not being a party in this matter. That changed when in May the British aircraft industry⁵² got wind of it and reported to London that this was consequently going to cost them orders and that the Dutch Government was violating international agreements. In June the British Air Ministry thought that the Netherlands stored these Fokker aircraft with Wijnmalen in order to enable this factory to meet its delivery obligations. In the course of the months that the British were investigating this matter, they even took it to the level of the Allied Supreme Commander, Marshal Ferdinand Foch (1851-1929). It appeared that, as early as the ceasefire negotiations at Spa, the sale of Fokker aircraft from the German Government back to Fokker had already been discussed between British delegate Richard Haking (1860-1945) and German Kurt von Hammerstein (1878-1943). After that, the British aviation authorities argued, Fokker had probably from April to May 1919 bribed Customs officials and smuggled 180 aircraft into the Netherlands and stored them at his own factory. The Dutch Government was supposed not to have bought them, or only just a few of them. The aircraft were said to have been spotted at the ELTA site, with German identification marks still visible through the newly-applied paint. The British also averred that Fokker had concealed five thousand aircraft engines near Arnhem, which he tried to sell by way of newspaper advertisements.⁵³ In January 1920 the British alleged that the Fokker aircraft were yet taken over by the Dutch Government via Wijnmalen.

British apprehension about the “slipping” of German aircraft into the Netherlands continued in 1920 and 1921. They suspected Carley of being paid by the Germans, or even being a German agent, and investigated Holz, a Amsterdam company that organized an auction for German aircraft in Ede in 1921.⁵⁴

After having been succeeded by Hardenberg and leaving the service, Walaardt Sacré took his chances with Vickers, which tried to get a firmer foothold in the Netherlands through him. Vickers’ activities had started in August 1919. From this cooperation stemmed the National Aircraft Industry Ltd in April 1922, in which familiar names reappear: Joop Carley as managing director, Walaardt Sacré as member of the Board of Commissioners, Frits Koolhoven as engineer and Van Heyst as test pilot. Initially, the aircraft were manufactured at an engineering works in Rotterdam the Munitions Agency had already done a lot of business with.

After a fire on 5 December 1922, construction was transferred to The Hague, before the company went bankrupt in 1925.

The balance

On behalf of the Government the Munitions Agency tried to establish a national aircraft industry from 1917 onwards, by giving Wijnmalen specific orders and by stimulating other companies. Apart from the War Ministry, the Ministry of Colonial Affairs and Commander-in-Chief Snijders also lent support to this policy, which suited the broader aim of having a national Dutch industry for war production. This was rather a tall order, because it implied giving private companies Government subsidies to manufacture aircraft. The results proved to be limited. Wijnmalen and Van Berkel, the companies that profited most from the subsidies, did not manage to pull through as soon as the war was over. The support for making available large funds for this purpose was also rapidly dwindling as the foundation of this support, laid during the war, had become too narrow.

Military aviation in the Netherlands had reached maturity in the First World War, just as it happened with the belligerent powers. For gathering knowledge and acquiring raw materials, the particularly unfavourable position of the Netherlands left an emphatic mark on the construction of the *LVA*, in a qualitative as well as quantitative sense. The *LVA* continuously found itself far below the desired level, despite the awe-inspiring efforts of Walaardt Sacré and Snijders. The interned aircraft, though important for knowledge gathering, did not play a significant role in making up for the deficiency. Neither were the British aviation authorities positive in their judgment about the *LVA* at the end of the war. When in 1918 they were considering the possible delivery of aircraft, they spoke of “negligible numbers”, realizing how small the *LVA* in fact was, and referred to the training of airmen as “very elementary and inefficient”.⁵⁵ Fokker was a God-sent! Earlier, positive experiences with him in 1917, together with the glowing reputation of his aircraft during the war, must have strengthened the choice to welcome this prodigal son back with such warmth. Besides, Fokker was a far better businessman than Wijnmalen. The Netherlands was lacking specialist expertise for producing engines – aircraft engines are technically very challenging –, lacking actual war experience and, together with that, the very rapid technical progress in

the field of aviation in the war years, and had to do without the fundament of an already existing aircraft industry in the pre-war years.

The scales, however, are not tipped in such a way that a one-sided, negative picture of the *LVA* emerges. Its growth under Walaardt Sacré was impressive: its workforce expanded from 111 to 708 employees, with a modern and complete airfield as its home base, and as such “a solid basis for Dutch military aviation”.⁵⁶ In Dutch military operational thinking the air force had achieved a firmly-fixed position. In 1919, military aviation was incorporated in the Strategic Directives, the all-comprising General Staff regulations, which spelt out the preparations of national defence and mobilization of the armed forces.

The *LVA*, it is true, also received substantial funds, especially in the closing years of the war. In April 1917 for instance, when the necessity of drastic expansion and modernization of the air fleet became apparent, General Snijders was hoping for a budget of 15.7 million guilders for 1918. He was granted 10 million, which was an increase of the air force budget of 250% in one year’s time!

After the Armistice, the continuation of such huge expenses was no longer politically feasible. In 1917 General Snijders had still put in for a budget of 6.3 million for the year 1919.

Just like Bosboom, War Secretary De Jonge was willing to pay for the air force. He even caused something of a political stir when he announced that the annual budget would have to be as high as twenty million guilders!⁵⁷ Left-wing resistance in the Second Chamber was gathering momentum in 1919. A socialist MP referred to the military air force as “boyish toying”, unfit for a small, neutral country like the Netherlands. He would rather see the military air force vanish altogether. Self-evidently, War Secretary Altling von Geusau, did want to go as far as that, declaring that “every field army needs an air service for reconnaissance and observation, but especially for counteracting reconnaissance by the opposition”. In the recent war the air force had been “of the greatest significance for morale and defensive force”.⁵⁸ Conversely, to left-wing MPs the military air force was no more than just a symbol of the indulgence in an expensive hobby. In this respect their opposition resembled the nineteenth-century combined resistance of left-wing Liberals and Socialists against the building of expensive fortifications. Just like then, opposition was futile.

Perhaps they found some comfort in the fact that the craved for national aircraft industry had not got off the ground.

The national military aircraft industry may not have materialized, but the ideals lived on, as this remark made by War Secretary Van Dijk in 1921 testifies: “In particular I would once again like to emphasize the national interest, which demands that, in the event of mobilization, for the sake of preserving its neutrality the country can dispose of an industry that should, more than previously, be able to meet the most necessary requirements of the army and navy air services. The past war years may serve as conclusive evidence that supplies from abroad cannot be sufficiently guaranteed.”⁵⁹ This fragment goes to show that in the inter-war years the discussion was by no means closed, but the urgent necessity was not there. The financial means to make this step were neither readily available shortly after the war, nor was the foundation laid during the war firm enough. Moreover, Fokker unexpectedly filled the gap the *LVA* was threatening to fall into in a manner that rendered a firm Government initiative superfluous. In any case, despite major efforts, at the end of the First World War the *LVA* was still far removed from what a modern air force would have to look like.

¹ Existing literature on this subject is principally in Dutch. The best study is R.de Winter, *Leven voor de Luchtvaart* (The Hague, 1992). The best introduction to the Netherlands in 1914-1918 in English is M. Abbenhuis' *The Art of Staying Neutral* (Amsterdam, 2006);

² General Snijders to the Queen's Commissioners, 2 August 1914, *National Archives The Hague (NA), archives of the General Staff (GS) inv. nr. 37*;

³ *NA, GS inv. nr 37*;

⁴ *NA, GS inv. nr. 136*;

⁵ French pilots were interned in Urk, an isolated island in the Zuiderzee, and questioned by the *LVA*;

⁶ Walaardt Sacré to General Snijders, 18 December 1914, *NA, GS inv.nr 115*;

⁷ S. van der Zee, *Vergeeten legende* (Amsterdam, 2001) and <http://www.alexdenouden.nl/artikelen/koolhoven.htm>.

⁸ About Wijnmalen: H.J. Hazewinkel, *Vliegtuigbouw in Fokkers schaduw* (1988) and De Winter, *Leven*, p.70;

⁹ H. Hoofdman, *Van Brik tot Freedom Fighter* (Zwolle, 1963), pp. 16-9;

¹⁰ From 1916 Schiphol became the main military airfield for the same reason;

¹¹ Koolhoven worked for this factory in the years 1906-1910;

¹² Wijnmalen to General Snijders, 17 March 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr. 322*;

¹³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs to London envoy, 10 January 1915, *NA, archief Nederlandse ambassade Londen, inv.nr 854*;

¹⁴ Figures based on the monthly LVA reports in *NA, GS*.

Consult <http://home.casema.nl/kw.jonkre/vliegtuigtypen.htm#C> and Hooftman, *Briek* (Zwolle, 1963) for a complete survey containing all the technical data of all the aircraft in the service of the LVA;

¹⁵ Bosboom to General Snijders, 30 June 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr 324*;

¹⁶ Hardenberg Memo, 11 November 1921, *NA, GS inv.nr. 962*;

¹⁷ De Winter, *Leven*, pp. 84-85;

¹⁸ Labouchere's grandfather was French and his three brothers lived in France. He was a pilot, having received his flying license in 1910. General Snijders accompanied him on his flights during the large-scale manoeuvres of the Dutch Army in September 1911. Most of the time Labouchere worked in France inspecting engines that were exported to the Netherlands. He also provided information about the latest French developments in military aviation;

¹⁹ Wijnmalen to Walaardt Sacré, 1 August 1916, *NA, GS inv.nr 501*;

²⁰ This Agency, founded by the Government in June 1915, can be compared with the Ministry of Munitions in Great Britain.

²¹ Negotiations with Wijnmalen, September-November 1916, *NA, GS inv.nr 501* and *Archief Artillerie Inrichtingen, inv.nr 2690*;

²² General Snijders, 15 April 1916, *NA, Archief Eenbeden Landmacht inv.nr 549*;

²³ See W. Klinkert, "Om den oorlogstoestand zooveel mogelijk na te bootsen..." in M. Kraaijestein and P. Schulten (eds.), *Wankel evenwicht; neutraal Nederland in de Eerste Wereldoorlog* (Soesterberg, 2007);

²⁴ General Snijders to Buhlman, 9 January 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr 322*;

²⁵ Scheltema to Bosboom, *NA, GS inv.nr 322*;

²⁶ Bosboom to General Snijders, 15 November 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr 330*;

²⁷ Dossier Richttoestel GM 1916, *NA, GS inv.nr 492*;

²⁸ Walaardt Sacré to General Snijders, 23 September 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr 275*;

²⁹ General Snijders to Bosboom, 15 December 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr. 271*;

³⁰ Walaardt Sacré to General Snijders, 17 May 1915, *NA, GS inv.nr. 322*;

³¹ *NA, GS inv.nr 647*;

³² *Het Vliegveld*, 1919, p.94;

³³ Walaardt Sacré to General Snijders, 9 March 1917, *NA, GS inv.nr. 643*;

³⁴ For criticism of the results in the field of military aviation in the Netherlands, see the series of articles published by Johan Rozendaal in the *Nieuwe Courant* (12 October to 2 November 1917);

³⁵ Besides foreign aircraft flying over Dutch national territory, the opposite also happened. On 5 January 1915 Dutch lieutenant J.P. van Oosten (1891- 1918) flew over Elten in Germany.

³⁶ He took it for granted at the time that Wijnmalen would deliver sixty aircraft (Nieuport, Sopwith and Caudron), twenty from France (Nieuport and Caudron) and ten Fokkers from Germany. Fourteen Farman would remain available as training aircraft;

³⁷ De Jonge to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 8 September 1917, *NA, Archief Buitenlandse Zaken, A-dossiers Europese Oorlog (BZ A) inv.nr 724*;

³⁸ Interview with Van Berkel in *NRC*, 15 March 1921. For the factory, see *Het Vliegveld* (1921) p. 98;

³⁹ De Jonge to General Snijders, 9 November 1917, *NA, GS inv.nr 643*;

⁴⁰ Dossier samenvoeging luchtmachten November 1917-februari 1918, *NA, GS inv.nr 741*. Also, *Het Vliegveld* 1929, p.372 and 438 and *Gebeime verbalen Ministerie van Oorlog 1920, inv.nr 313*;

⁴¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 May 1918, *NA, BZ-A, inv.nr 729*;

⁴² January-February 1918, *NA, GS inv.nr. 765*;

⁴³ Walaardt Sacré to General Snijders, 12 July 1918, *NA, GS, inv.nr. 821*;

⁴⁴ On 1 November 1918 a Farman collided with a Caudron in mid-air over Soesterberg. The aircrews of both planes died in the accident;

⁴⁵ 120 D VII, 70 C 1 and 20 D VIII;

⁴⁶ *NRC*, 26 April and 6 May 1919; *Het Volk*, 6 June 1919;

⁴⁷ *Het Centrum*, 2 & 28 June 1919;

⁴⁸ E. Franquinet, *Fokker* (Eindhoven, 1946), pp. 179-80;

⁴⁹ Fokker's adventures have been recorded in detail in M. Dierikx, *Dwarswind* (Den Haag, 1997). See *Het Vliegveld* (1920) for a survey of his aircraft;

⁵⁰ Head of the LVA to the General Staff, 22 October 1921, *NA, GS inv.nr. 962*. See *Het Vliegveld* (1920), p. 319;

⁵¹ *National Archives London (NA-GB)*, Air 1/34/15/1/206;

⁵² Besides Vickers, this also concerned the AVRO factory of Alliot Verdon Roe (1877-1958);

⁵³ *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 25 October 1919;

⁵⁴ *NA-GB, dossier Air 2/199*;

⁵⁵ *NA-GB, Air 1/34/15/1/206*;

⁵⁶ De Winter, *Leven*, p 65;

⁵⁷ 28 November 1917, p. 512 and 5 February 1918, p. 1225;

⁵⁸ 18 December 1919, p. 1062;

⁵⁹ *Van Dijk Memo*, 4 November 1921, *NA, GS inv.nr. 962*.

Arms, Influence, and Coastal Defense: The British Military Mission to Finland, 1924-25

By Donald Stoker⁶

“Finland must take some chances, and history shows that it is safer to take chances with the Russian fleet than with the Russian Army.”

- General Sir W. M. St. G. Kirke¹

In the modern period military missions have served as an important tool for nations pursuing military development, as well as those attempting to gain influence over the political and military policies of the recipient states. Typically, a smaller country contracts with a larger power for a visiting team of expert advisors. The dispatching power might have the best interests of the smaller state at heart, but self-interest usually drives both nations involved. In the decades between the world wars, the European powers generally sought to place military missions in foreign states to achieve economic benefits, particularly the sale of arms, or to counter the political and economic influence of a rival.²

In 1924, as a part of its long-running efforts to draw-up an affordable naval bill to meet the nation’s defense needs, the Finnish government asked for a British military mission. The impetus for this came from the Finns in 1919, when Commodore G.T.G. von Schoultz discussed the idea with Marshal Carl Mannerheim. Von Schoultz brought the idea before the government, but did not get what he wanted. Instead, the Finnish government chose a French military mission and then supplemented it with a short-lived French naval mission after World War I.³ The French presence would be temporary, but Finland’s quest for direct foreign military advice continued.

The French, like the British, used military missions as a means of pursuing several diplomatic, military, and economic goals. To Paris, they were an element of France’s Eastern European alliance and influence building strategy in the immediate post-World War I period. In February 1919, at George

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Clemenceau's order, a mission comprising two Air Force and two Army officers, left for Finland. To Mannerheim, the mission's purpose was to instruct the army. But the French also had other tasks for it, some not unlike what the British would outline for their future mission. Its additional duties included intelligence gathering and conducting propaganda on France's behalf. Similarly, the French dispatched missions to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. The French hoped to tie these states to France's post-World War I alliance strategy by having them adopt French arms and military methods,⁴ which was far more commitment than the British hoped to extract from Finland, or intended to give. The important economic advantages that it was hoped would result from such missions became increasingly important to London and Paris during the 1920s.

In late 1923, the Finnish government appointed a combined civilian and military committee to examine the state of the nation's defenses. The proposals issuing from the group bore little relation to what the Finns could afford. For example, the amount the committee required for coast defense alone amounted to £5,000,000, a sum larger than Finland's defense budget for two years. The proposal horrified civilian officials and worried officers of the army; the latter feared that their own requirements would be sacrificed for the needs of coast defense and indeed, sometimes this was the case.⁵

In 1923, the Finnish government had under consideration proposals to spend about 300,000,000 Finnish marks, nearly £2,000,000, on defense. The government, citing the opinion of many Finns that the nation's military officers lacked the necessary technical experience to carry out their duties, decided to seek military advice from abroad before submitting any military spending proposals to the Diet. The Finns, at least initially, wanted a British commission that would advise on coastal, naval, and air defense, a group for which the Finns would pay all expenses. Finland also wanted the mission sent in as unobtrusive a manner as possible to avoid any unnecessary comments from the Finnish press. Approaching Britain for such advice was a new turn for Finnish policy. Previously, they had sought the services of France and Germany in such matters. Major-General Walter Mervyn St. George Kirke, who eventually led the British team, contributed the shift in Finnish policy to the efforts of Sir Ernest Rennie, the British consul in Helsinki. To the British government, the mission Kirke was to lead had two purposes: to counter French influence, and obtain orders for British armaments firms.⁶

The initial Finnish request for the mission came on 20 March 1924. The Finns wanted the mission purely for defensive reasons and had no aggressive intentions. Moreover, the Finnish government had a strong desire to get the best value for its modest funds. Finland wanted British experts to advise on the nation's sea defense and the fortification of the Finnish coast, particularly in regard to coastal batteries, taking into consideration the materials then available. The Finns also wanted to know how air power could be used in coastal defense and whether or not aircraft could replace some of the units then being utilized to protect the nation's maritime frontiers.⁷

The Foreign Office gave its blessing to the mission, though expressed doubts as to whether or not it would ever materialize. The War Office proposed a seven-member commission, one Chief of Mission, assisted by two men from each of the armed services. Lieutenant-Colonel F. P. Nosworthy, of the Royal Engineers, who was on a tour of the eastern Baltic and scheduled to be in Finland from 23-27 May, was instructed to obtain more information from Finland on its needs. The British government worried that the mission might arrive in Finland at a time of political crisis in the Finnish High Command, an allusion to infighting between the *Jägers* (the bloc of Finnish officers who had served in the German army during World War I) and their supporters, and the former Tsarist officers, and instructed Nosworthy to keep in close contact with the British representatives in Helsinki. The Admiralty also approved of sending British advisors to Finland—if the Finns agreed to pay all the expenses involved in such a venture.⁸

Meanwhile, Commodore von Schoultz, the head of the Finnish Navy, met with Captain W. de M. Egerton, the British naval attaché in Helsinki, and discussed the possibility of a purely naval mission to Finland. The meeting provides insight into some of the problems within the Finnish high command. Von Schoultz was not aware that the Finnish government had requested a combined British military mission, or even that Finnish authorities had suggested it. Egerton believed that von Schoultz's ignorance of Finnish policy resulted from the fact that the entire command structure lay in the hands of the Army. Egerton wrote that "it appears to be their policy to keep the Navy as much as possible in the background." Egerton also commented that the planned addition of a naval officer to Finland's General Staff might result in better communication between the service arms.⁹

On 24 May 1924, Egerton, Nosworthy, and Major R. B. Goodden, the British military attaché for Finland and the Baltic States, met with Commodore von

Schoultz, Commander Yrjö Roos of the Naval Staff, Major Martola of the Finnish General Staff, and a Finnish officer assigned to the Coastal Defense Artillery, Major Talvela. They discussed Britain's dispatch of an expert commission to study various matters related to the coast defense of Finland.¹⁰

Finland wanted some type of mission, but several factors greatly concerned the Finnish government. Perpetually poor, it worried about the cost of the mission and because of this asked that it involve as few personnel as possible. The British were asked to suggest the composition of the mission, the rank and number of officers needed, as well as the mission's duration. Commodore von Schoultz said that the coastal areas that they would be considering included parts of the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia, as well as the northern and western shores of Lake Ladoga. The Finnish government reserved the right to designate which ports and bases required special defense preparations because of specific military or other reasons.¹¹

The Finns eventually decided that they wanted the mission to examine the defense of Finland's entire frontier, both land and sea, including the Karelian Isthmus. However, it was only to consider land defense that "depended on naval actions, as e.g. bombardment of the coast, landing of armed forces with the purpose of surrounding field armies, or cutting off their communications, etc." The northern parts of Finland, meaning the frontiers between Finland and Sweden, were not considered critical, a clear indication of who Finland saw as its potential enemy. The regions of vital importance included the area from Turku (Åbo) on the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland, and the northern and western coasts of Lake Ladoga. The Finnish authorities were to inform the commission of what locations they felt to have enough strategic and political significance to warrant fortification. The mission would be left to determine the best methods of defending these areas.¹²

After learning the breadth of the terms of reference for the mission, The British representatives agreed that they could not suggest a team smaller than ten members. They proposed that a mission led by a chairman whose rank and branch of service was determined by the British military authorities. He would be assisted by officers from the three branches of the British armed services: two from the Navy, two from the Army, and two from the Air Force. Two secretaries and one draftsman would also be needed, and it would take two months in Finland to fulfill the assignment. The Finnish Minister of Defense had had in mind a much smaller staff, perhaps two or three members, but von Schoultz agreed with the British estimate.¹³

The officials also discussed the critical matter of expense. The British representatives estimated that the proposed mission would not cost more than £2,000 per month. They prepared an itemized salary estimate, which included a twelfth mission member, and a typist. The expected monthly cost was £1,035. The British expected the Finns to pay for travel expenses to and from Finland and to also make contributions to the pension funds of the participating officers during the time they spent in Finland. The British representatives then pointed out that if Finland spent the entire projected sum of £2,000,000, the cost of the commission as discussed would amount to only 0.1 per cent of the anticipated funds, a sum approximate to the cost of 12 modern sea mines.¹⁴

The British and the Finns both looked favorably upon the possibility of the mission. The French had a different attitude, or at least the British believed they did. Nosworthy reported that “French intrigue was very hot in Finland; they had somehow got to know all about our proposed Mission and were extremely annoyed about it.” Rennie informed Nosworthy that the French were “deeply disliked by the Finns” and mentioned that it was unlikely that the French would be “able to affect their [Finnish] decisions in any way.”¹⁵

Official notification of Finland’s desire for the mission came in early June 1924. The Finns agreed to the proposed composition, as well as to pay the salaries and travel expenses of the commission members. It was anticipated that the mission would last two months and that therefore the necessary personnel should arrive in Finland before the end of June.¹⁶

Hjalmar J. Procopé, the Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs, was “anxious” for the dispatch of the experts. The Finns wanted them to study the defenses of the southern coast of Finland as well as Lake Ladoga, including both the inland and coastal defenses. The exact details of the work they would undertake would be settled after their arrival.¹⁷ The shifting nature of exactly what the Finns wanted the British to do reveals much about the confused state of civil-military relations and defense planning in Finland.

The Finns expressed some concern over the official name of the mission; they disliked the terms “Naval and Military Mission” and “Commission.” Procopé said that such terms “would give an air of permanency to the body of officers” that Britain sent to Finland and that it also might “give rise to undue comments” in both the Finnish and foreign press.¹⁸

The War Office recommended that a high-ranking Army officer serve as the mission's head. The Foreign Office agreed, citing as the basis for their decision the more advanced state of development of the Finnish Army when compared to the Finnish Navy and Air Force. Others in the British government possessed little enthusiasm for the project. In January 1924, the first Labour Government took office. Ramsey MacDonald, the new Prime Minister, quickly granted *de jure* recognition to the Soviet Union, something other British governments had previously refused (though they would trade with them), and soon embarked upon efforts to strengthen Great Britain's political and economic ties with Moscow. C. P. Trevelyan, the President of the Board of Education protested the timing chosen to send a "large military commission to teach Finland, one of Russia's neighbors, how to arm themselves most effectively against her." He also contended that this constituted a "definitely unfriendly act to the Russian Government and for that reason alone I suggest to the Cabinet that it ought to be stopped." Trevelyan also reminded the British government of the criticism it had leveled at France for the manner "in which it had been arming and instructing in matters its various vassal nations in the East of Europe. It is most objectionable that we should begin to play the same game."¹⁹ The Minister's comments, especially his criticism of armament policy, though a bit alarmist, do demonstrate the minor shift in the foreign policy views of some government officials during the short-lived Labour government. Trevelyan's outburst might also demonstrate the influence of the pacifist wing of the Labour Party.

The Foreign Office considered the objections of the Board of Education unwarranted. Finland possessed only rudimentary defenses and the Foreign Office refused to believe that Finland, either with or without the temporary help of a commission of experts, could pose a serious menace to the Soviet Union. The Foreign Office also did not like having a British mission compared with a French one. They insisted, incorrectly, that similar projects undertaken by France tended to be larger and of a longer duration. Moreover, they contended, with far too broad of a generalization, that French officers serving with such missions generally held command positions within the forces for which they provided advice. In the case under discussion neither the Finns nor the British anticipated any long-term commitment; Britain was merely responding to a Finnish request. The diplomats insisted that the mission would continue despite the objections of the Board of Education—if

the Army Council still agreed to the matter. The Council did, and hoped to dispatch the mission around 15 July 1924.²⁰

By 8 July 1924, the British had assembled the necessary personnel. Procopé and others in the Finnish government were pleased that the British had agreed to send the advisors, and happy with the terms concluded. Some also held the opinion that the British acted from an attitude of personal “disinterest,” a perception that the British hoped and tried to impress upon the Finns. To command the mission the British authorities selected Major-General Sir Walter Mervyn St. George Kirke, an officer of the Royal Artillery who had served in India and China, as well on the Western Front during the Great War. This proved a wise choice. General Kirke worked diligently and quickly, generally keeping the needs of the Finns in the forefront of any decision, an unusual attitude for French and British officials working in the eastern Baltic between the world wars. Aiding his endeavors were Captain Fraser and Commander Twigg, both of the Royal Navy, Lieutenant-Colonel Wighton, Royal Army, Lieutenant-Colonel Ling, Royal Engineers, Group Captain Holt, Royal Air Force (RAF), Squadron Leader Maycock, RAF, two military clerks, and one military draftsman. The mission came to Finland about the middle of July 1924, an event kept very quiet. Neither the Commander-in-Chief of the Finnish forces, General Karl Frederik Wilkama, nor the Chief of Staff, General Oscar Enckell, received official word of the arrivals.²¹ Again, the communication problem within the Finnish military and civilian structures becomes apparent.

After meeting with the Minister of Defense, General Kirke realized that no substantial political or strategic groundwork existed upon which to base the suggestions of the British mission. The Minister of Defense could also provide Kirke with no real estimate on the amount of money available for the specific service branches. Kirke suggested a comprehensive survey of the entirety of Finland’s defense problems before embarking upon any expenditure. The Finnish government agreed and the advisors began their work on this basis. General Kirke wrote: “I thus found myself in the position of Minister of Defence having to allot tasks and funds as between the three Services, each of which naturally considered itself entitled to the Lion’s share.”²²

Six weeks later, General Kirke and his officers had reconnoitered the country and filed a report detailing their recommendations regarding the navy, coastal defense, and the air force. The British experts cautioned that the needs of the

army should be considered equally and expressed their view that the requirements of the ground forces were among the most urgent. The recommendations then went to the Revision Committee. They were adopted six months later after much argument. The government was “enchanted” with the mission’s progress statements and Kirke wrote that the group’s report would not only give the Finns better coastal defenses, but also save them several hundred million marks. Some in the leadership of the Navy and Coast Defense were not so pleased with the work of the mission, or its recommendations. The inspector of coast defenses protested the cuts in the funding estimates for his service from £5,000,000 to about £500,000. The head of the Navy also pressed the Revision Committee to adjust its expenditure proposals upward. The Air Force accepted the British advice and as funding became available it moved its development along the proposed lines.²³

Kirke’s handling of the mission bought much goodwill for Britain. At the beginning of his tenure in Finland, Kirke made it clear that he wished to complete his work as quickly as possible in order to pass on the financial savings to the Finnish government. He sent some of the mission personnel home within six weeks, earlier than expected. He also intended to return home before his allotted time. This, according to General Kirke, was a “novel” experience for the Finns. Previously, they had had a difficult time getting rid of earlier German and French advisors, and he insisted that the French mission had been particularly difficult to dislodge. Kirke believed, in typical British fashion, that the French “having found a soft job tried to stick to it as long as possible.” The remainder of the British personnel, except for Kirke and a staff officer, sailed on 11 September 1924.²⁴

The various branches of the British government and military did not always assist Kirke’s endeavors to keep the mission’s costs at a minimum. The British military wanted the Finnish government to assume the expense of the salaries of the officers sent to Finland, an outlay that the armed forces would have borne in any circumstance. General Kirke asked his government to find ways to keep Finland’s costs to a minimum and requested that they not charge the Finns expenses that the government would normally bear. Kirke had been anxious to keep costs low in an attempt to convince the Finns of the “disinterest” on the part of the British government, hoping, in turn, that this would result in orders for British industry, an attitude that clearly reveals Britain’s hope for the mission. Rennie, the British Consul, supported Kirke’s efforts and pointed out to his superiors (incorrectly) that the French only

dispatch missions if contracts are placed in France, the result being the creation of a bad impression. Rennie insisted that minimizing the mission's costs would bring benefits to British industry that far outweighed any additional expenses the government might incur. The Foreign Office agreed with Kirke and Rennie and asked the three service heads to do as the pair recommended. The Admiralty, at least, agreed. Kirke also attempted to have the cost of instruction fees lowered for Finnish air officers to receive training in Britain. The Treasury refused to allow a reduction in these charges for any foreign officers.²⁵

Kirke's conscientious efforts to reduce the expenses of the mission paid extra dividends for British influence. The Finns were pleased and impressed with all of Kirke's efforts, enough so that they asked the General to remain in Finland until the end of the year. The official reason given was that he would help in the reorganization of the Finnish Army. The Commander-in-Chief and the Chief of the General Staff also wanted Kirke to stay. Both had only recently taken up their appointments, the former commanders having been relieved from their positions shortly after the arrival of the British mission.²⁶ Possibly, the deposed soldiers were victims of Finland's purge of non-ethnic Finns from the ranks of the government and military.

Kirke accepted the offer and returned to Britain in September to bring Lady Kirke to Helsinki. The couple arrived in Finland at the beginning of October, accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel P.L.W. Powell. Powell came to meet Finland's request for the loan of an army officer for six months, with the possibility of this period being extended.²⁷

The Finns gave Kirke a free hand and he anticipated completing his work by Christmas. He attempted to have the question of army reorganization transferred from the Revision Committee to the General Staff. Subsequent to Kirke's appointment, the Committee had spent eight months debating what should be done in regard to the army, without reaching a conclusion. Kirke's efforts proved futile and he contributed his failure to the Chief of the General Staff, who being "new to his post, was afraid of responsibility, and had not the experience necessary to enable him to assert himself." The Revision Committee also did not want to relinquish their control because of their own desires to do the job. The Finnish government also preferred that the responsibility for defense recommendations remain in the hands of the Committee. Its members were drawn from many of the different parties of the Finnish political spectrum and the government wanted them to be

directly responsible for the conclusions reached so that their respective political groups would be committed to finding the necessary funding. On strictly military matters, the Committee invariably accepted Kirke's advice.²⁸

Kirke did not like the slow pace of the Revision Committee and his hope of departing around Christmas proved futile. But, he wrote, that this "was natural, seeing that they were all busy men and many of them with little knowledge of the subject, though intensely anxious to do their best." Other factors also added to the extension of his stay. Army officers responsible for preparing reports on the cost of various proposals had promised them by January. These had still not arrived by the time of the General's departure at the end of March 1925. To hurry the Finns, General Kirke proposed coming home several times, once soon after Christmas 1924. He reported that this had "an instantaneous though temporary effect."²⁹

The Mission's Recommendations

In the end, what were the recommendations offered by General Kirke, particularly for the Finnish Navy and Coast Defense, and did the Finns implement them? First, Kirke believed that the Finns should quickly reorganize the military command structure, as one branch of the army frequently did not know what the other was doing. He suggested that the Finns use the British War Office as a model. The British also recommended the creation of a Finnish Navy as an independent service not tied to the coastal defense command structure. Kirke also thought that placing warships under the command of Army coast defense officers would hinder naval operations and fail to take advantage of what he saw as the "enterprising nature of the Finnish character." He also argued against placing the Coast Defense forces under the command of the Navy. He recommended this because he felt that in the event of a successful invasion defensive operations would become primarily an Army show. Kirke also did not want the navy burdened with the problems entailed in coast defense. He believed that the navy needed to concentrate on its own development so as to emerge as an efficient force. To him, this was burden enough.³⁰

To Kirke and his staff the naval forces of Finland had several objectives: 1) forcing the concentration of enemy units, which would hurt any efforts at blockade and make enemy ships susceptible to submarine attack; 2) attacking single enemy vessels; 3) launching naval attacks in combination with aircraft;

4) forcing the enemy to devote resources to convoying unarmed vessels – “in short, hamper his freedom of action on the seas.” To accomplish these tasks the British argued that Finland needed air and naval forces, but not at the expense of the Army. The Army was seen as the most important arm, and rightfully so. Aircraft were considered useful to the army, naval forces not as much so. Kirke did believe that the Finns needed some naval units and felt that they would utilize them effectively. He wrote that the Finns were “naturally a sea-faring people, possessing numerous small craft and a knowledge of how to use them, and an endeavour should be made to put these factors to good use.”³¹

The British mission also filed exhaustive reports evaluating the extensive coastal fortifications that the Finns inherited from the Russians. Elements in the Finnish military wanted to arm most of these sites with the numerous artillery pieces acquired upon the collapse of the Tsarist regime. Kirke believed that making an effort to erect fixed defenses to protect the entire coast was not only impractical, but also unnecessary. Enacting such a plan would, in his opinion, result in a “useless diversion of funds” that could be better spent on the field army. It would also contribute to making Finnish defenses weak everywhere. Kirke argued for the installation of coastal batteries at strategic points along the coast in order to protect Finland’s ports and other important installations.³²

Kirke also pushed for the standardization of the coastal defense weapons. The Finns had a myriad of old Tsarist artillery, some of which had been purchased from American firms, ranging from light 47mm pieces to 12-inch guns. Kirke suggested that in the interest of efficiency the shore guns should be of three types: 75mm (these could also act as anti-aircraft guns), 6-inch, and 10-inch.³³

The British mission also argued against the creation of an extensive network of coastal fortifications because of the amount of personnel that manning such installations required. The coast defense forces already suffered from a shortage of officers, and the expansion of this service’s duties would only exacerbate the problem. The construction of batteries at strategic sites would allow the concentration of scarce personnel. Kirke also recommended that most of the servicemen assigned to coastal defense duties be Schutz Corps (militia) members wherever possible. This would release additional men from the younger and more fit classes for service in the regular army.³⁴ This desire to prevent the dissipation of Finland’s manpower resources in order to

provide the Finnish Army with sufficient cadres was one of the dominant elements that continuously influenced the recommendations that Kirke offered the Finns.

Kirke also believed that the Finns had inordinate fears regarding a Soviet amphibious assault and the shelling of Finnish cities by the Red Navy. He wrote: "Finland must take some chances, and history shows that it is safer to take chances with the Russian fleet than with the Russian Army." He argued that Finland's best defense against a Russian amphibious assault was the use of mobile reserves and aircraft. A railway runs along the southern coast of Finland and Kirke believed that the Finns would have no problems massing sufficient strength to throw back any Soviet invasion force that made it to shore through a gauntlet composed of coastal guns, the Finnish Navy, and the Finnish Air Force. Similarly, attacks launched across the ice during winter would also be very vulnerable to attacks from the air.³⁵

Kirke also argued that the possibility of coastal bombardment on the part of Soviet warships would be at best slight, an assessment that the Winter War would later prove correct. The many islands that dot the coast of Finland force any bombarding warships to take up stations a great distance from the intended target. Before radar, this prevented accurate observation of the site under attack, except by the use of aircraft. Unless aircraft can stay over the target, the bombardment proves very ineffective. Coastal guns, which generally have greater accuracy than those on board ship, would also make getting too close to a Finnish port a dangerous proposition for a Soviet warship. These same islands also inhibit the movement of enemy warships along Finland's shores. The confined waters force the vessels to operate singly or in small groups. These units would be very vulnerable to Finnish naval attacks.³⁶

The British also offered advice on the composition of the Finnish Navy. The main element would consist of three gunboats, or more accurately, armored coast defense ships. The British recommended 2,500-ton vessels with a shallow draft (12-14 feet), with 6-inch guns for the main armament. Kirke advocated three such vessels so as to always have one at sea. The British also arrived at this number because the best information that Great Britain then possessed on the Red Navy led Kirke to believe that at the most, the Soviets would only be able to have three destroyers on station at any one time. Additionally, if the Soviets armed their available merchantmen, they might be able to muster an additional three vessels. It was felt that the armored ships

would be able to deal with any threat from enemy destroyers as well as protect coastal shipping. Kirke's commission recommended that one armored ship be built immediately so that the lessons learned from its construction and use could be utilized in the building of its sister ships.³⁷

The British plan foresaw at least three 400-ton submarines complementing the armored ships. Kirke recommended buying these abroad, preferably from Great Britain, in order to take advantage of British experience. British builders were more knowledgeable than those in any "available" nation. This would result in a larger expenditure for the submarines, but the Finns would reap the benefit of British experience. Kirke advised the construction of subsequent vessels in Finnish yards. Additionally, the Finns also had the old Russian submarine *AG.16*, which the Finns had raised and upon which they had already spent 19,000,000 Finnish marks for hull and machinery repairs. Because of its age and condition Kirke did not believe that the Finns should seek to make it an active part of their navy. As a complement to the submarines, the British recommended the purchase of a submarine parent ship.³⁸

Kirke's mission also advised the construction of barges that would be equipped with 12-inch cannon left in Finland by the Russians. Inspired by the British experience in the Dardanelles in 1915 and along the Flanders coast in 1917-18, these weapons were meant for defensive use against attacking enemy warships under the cover of Finland's many islands.³⁹

Kirke argued against the purchase of new Coastal Motor Boats (CMBs), believing that the money would be better spent on aircraft capable of carrying torpedoes, something that he believed, correctly, would become increasing efficient in subsequent years. The British recommended that the Finns equip 50 vessels for minesweeping and that they purchase the paravanes necessary for this, as well as numerous extras. Defensive mine laying played a role in the British plans and included sowing the areas around Björkö, Vyborg, Vasa, and Kotka. A field would also be laid between the Åland Islands and Sweden in order to protect Finland's communications. At the time of Kirke's tenure, the Finns had 1,834 mines in storage. Kirke recommended the purchase of an additional 500.⁴⁰

In the end, the British concluded that the Finns should spend 423,914,340 Finnish marks over a six-year period for the improvement and expansion of their navy. This figure included money for personnel expenses, maintenance,

and work on a number of bases, as well as the moving of one. The latest Finnish program drawn up for the navy and coast defense before Kirke's arrival had called for the expenditure of 684,974,840 Finnish marks.⁴¹

The Aftermath

General Kirke left Helsinki on 24 March 1925. The Finns were very pleased by his work, especially his businesslike approach. They regretted his departure and offered their hopes that he would soon return. Kirke, as well as officials of the British government, believed the mission a complete success, and their comments on this subject demonstrate the primary purposes for dispatching the mission: influence and contracts. Kirke believed that the mission had produced an "invisible gain to British prestige" and that it had established good relations with the military leaders in Finland, particularly the Jäger officers, who had previously been perceived by the British as pro-German, and who were also the most important group in the Finnish military. In regard to the navy he wrote that "The extent to which British influence predominates will depend entirely on the extent to which the British Admiralty is prepared to help in training officers." The Finns were particularly eager to send young officers to the United Kingdom for submarine training and Kirke wrote that "This is probably the only chance of getting any share for British yards in the work of the new Naval programme." Kirke felt that relations between Finland and Britain would continue to improve steadily, the result being "good effects on commercial relations" between the two states.⁴² He proved overly optimistic.

Despite his positive hopes for the future, Kirke was convinced that "the scales are heavily loaded against British firms." He identified several obstacles, the first being the cost of French goods, which tended to be less than those from Great Britain. General Kirke also noted the French government's policy of sometimes providing financial support to firms doing business with foreign countries, as well as the strong official encouragement from the French government. He also noted some additional past elements that weighed against the British: the French tactic of awarding medals to influential military and political personnel as well as "the propaganda of French officers who are practically agents for armament firms." Finally, Finnish officers had often only seen French material.⁴³

General Kirke's complaint regarding the French policy of awarding medals had particularly strong merit. During the 1920s, the French gave numerous Legions of Honor to important Finnish officials, many of them naval officers. Included among these were Commander Einar-Wilhelm Schwank, 11 January 1923, and Commander Yrjö Roos, 23 July 1924, both of whom were future heads of the Finnish Navy. Important dignitaries receiving the medal included Dr. Rudolf Holsti, 22 April 1920, and Hjalmar Procopé, 22 November 1928. Commodore von Schoultz also held the Legion of Honor.⁴⁴ But this did not win France the influence it desired.

Despite the threat to the British from French competition, Kirke did not believe that the French represented the greatest danger. He saw the Italians and Swedes, both of whom had their advocates in Finland, as Britain's most dangerous competitors. France, Italy, and Sweden had all accepted Finnish officers to various military training schools and the Italians had even allowed the Finns to serve in command positions.⁴⁵ The real threat, which Kirke never realized, was Germany.

Kirke's presence and Finnish satisfaction with his activities and those of the other British officers did not prevent the Finns from also looking elsewhere for military advice. In early September 1924, near the end of the tenure of the British mission, Finland dispatched a group of leading Finnish naval officers to study the naval situations in Germany, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries. A British observer commented that Finland had "determined to have recourse to as many countries as may be for guidance in their task of reorganizing the defensive forces of their country." During this same period, the Finnish Minister of Defense asked for permission to retain five foreign military experts for the new Army staff school scheduled to open on 3 November 1924. Included among these were one French, one Italian, and one Swedish officer.⁴⁶

Kirke's intervention did prevent the appointment of a French advisor to the Finnish Air Force. Under an old agreement, General Enckell of the Finnish Army went to Paris sometime around Christmas 1924 to arrange for a French air officer as an instructor and air advisor to the Finnish government. Kirke, when he learned of this through the Finnish Air Force, pointed out to the Minister of Defense, as well as to the Foreign Minister, that simultaneously seeking the advice of two nations would be useless and "fatal to the efficiency of the Finnish Air Force, and that if they were definitely committed to the French, it would be best for us to go at once." Rennie, the British Minister in

Helsinki, supported Kirke's view. A meeting of the Finnish Cabinet followed and its members voted unanimously that Kirke should stay and the French should be sent Finland's regrets. Moreover, the Cabinet decided to request the services of a British air officer for two years. The British government agreed and Squadron Leader Field arrived in March 1925.⁴⁷

In an effort to strengthen Britain's economic chances, General Kirke advocated the granting of preferential treatment toward Finnish officers regarding invitations to British maneuvers. In Kirke's view, the Finnish Army and government would greatly appreciate this and "it would probably lead to practical results when new equipment had to be purchased abroad."⁴⁸

Foreign Office officials had similar views. They believed that the appointment of a British air advisor indicated that the Finns were looking increasingly toward Britain. They also believed that if Finnish naval officers sent to Britain for training received a good welcome the "commercial results may very well be considerable." A Foreign Office minute summed up in one sentence British hopes for General Kirke's mission: "There is no doubt that the mission has enhanced our prestige & let us hope that commercial results will follow."⁴⁹

The recommendations of the mission had a limited effect on the development of the Finnish Air Force, Army, and Navy, but little effect on the Coast Defense forces. In general, the British advice received a "harsh reception" from the naval officers. The mission's recommendation that Finland remove many of the coastal defense guns was rejected. The Finnish high command could not understand why Kirke's mission had made such a decision and refused to accept it. The Finns also disagreed with the British recommendations regarding the caliber of the guns for the planned coast defense ships; they believed the suggested British caliber insufficient for their needs. The Finns also did not like Kirke's conclusion that CMBs were useless to Finland. The Finnish Navy considered them very necessary. Moreover, the torpedo boats, as well as the armored ships and submarines, were weapons that the Finns had the potential to construct, at least partially, in their own yards. This too was an important factor in their defense considerations, and correctly so.⁵⁰

In the end, the impact of General Kirke's mission in regard to the Navy and Coast Defense was minor. The naval high command generally rejected the British proposals while the Army and Air Force took many of them to heart.

Most of the detailed recommendations were not followed and Rudolf Holsti insisted that this left Finland in a “less favorable” position against the Soviet Union in 1939.⁵¹

The mission likely did succeed in changing Finnish attitudes toward Great Britain, therefore increasing British influence, and probably did soften the views of the Jägers toward the British. The French viewed it as a great success for their British opponent.⁵² Despite this, the British continually assumed, incorrectly, that the pro-German feelings of the Jägers equated to anti-British attitudes. This was in no way a correct assessment.

The British cause was also dealt a severe blow by the resolution of the language dispute in Finland. In the early 1920s, many factions in Finland complained bitterly that many high political, military, and governmental positions were occupied by Finns of Swedish ancestry. This resulted in a campaign to remove many of the influential Swedish-speaking Finns from their jobs and replace them with Finnish speakers. The Swedish-speakers in the military also tended to be former Tsarist officers, another group that the more radical of the Jägers disliked. The Jägers played a key role in the campaign to remove these older officers and some of those who lost their positions were sympathetic to Great Britain and also the very men with whom the British were accustomed to dealing. Important among these was Commodore von Schoultz.⁵³

Von Schoultz, the head of the Finnish Navy in the first half of the 1920s, was a former Tsarist officer and veteran of the Imperial Russian Navy. During World War I, he had served as a liaison officer with the British Grand Fleet. Present at the Battle of Jutland, Schoultz made comments on the fight in his memoirs that caused uproar in Great Britain. Schoultz criticized Admiral Sir John Jellicoe for breaking off the engagement in the evening, failing to take precautions to enable the British fleet to maintain contact with the enemy, and not sending his destroyers to launch night attacks against the Germans. Schoultz believed that these mistakes cost the British the opportunity to continue the battle the following day. Though many in Britain did not appreciate his remarks, Schoultz had maintained excellent relations with the British officers with whom he had served. The Commodore still had many friends in the Royal Navy and was generally well liked by British officials, no doubt his fluent English helped in this respect. Schoultz’s presence helped further the cause of good relations between Britain and Finland. Perhaps

because of his German-appearing name, some French observers accused him of being a “germanophile.”⁵⁴

In Finland, in 1926, a law requiring knowledge of the Finnish language to hold a military post came into force. Officers were required to take a rigid language examination, which Commodore von Schoultz failed. The Commodore spoke excellent Russian, English, German, and French, but did not speak Finnish well enough to pass the exam. He was forced into retirement as were a number of other naval officers. A Finnish observer lamented Schoultz’s departure by writing that “there is nobody to take his place.”⁵⁵

The Finns filled the recently vacated command posts with younger officers who would not normally have been awarded such senior slots. Commander Yrjö Roos moved into Commodore von Schoultz’s position in May 1925, he was only thirty-five. Roos died in August 1926, his untimely death a result of a carbon monoxide leak in a minesweeper, the noxious fumes being accidentally pumped into the unfortunate officer’s cabin. Commander Achilles Sourander replaced Roos. In 1929, Commander Einar Schwank became the head of the Finnish Navy.⁵⁶

The retirement of von Schoultz cost the British one of their greatest allies. The Jäger victory in the linguistic struggle resulted in many of them filling positions of power that they had not formerly held. Though they were not necessarily pro-German, they were more inclined to deal with Germany than their predecessors. Kirke’s mission did produce an increase in British influence in Finland, but it was a short-lived bounty.

Not long after Kirke’s mission, the Admiralty began to take the appointment of naval missions and naval advisors more seriously. The effects of the 1922 Washington naval treaties and lower governmental spending on ship construction began hurting Britain’s ability to produce the naval armaments that it needed. Obviously, in the eyes of the Admiralty this was an enormous security issue, and they began searching for ways to alleviate the problem. First, they tried granting subsidies for new construction, but by the mid-1920s it had become clear that this would not solve the problem. Soon, the Royal Navy saw Britain’s declining naval armaments industry as the greatest threat to British sea power, even more so than the Royal Navy’s true enemies: France, and most dangerous of all, the Treasury. The Admiralty began to see foreign orders as the solution.⁵⁷

To protect its naval arms industry the Admiralty became very supportive of pursuing foreign orders. They believed that the best way to win them would be to send naval missions, naval advisors, and naval attachés, and even provide subsidies, to the potential customers. Moreover, naval missions could counter French influence, and the Admiralty's agreement to send a mission to Romania was partially motivated by a desire to keep the French from sending one. Also, Romania, like the Baltic States, was seen a portal to Russian trade. This was a clear reversal of the 1919 Royal Navy policy against the dispatch of missions.⁵⁸ The worsening economic conditions of the interwar period would force even more changes in Admiralty policy.

Later, in a lecture delivered after his return to Britain, General Kirke stressed his confidence in the Finns ability to defend themselves against the Soviets, stating that "one may reasonably conclude that the defence of Finland's coasts and essential sea communications is by no means an impossible, nor even a very difficult task." The results of the Winter War would prove him correct.⁵⁹

The Finns did do some of the things that the British recommended. They built two Coast Defense Ships in the late 1920s, partially in their own yards, and a number of submarines. But this would not be done with British help. German experts, the most important of whom was a former submarine officer named Karl Bartenbach, were already quietly working in Finland. Puppet German firms built vessels for the Finnish Navy in Finnish yards, laying the foundation for a modern Finnish Navy, and Nazi Germany's U-boat arm.⁶⁰ The British sent a mission to keep Finland from the camp of French influence. London should have been worrying about the Germans.

¹ Kirke, "Principles of Coast Defence," 25 July 1924, Finnish Military Archives [henceforth cited as FMA], Puolustusrevisionin Arkisto [henceforth cited as PRA], file BFM 16/25.

* I am indebted to the late Commodore Erik Wihtol, Finnish Navy, (Ret.), for the Finnish archival documents on the Kirke mission.

* This article was adapted from the author's *Britain, France, and the Naval Arms Trade in the Baltic: Grand Strategy and Failure, 1919-1939*, London: Frank Cass, 2003.

² Donald Stoker, "The History and Evolution of Foreign Military Advising and Assistance," in Donald Stoker, ed., *Military Advising and Assistance: From Mercenaries to Privatization, 1815-2007* (London: Routledge, 2008), 3-4.

- ³ Rennie to Egerton, 17 Dec. 1923, National Archives, Public Record Office, London, Foreign Office [hereafter cited as FO] 371/10421.
- ⁴ Kalervo Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barriere de l'Est? The Emergence of the New French Eastern European Alliance Policy 1917-1919*, in Turun Yliopiston Julkaisuja, ser. B, vol. 135 (Turku: Turun Yliopisto, 1975), 213-214.
- ⁵ Report by Major-General W. M. St. G. Kirke, on the British Mission to Finland (July 1924 to March 1925) [hereafter cited as Kirke Report], in Kirke to War Office [hereafter cited as WO], 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990.
- ⁶ Ibid.; Rennie to MacDonald, 24 Mar. 1924, FO 371/10421; Esa Sundbäck, "Finland in British Baltic Policy, British Political and Economic Interests Regarding Finland in the Aftermath of the First World War, 1918-1925," (PhD diss., Turku University, 2000), 260-61.
- ⁷ Kirke Report, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Rennie to MacDonald, 6 Apr. 1924, FO 371/10421.
- ⁸ Carr, FO minute, 9 Apr. 1924, FO 371/10421; WO to FO, 30 Apr. 1924, *ibid.*; Creedy to FO, 1 May 1924, *ibid.*; Mounsey to Rennie, 5 May 1924, *ibid.*; WO to FO, 8 May 1924, *ibid.*; Walker to FO, 8 May 1924, *ibid.*; Murrack to FO, 9 May 1924, *ibid.*; WO to Nosworthy, 17 May 1924, *ibid.*
- ⁹ Egerton to Department of Naval Intelligence [DNI], enclosure in Rennie to MacDonald, 14 Apr. 1924, *ibid.*
- ¹⁰ Nosworthy report on meeting with von Schoultz [hereafter Nosworthy], 27 May 1924, *ibid.*; Egerton report on meeting with von Schoultz [hereafter Egerton], 27 May 1924, *ibid.*; Lt. Colonel F. P. Nosworthy, "Visit to the Baltic States, 9th May, 1924/2nd June, 1924," Appendix III, "Translation of the Minutes of the Anglo-Finnish Conference Held At Helsingfors on May 24th 1924 From the Official Finnish Report" [henceforth Nosworthy, "Minutes"], WO 106/1573.
- ¹¹ Nosworthy, 27 May 1924 and Egerton, 27 May 1924, FO 371/10421; Nosworthy, "Minutes," WO 106/1573.
- ¹² Nosworthy, 27 May 1924 and Egerton, 27 May 1924, FO 371/10421.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*; Nosworthy, "Minutes," WO 106/1573.
- ¹⁴ Nosworthy, 27 May 1924 and Egerton, 27 May 1924, FO 371/10421.
- ¹⁵ Nosworthy, "Minutes," WO 106/1573.
- ¹⁶ Rennie to FO, 7 June 1924, FO 371/10421; Goodden to WO, 30 May 1924, "Reports and Letters to Director of Military Operations & Intelligence," Imperial War Museum, London, Goodden Papers, PP 73/137/7; Rennie to FO, 28 May, 3 June 1924, FO 371/10421.
- ¹⁷ Rennie to MacDonald, 9 June 1924, FO 371/10421; Rennie to FO, 7 June 1924, FO 371/10421.
- ¹⁸ Rennie to MacDonald, 9 June 1924, FO 371/10421.

¹⁹ Creedy to FO, 13 June 1924, FO 371/10421; Carr, FO minute, 12 June 1924, *ibid.*; President of the Board of Education to FO, 17 June 1924, *ibid.*; Sir Curtis Keeble, *Britain and the Soviet Union, 1917-89* (London: Macmillan Press, Ltd, 1990), 94-98; Andrew J. Williams, *Labour and Russia* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), 11.

²⁰ Carr, FO minute, 19 June 1924, FO 371/10421; Mounsey to WO, 17 June 1924, *ibid.*; WO to FO, 27 June 1924, *ibid.*

²¹ WO telegram sent by FO to Rennie, 8 July 1924, FO 371/10421; Rennie to MacDonald, 5 July 1924, *ibid.*; Rennie to MacDonald, 9 July 1924, *ibid.*; Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990.

²² Kirke, "Autobiographical Notes," 15-17, Liddell-Hart Centre for Military Archives [hereafter LHC], King's College, London, Kirke Papers, file 26; Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990.

²³ Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Kirke to Lady Kirke, 20 Aug. 1924, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 7/14.

²⁴ Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Kirke, "Autobiographical Notes," 15-17, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 26.

²⁵ Forbes interview of Rennie, 4 Nov. 1924, FO 371/10421; Gregory to WO, War Ministry, and Admiralty, 4 Nov. 1924, *ibid.* See also: Forbes, FO minute, 6 Nov. 1924, *ibid.*; Admiralty to WO, 23 Dec. 1924, *ibid.*; Trenchard to Kirke, 16 Dec. 1924, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 6/13.

²⁶ Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Rennie to MacDonald, 1 Sept. 1924, FO 371/10421; Kirke to Lady Kirke, 25 Aug. 1924, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 7/15; Kirke, "Autobiographical Notes," 15-17, *ibid.*, file 26.

²⁷ Kirke, "Autobiographical Notes," 15-17, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 26; Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; telegram for Kirke in Rennie to FO, 30 Aug. 1924, FO 371/10421; Carr, FO minute, 30 Aug. 1924, *ibid.*; Carr or O'Malley to Rennie, 3 Sept. 1924, *ibid.*

²⁸ Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Kirke, "Autobiographical Notes," 15-16, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 26. The Chief of the General Staff that Kirke mentions may have been Lieutenant General V.P. Nenonen. Kirke was unclear on this.

²⁹ Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990.

³⁰ Kirke, "Memorandum on office procedure," 18 Jan. 1925, FMA, PRA, file BFM 25; Kirke report, "Memorandum on the Organisation of Command; With Special Reference to the Relations of Army, Navy, and Air Force to the Command of the Coast Defence," 17 Dec. 1924, FMA, PRA, file BFM 32/24.

³¹ Kirke, "Relative Value of Sea and Air Forces in the Special Circumstances of Finland," undated [1924 or 1925], FMA, PRA, file BFM 25.

³² Kirke, "Principles of Coast Defence," 25 July 1924, FMA, PRA, file BFM 16/25.

³³ “Further Report on The Fixed Defences of the Finnish Coast, as a result of reconnaissance from land, sea, and air,” undated, FMA, PRA, file BFM 8/24. This report contains an extremely detailed analysis of the gun emplacements that the Finns inherited from the Tsarist regime as well as the recommendations made by the British regarding each site.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Kirke, “Principles of Coast Defence,” 25 July 1924, FMA, PRA, file BFM 16/25; Kirke, “Note on Sea and Coast Defence, Report of Revision Committee,” 6 Mar. 1925, *ibid.*, file BFM 15/25.

³⁶ Kirke, “Principles of Coast Defence,” 25 July 1924, FMA, PRA, file BFM 16/25.

³⁷ Kirke, “Naval Proposals,” 24 Aug. 1924, FMA, PRA, file BFM 8/24.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Erik Wihtol, “La Pensée Navale Finlandaise Après l’Accession à l’Indépendance de 1917. Les efforts d’un petit pays pour se constituer une force navale proper,” in *l’Evolution de la Pensée Navale IV*, Hervé Couteau-Bégarie, ed. (Paris: Institut de Stratégie Comparée, 1994), 225.

⁴⁰ Kirke, “Naval Proposals,” 24 Aug. 1924, FMA, PRA, file BFM 8/24.

⁴¹ Ibid.; Hornburg?, “Naval Estimates,” undated, FMA, PRA, file BFM 29.

⁴² Kirke report, 2 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Rennie to Chamberlain, 26 Mar. 1925, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 6/32; Nosworthy, “Report on Tour of Baltic States and Scandinavian Countries by Lieut.-Col. F. P. Nosworthy, July-August 1925,” WO 106/1574; Kirke to HBM’s [His British Majesty’s] Minister, 17 Mar. 1925, FMA, PRA, file BFM 17/25; Patrick Salmon, “British Security Interests in Scandinavia and the Baltic 1918-1939,” in John Hiden and Aleksander Loit, eds., *The Baltic in International Relations Between the Two World Wars. Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis 3. Studia Baltica Stockholmiensis* (Stockholm: Center for Baltic Studies, 1986), 120.

⁴³ Kirke to HBM’s Minister, 17 Mar. 1925, FMA, PRA, file BFM 17/25.

⁴⁴ *Annuaire Officiel de la Légion D’Honneur* (Paris: Librairie Aristide Quillet, 1929), 2287, 2289; d’Ythurbide report no. 116, 7 Nov. 1920, Service Historique de la Marine, Vincennes, Paris [hereafter cited as SHIM], 1BB⁷ 125 Finlande.

⁴⁵ Kirke to HBM’s Minister, 17 Mar. 1925, FMA, PRA, file BFM 17/25.

⁴⁶ MacKillop to MacDonald, 9 Sept. 1924, FO 371/10421.

⁴⁷ Kirke report in Kirke to WO, 4 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; Sundbäck, “Finland in British Baltic Policy,” 260fn.

⁴⁸ Kirke report, 2 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990.

⁴⁹ Randall, FO minute, 17 Apr. 1925, FO 371/10990; initial illegible, FO minute, 21 Apr. 1925, *ibid.* General Kirke returned to Finland in June 1939 for a two week visit and was enthusiastically welcomed by the Finnish government as well as Marshall Mannerheim and the military high command, Kirke, “Notes by General Kirke on His

Visit to Finland, June 1939,” 26 June 1939, FO 371/23648; Halifax to Hore-Belisha, 26 May 1939, *ibid.*; Kirke, “Autobiographical Notes,” 32-33, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 26.

⁵⁰ Letter from Commodore Erik Wihtol to the author, 5 Feb. 1996; Wihtol, “La Pensée Navale Finlandaise,” 226.

⁵¹ Rudolf Holsti Papers, *Holsti Memoirs*, “Present Political Situation in Northern Europe,” 20, Hoover Institute, Stanford University.

⁵² de Coppet to MAE, 30 Mar. 1925, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, Finlande 9.

⁵³ For an excellent study of the ethnic/linguistic problems in Finland during this period see Pekka Kalevi Hamalainen’s “The Nationality Struggle Between the Finns and the Swedish-Speaking Minority in Finland, 1917-1939” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1966).

⁵⁴ Report, 1 Apr. 1924, BIM [Bulletin Information Militaire] no. 4, SHM, 1BB⁷ 129 Lettonie; Vennin to 2^{ème} Bureau, EMG, received 22 Feb. 1924, *ibid.*; Annual Report on Finland for 1921, 14 Feb. 1922, FO 371/8100; Commodore G. T. J. von Schoultz, *With the British Battle Fleet. War Recollections of a Russian Naval Officer* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1925), 179. This work also appeared as *Mit der Grand Fleet im Weltkrieg. Erinnerungen eines Teilnehmers* (Leipzig: K.F. Koehler, 1925).

⁵⁵ Rennie to Chamberlain, 11 Feb. 1926, FO 371/11751; Hornburg to Kirke, 13 Jan. 1926, LHC, Kirke Papers, file 7/26; Rennie to Orde, 23 Mar. 1926, FO 371/11752.

⁵⁶ Kirke, “Naval Proposals,” FMA, PRA, file BFM 8/24; letter from Commodore Erik Wihtol to the author, 21 May 1996; letter from Commodore Erik Wihtol to the author, 26 June 1996; “Naval Visit Canceled,” *Riga Times*, 21 Aug. 1926, 3; “Commander Achilles Sourander,” *Riga Times*, 28 Aug. 1926, 4.

⁵⁷ Christopher Bell, *The Royal Navy, Seapower, and Strategy Between the Wars* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 149, 182.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 152-54, 182-83.

⁵⁹ Major-General W.M.St.G. Kirke, “Modern Finland,” *The Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* LXX (Nov. 1925): 734-47.

⁶⁰ For the story of German building in Finland see Björn Forsén and Annette Forsén, “German Secret Submarine Export, 1919-1935,” in Donald Stoker and Jonathan Grant, eds., *Girding for Battle: The Arms Trade in a Global Perspective, 1800-1940* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 113-34, and Björn Forsén and Annette Forsén, *Saksan ja Suomen: salainen sukellusveneyhteistyö* (Porvoo: Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö, 1999).

The Miracle on the Vistula, the Battle of Warsaw 1920: The Weak Facing the Strong

By Col Ph.D. Zdzisław Słima

World history presents many cases of struggles between superior and inferior state and non-state actors. At a first glance, the outcome of the confrontation usually favors the big and powerful actors. At the same time, there is the tendency to underestimate the weaker state as an opponent not likely to be worthy of effectively meeting the threat posed by the larger power. Most quick looks assume that it is only a matter of time before the stronger actor finally overwhelms the weaker adversary. What is significant, however, is that such initial estimates use factors that are easy to measure. Yet, in the case of standard comparisons of relative strength the early “easy” measurements are almost always wrong.

1. Weak versus strong concept

Nonmilitary aspects of power are still not a subject of sufficiently deep analysis, even though conflicts since World War II have proven that they are rather critical to achieving victory or avoiding defeat, particularly in the case of asymmetric confrontation. So, if “power implies victory in a conflict, then weak actors should never win against stronger opponents. In history there are many examples where weak actors defeated stronger actors.”¹ Contemporary history presents examples where powerful states were defeated by less powerful and smaller state and non-state actors. For example, France and then the United States were forced to leave Vietnam, the USSR left Afghanistan when it failed to stop the resistance to the Soviet occupation. The US and UN found Somalia’s Warlords too great an obstacle to maintain the UN’s humanitarian mission there. In 2006 Israel painfully underestimated Hezbollah and failed to gain what military leaders anticipated would be a relatively easy victory. Such examples as these are quite common at the operational level where a numerically and technologically “inferior” force was able to defeat a “superior” force. In addition, a study of the battlefield at the tactical level provides several useful examples. These, if studied carefully, can remove, at least a little, the curtain created by “the fog of war” and help us to understand “why”.

The concept of a weak against strong has roots in ancient Chinese military history, which emphasizes stealth, deception, and indirect approaches. Even today this way of thinking is an integral part of Chinese military culture. The main idea is to present oneself as weak and humble. Next, after consolidating power, one should exploit opportunities and demonstrate strength in order to defeat the adversary. Chinese history, especially the Sino- Japanese War 1937 – 1945 and the Chinese Civil War of 1931-1949, proved that such an approach is effective if firmly rooted in morale, military art, and good leadership. The roots of this Chinese way of thinking are connected with Sun Zu, who wrote that “the strength of an army does not depend on superiority in numbers.”² That way of thinking was continued after the Communist takeover of china in 1949. Compared to China, the West’s military-cultural methodology is different because countries usually present their strength as a first step in order to frighten potential enemies and to achieve psychological advantages, and to exploit opportunities³.

The history of the Baltic region also proves that inferior is not always a losing proposition when facing a superior state actor. The three relatively small Baltic States for centuries struggled with strong neighbors. They survived a long process and exploited the international situation to create independent countries. Thus, in the long term, they defeated superior adversaries (Germans and Russians). Some of the Baltic struggles are effective demonstrations of the idea of the weak defeating the strong. During the Estonian War for Independence beginning in 1918, through the final battles of war in 1920, about 120,000 Soviet soldiers fought against a 40,000-man newly created Estonian armed forces. After many attacks on fortified Estonian positions, in which the Red Army suffered heavy casualties, the Red Army was completely exhausted by the end of year.⁴ This exhaustion was the basic trigger to continue peace talks, to establish a ceasefire, and finally to sign the Peace Treaty of Tartu between the Republic of Estonia and RSFSR on 02 February 1920. After World War II Latvian and Lithuanian national partisans fought and maintained their insurgency against Soviet Russia up to the beginning of 1960s. Although, in theory, these rebels had no chance to survive when facing full power of the communists’ instruments of power, this struggle was a critical element in preserving a national identity that later emerged in the late 1980s in full force.

One example of the weak versus strong concept in the region was the Polish – Russian War, which included the Battle of Warsaw fought in August 1920. At the time Soviet Russia had consolidated its rule after a period of war and revolution, and she felt strong enough to challenge Poland and, indeed, the whole of Europe. The opponent, Poland, had just regained its independence after a long period of foreign domination, and was much weaker in some dimensions. In this study, the Battle of Warsaw will be used to recognize which characteristics of the Strong versus weak construct influenced the final outcome of a battle. As well as pure numbers, other factors such as leadership, morale, tenets of applying operations and information also played critical role. After presenting the political/military situation of both countries, and the situation before the battle, the plans of the opposing forces and the flow of the battle will be highlighted. Finally, the factors that influenced the result of the battle and the ultimate significance of the victory will be discussed. It was indeed the decisive battle of the Polish-Soviet War, which began soon after the end of World War I and lasted until the Treaty of Riga in 1920. It was this battle that stopped the Communist stream in its Westward flow and saved the newly regained independence of Poland.

2. Battle of Warsaw. Pre-battle situation

2.1. The situation of the Polish forces

On 11 November 1918 Jozef Pilsudski came to Warsaw and assumed supreme military command in Poland. It was the most important day for Poland's contemporary history. When World War I ended Poland regained its independence that had been lost in the 1795 after the Third Partition. But the Poles had never completely lost their national identity and Poland as a nation survived that terribly difficult period in its history. In the new political situation of postwar Europe in 1919 the Poles were forced to build the new state. Peace was desperately needed, especially as much of Poland had been devastated by the recent world War. However, the borders were not yet agreed and the winners of the war, the Western powers, were still working on them in 1919. Unfortunately, the Polish borders as proposed by the Allied powers were not seen as favorable to Poland. A special point of concern was the Curzon Line, proposed by the UK, which left millions of Polish people living on the eastern bank of river Bug, inside Russia. What is also important is that Russia, both "Red" and

“White” Russia still considered Poland as a former province and believed that it was only a matter of time for Russia to incorporate Poland back into the empire. Therefore, in response to the Russian civil war, “Polish diplomacy was not willing to get involved on either side.”⁵ As a result, a conflict between Poland and Soviet Russia was predictable due to colliding interests of both countries.

Pilsudski, after following the development of events inside Russia, concluded that very soon she would attack Poland and would try to support revolution in Europe. Moreover, he made some sound assessments regarding Russia. First, he was aware that “merely defeating the Soviet forces would not benefit Poland. If the Soviet regime were to be replaced by the ‘White’ Denikin, Yuenich or Kolchak, supported by the Western Powers, Poland’s independence would be even less secure than before.”⁶ So, “support of Denikin in his struggle against the Bolsheviks cannot be Poland’s *raison d’État*”⁷ even though the Western powers expected it. At the same time, Pilsudski was aware that defending the country would be extremely difficult because the Poles faced a daunting task in both building the nation and establishing a new democracy. It was a task complicated by the major differences between the three areas of Poland that had been allotted among the three great powers in the 1700s. In addition, it was necessary to immediately create new armed forces to defend the country and fight for borders, which had not yet been fixed by international agreement. Support from the outside was very restricted as the Western European countries, mainly Britain and France, did not generally support Poland’s position. Instead, these great powers pressured Poland to accept the Russian terms of armistice – no matter how unfavorable – as the West was then contemplating having to deal with Russia as a future economic partner. The public opinion in Western Europe, influenced by the mass media and by the rise of left wing politicians in the postwar world, tended to be very anti-Polish. This anti-Polish feeling extended to the workers and Western European trade unions. This, in turn, influenced the shipment of war materiel into Poland.

To improve the situation to the east and to support the Polish inhabitants of the region, the Polish government, supported by Ukrainian military units, launched the “Kiev Expedition” on 25 April 1920 into the Ukraine. The main goal of the military intervention was to defeat the Soviet troops on the southern flank and to establish a Ukrainian government friendly to Poland. The military intervention was also the result of treaty between

Polish government and Ukrainian People's Republic headed by Symon Petlura signed on 21 April, and accompanied by a military convention.⁸ However, the advancing troops, who were mainly shifted from the Northern Front, were stopped and fixed at Kiev. The advance to Kiev created a weak front facing Tukhachevski's North-Western Front forces. The Poles and Ukrainians manned a 330 kilometers long front with only 120 000 soldiers supported by about 460 artillery pieces. Such a thin defensive line created a risky situation in case the Russians advanced, and there was already information flowing in about a rapid build up of Russian forces in Belarus. Also, the lack of strategic reserves in the north made the situation even worse in terms of facing an enemy offensive. Yet the Polish leaders underestimated that growing threat in the north and decided to continue the expedition in Ukraine. Fortunately General Sosnkowski, then Deputy Minister of Military Affairs, made some sound decisions on the Polish army's internal preparations when re recognized the real threat. He also understood the new nature of war with Russia as a "regular war of massed forces, where we encounter all the firepower and mechanized aids of recent World War, a national war, where we face not merely the Bolsheviks guards but the concentrated might of all Russia"⁹.

2.2. Russian political–military situation and the launch of offensive

The policy of the revolutionary Russia in 1919 and at the beginning of 1920 was mainly focused on internal problems caused by counterrevolution that was supported by the intervention of the Western Powers. The year of 1920 was especially important for Soviet Russia as the "White" forces, along with the intervention forces of the Western Powers, were defeated or contained. The Bolsheviks now took full control of Russia, and their forces and commanders had gained valuable combat experience. The Bolsheviks had also captured large amounts of modern military equipment. The defeat of the internal opposition was a critical event in the Communists' ability to consolidate power within Russian borders. The internal stabilization was an important precondition to exploiting the unstable situation in Europe after the World War I and enabling Lenin's government to shift attention to internal issues to fomenting a "revolution from outside," a concept especially formulated by Lenin. A favorable climate for revolution had been established in many countries of the postwar Europe with strong revolutionary movements, especially in Germany and Hungary, as the Soviet Russia was seen by a

large part of the working class as only political system that could give political power to that social class. At the moment Lenin saw Poland mainly as an obstacle for the communist revolution to export its ideas into Central and Western Europe. For the Red Army, after great success in fighting strong internal opposition, Poland was supposed to be relatively easy target. Thus, in 1920 the strategic goal was to export the communist revolution to Western Europe using Red Army as the main instrument. The conquest of Poland was seen as an operational goal set to support the communists in Germany and Hungary as well as other movements. Eventually, the whole of Europe would be subject to the revolution.¹⁰ In some of the “most important industrial cities in Germany some preparations were on the way to proclaim communism regime after Warsaw had fallen.”¹¹ In order to conceal the military preparations and to show good will to the Western European, Russian leadership announced its desire to continue negotiations, but also presented some very tough preconditions to negotiations. Even lord d’Abernon, a member of the Interallied Mission to Poland in 1920, admitted that Soviet armistice proposals were “incredible” and “so extravagant that I cannot convince any Polish government taking them into consideration”¹².

To begin the grand offensive the Bolsheviks initiated an information campaign in which Russian communist leaders, in speeches and pamphlets, emphasized the need to support brother-workers in the Western Europe and the necessity to open up the shortest route from Russia to Berlin and Paris – which happened to lead right through Poland with Warsaw along that avenue of approach¹³. On 27 February 1920 Lenin ordered the Revolutionary – Military Soviet of the Western Front to „prepare for war against Poland” and to “move west to aid the Communists.”¹⁴ The course of action focused on a massive strike in the direction of Warsaw, as that city was the acknowledged Polish Centre of Gravity and because Warsaw’s capture would have enormous propaganda effect for the Soviets. The loss of Warsaw, the political and economic and cultural centre of Poland, would undermine the morale of the Poles and would serve as the signal to start communist uprisings in the West that would be timed to support the Red Army’s drive to the West.

Poland’s military offensive - the “Kiev Expedition” sped up the Russian decision to conquer the western neighbor. To counter the Polish offensive the Russian offensive started in early June 1920. The first attack came on the southern front when the Russian 1st Cavalry Army, commanded by

Semyon Budyonny, attacked and broke Polish defenses on June fifth. This led to the collapse of the Polish front in the east and a retreat from Ukraine beginning on 10 June. However, the decisive point of the Russian offensive was in Belarus with Russian forces to advance along the main axis of advance from Smolensk – Brest Litovsk. On 2 July 1920, in a proclamation to his soldiers, General Mikhail Tukhachevsky, the Western Front commander, stated that “On the corpse of White Poland lies the road to worldwide conflagration. On our bayonets we will bring happiness and peace to the toiling masses of mankind. On to Wilno, Minsk, and Warsaw! Forward March!”¹⁵ Next, on 4 July 1920, he began the Russians’ Western Front offensive, which forced the Polish armies to retreat. The Russian attack was energetically pushed and on 19 July the Red Army seized Grodno, on 28 July it reached Bialystok, and just three days later, the Brest Fortress capitulated. To achieve such the significant progress Tukhachevski organized Western Front in four armies: 4th, 15th, 3rd and 16th, which included about 110 000 infantry troops, 11 000 cavalry, 722 artillery pieces and approximately 2900 machine guns. What is more important, Tukhachevski implemented one of tenets of military art – economy of force, because he massed his troops at decisive points and reached a very favorable ratio of 4:1 in numbers. Finally, at the beginning of August 1920 Russian troops were just 50 kilometers east of Warsaw and they reached Vistula River line.

3. Flow of the Battle

3.1. Russian Plan

The plan created by Mikhail Tukhachevski to conquer Warsaw was based on Russian experiences from 1831, when they crossed the Vistula River next to Torun and attacked successfully from the northwest. According to selected course of action, the Russian 15th and 4th Armies were to cross the Vistula River north of Warsaw near Wloclawek and to launch a synchronized attack from the northwest. The 16th and 3rd Armies were tasked to attack the city from the east. The Mozyr Group, even though very weak, was to cover southern flank of advancing armies. The plan to cross the river to the north of Warsaw had another advantage as it would stop any supplies for Polish Armed Forces shipped by western Allies via the Danzig (Gdansk) seaport. The plan assumed that after seizing Warsaw

the Polish resistance would collapse and the door to the Western Europe would be wide open.

3.2. Polish Plan

The rapid advance of the Russian troops forced Jozef Pilsudski to revise previous defense plans, and he decided to withdraw Polish troops across the Vistula River and to base the defense on bridgeheads at Warsaw and at the Wieprz River. Pilsudski was convinced that “the best way to defend Warsaw was not to create strong defensive lines around the city, but to strike the enemy hard with everything at his disposal”¹⁶. To do it, two armies (1st and 2nd) were to conduct an active defense to face the Soviet frontal attack on Warsaw and to fix the Soviet forces. The 5th Army was to defend the along Wkra River and later the Vistula River in order to shield the capitol from the northwest direction and to contain the advancing Soviet forces. If possible, the 5th Army was to counterattack from behind Warsaw to cut off Soviet forces. To do that they would have to break through the enemy front and attack the Russian rear area. The main task was assigned to the “Reserve Army,” which was composed of troops taken from 4th and 3rd Armies (or the “Assault Group” - Grupa Uderzeniowa). The Polish Army was personally commanded by Jozef Pilsudski. The whole force also included troops to contain the Soviet Strategic offensive — about 25% of the total force. The Polish right flank was secured by 3rd Polish Army, with its main task to stop any attempt by the Soviet Southwest Front to attack from the east. The concept was based on the information available to Pilsudski, the Russian’s current force disposition focused on Warsaw, and his understanding of the lack of strategic cooperation between two Russian fronts. The Russians’ relatively weak Mozyr Group that covered the south flank of Tukhachevsky's front was identified as a possible enemy weakness. Pilsudski’s plan exposed the Poles to considerable risk in case the Russians made an attack from the east with the armies of the South-Western Front. The very mobile 1st Cavalry Army was an especially dangerous force in this scenario. The Poles had to appropriately divide their forces to achieve the desired force ratio and at the same fix the enemy forces attacking Warsaw and secure their right flank. Moreover, it was necessary to concentrate troops in short time, as just a week before the counteroffensive, and some of the needed Polish forces were still in combat about 150 to 250 kilometers from their planned assembly areas. The rail net needed to move forces to their assembly areas were already within striking distance of the Red Army, and a Russian

advanced could completely throw off the Polish counteroffensive plans and destroy the unity of the whole Polish armed forces.

The concept of the operation was based on trustworthy information acquired by Polish intelligence. Part of the intelligence was based on intercepted Russian radio messages. There was a lack of confidence in the plan expressed by a few prominent army officers and some national and international military experts. It was even noted that Pilsudski had no formal military education. While Pilsudski was aware of the risks he was taking he also knew that the loss of Warsaw would have terrible consequences for newly created state. With the loss of Warsaw might come a loss of sovereignty that would again be lost again for many years.

3.3. The progress of the struggle¹⁷

As noted before, Polish four armies defended along river lines securing Warsaw, with the 3rd Army securing the right flank. Tukhachevsky also deployed four armies with the intent to finish the battle quickly by a synchronized multidirectional attack. The first phase of the battle started on 13 August with a Russian frontal attack on the Praga bridgehead in the eastern part of Warsaw. This area, as well as the area next to Radzymin saw heavy fighting, and fell to the Russians the next day. On 14 August the defense lines of the Polish 5th Army were broken by divisions from three

Soviet armies: the 3rd, 4th and 15th. However, reinforcements of arrived for the Poles in the form of the elite, battle-tested units: the Siberian Brigade and 18th Infantry Division. These units brought the situation under control and the Polish 5th Army was able to again hold its line. The Polish 1st Army resisted the direct assault of six Russian rifle divisions with some difficulties. To reduce the pressure on the 5th Army General Haller, commanding the Polish Northern Front, planned to begin the 5th Army's counterattack. Local counterattacks by the Polish 5th Army and strong defensive actions by the 1st Army stopped and fixed the Russian forces and creating the conditions to prepare counteroffensive in the south¹⁸.

On 14 August the Red Army reached Izabelin, just 13 kilometers from Warsaw. At that moment Tukhachevski was sure he needed only one strong coordinated push to complete the victory. Although the 1st Cavalry Army of the South-Western Front had not been transferred to his command, in spite of orders send by the Soviet High Command, he was

sure that success was close. The failure to transfer command of Budionny's force to Tukhachevsky was caused by a grudge between Jegorow and Tukhachevsky combined with the political games of Joseph Stalin.¹⁹ On 14 August the Polish 5th Army continued its successful fight with the numerically and technically superior Soviet 3rd and 15th Armies and contained their advance toward Warsaw and Modlin from the northwest by 15 August. It was critical for Pilsudski to finalize the preparations for the Polish counteroffensive.

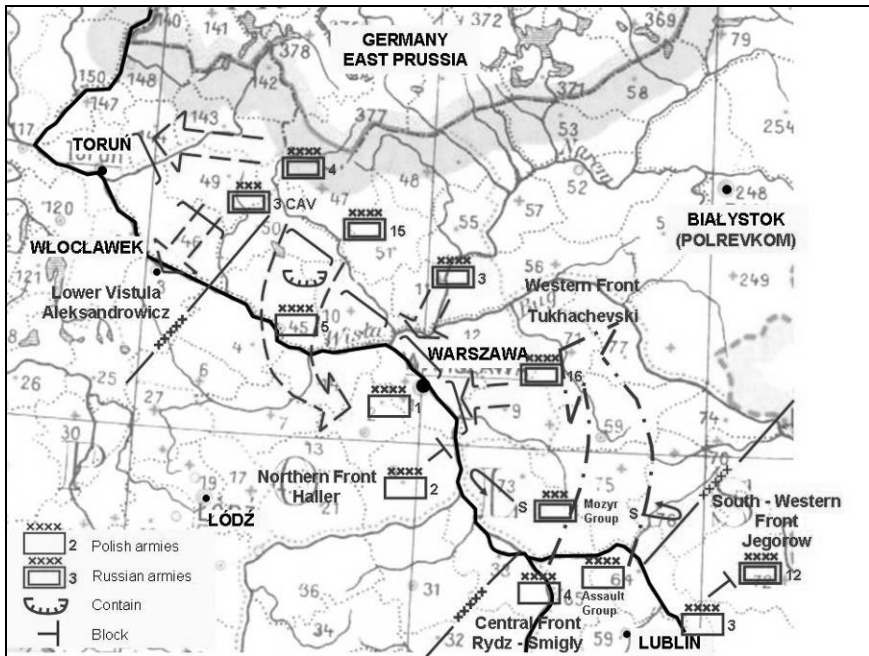


Fig. 1. The concept of the Battle of Warsaw.

Sources Iwo Pogonowski, *Poland. A Historical Atlas*, New York: Barnes&Nobles Books, pp. 186, 187. Sikorski, p. 79. Polska AD 1920 - Granicetyczasowe, <http://img241.imageshack.us/i/polska1920frontve3.jpg/> (accessed November 3, 2009).

On the decisive day, 16 August, the Polish Reserve Army headed by Pilsudski launched an offensive in the south from the Wieprz River driving northward against the Russian left flank, which was guarded only

by the Mozyr Group. The Mozyr Groups was quickly overwhelmed by the Poles as its two weak divisions had to cover a 150 kilometer long front. During the first day of the operation only one of the Polish divisions reported enemy opposition. The remaining four divisions, reinforced by a cavalry brigade, moves unopposed for 45 kilometers in a northerly direction. This movement cut the communications and supply lines of the Soviet 16th Army. With no direction from their Front headquarters, the Mozyr Group began an uncoordinated retreat for fear of their left flank being cut off. Finally, the Reserve Army after covering approximately 70 kilometers in 36 hours, divided the Soviet front and caused the uncoordinated withdrawal of the armies belonging to the Western Front. As the Soviet command lost contact with most of its forces, none of their actions were coordinated. Armies in the centre went into chaos and panicked based on unconfirmed messages. Some Russian divisions continued their attack toward Warsaw, some turned to retreat. So Russian forces lost their cohesion. The “success of Pilsudski’s maneuver change the entire strategic situation.”²⁰ In the north, the Polish 5th Army continued its advance against 4th and 15th Soviet Armies. Even though the 15th Army fought very well and effectively protected the withdrawal of the right flank of 4th Army, it was defeated and on 20 August began its own retreat.

Mikhail Tukhachevski became aware of the quickly worsening situation on 18 August and send orders for troops to regroup to straighten the front line, to stop the Polish offensive, and to regain the initiative. However, poor communication blocked many orders or slowed them down, and organized actions by the Russians were impossible. To cover the right flank of the advancing Polish troops the Polish 3rd and 2nd Armies converged to form a strong defensive line in the case of an attack by Jegorow’s Front. Fortunately, this did not occur. By 21 August the organized resistance of the Russian Western Front forces was finished, before the end of month the Front was in complete retreat, leaving large amounts of equipment and supplies to be captured. The Soviet 4th Army was trapped by the Polish advance, so it crossed the German East Prussian border where it was interned and disarmed. The Battle of Warsaw was over. The war continued, though, and lasted until the end of the year.

4. Main factors influencing the outcome of the battle

The Polish success during the battle of Warsaw was the outcome of many circumstances, but the most important factor was the human factor, competent and effective leadership backed up by the full dedication of the whole nation. Although Poland had been divided into three parts in the partition 123 years earlier and these three parts differed significantly in politics and culture, the Poles had preserved a national identity strong enough to unite against a common threat.

4.1. Leadership as a Factor in the Conflict

“In 1920 two amazing characters faced each other: Josef Pilsudski and Mikhail Tukhachevski. Everything differed about them, starting from their age (Pilsudski was 53 and Tukhachevski was 27 years old). But at least one feature was held in common. They reached their positions by the wind of history. It became possible to reveal their leadership talents were possible to reveal only because huge changes had occurred, and during such a time incredible careers could be made.”²¹ The character was the military leader of Poland who was completely dedicated to saving his country. He was personally the author of the plan for Battle of Warsaw plan and took all responsibility for the outcome when its success could not be easily predicted. Pilsudski based his plan on all available information combined with his military intuition. It was not an easy course of action as some senior commanders, both Polish officers and officers from the Western Missions to Poland, advised different courses of action. Being aware of the importance of Warsaw and counting the advantages and disadvantages of his plan, Pilsudski decided to start the battle based on his plan. As morale in Polish ranks had gone down after the bitter defeats to that time, Pilsudski took personal command of the “Assault Group,” and stayed with this force intended as the decisive force at the high point of the battle in order to encourage them to fight. Even before the battle he often visited the front lines to see the soldiers and improve morale. During the key first two days of the battle he was present among soldiers and helped them understand the importance of their effort and to encourage them to do their best. Without doubt he was a leader who knew how to take responsibility for his decisions and his personal leadership showed his troops the way to victory.

Next to Pilsudski the Polish forces had some other talented generals with solid military backgrounds that had been earned during fighting with foreign armies during World War I. The top leaders knew each other rather well as they had cooperated long before the Polish – Russian War. General Sikorski had met Pilsudski in 1907 when he joined Polish Socialist Party and had lectured the Poles on military affairs and tactics. Sikorski had been involved in the creation of the Polish Legions, and from 1918 on he had served in Polish Army. General Haller was one of the important leaders of the Polish Armed Forces. He had arrived from France with the Blue Army and had also been involved in the creation of the Volunteer Army. Prewar relationships created a good climate and a common understanding among the Polish commanders, although they later would have different visions of the nation's future and of the proper means to develop the army. Their previous experience in different armies was useful. In fact, their different ways of understanding the military art gave them the flexibility to create some bold new concepts of operations. Since Pilsudski had worked with his commanders before he knew their capabilities and was able to assign each man to the task he was best suited to. During the battle General Haller commanded the Northern Front and General Sikorski commanded Polish 5th Army. It was Sikorski's brilliant leadership that was critical in creating the conditions to launch the decisive advance. Sikorski demonstrated his talent in several ways. When his army was faced with enemy forces three times larger, he came up with a plan to effectively defend his line, conduct a counterattack, and finally to defeat his opponents decisively. A decisive victory was won the moment that the Russians started their withdrawal and the Poles attacked in the south.

Still, Pilsudski was well aware that not all of his commanders were up to all of the tasks they faced. So, just before the battle, he made some changes on top positions in order to have the right people in place to carry out his offensive plan. This was a very sound action.

On the other side there were more problems with the leadership. A major reason for the collapse of Russian advance was the lack of cooperation between the Western Front and the South – Western Front, which created huge gap between them. The friction among the Soviet leaders was partly caused by the personal ambitions of the commanders as well as some competition. Another important factor was a history of personal animosity between Tukhachevski and Jegorow.²² Stalin's ambitions and intrigues made the overall situation worse. Jegorow, in defiance of orders from the

Commander-in-chief, refused to attach his 12th Army and 1st Cavalry Army to the Western Front.²³ So, of the two fronts, only one was actively involved in the decisive battle of the war. This action heavily degraded the Red Army's combat power at the decisive point during critical days of the struggle.



Fig. 2. Marshal Jozef Pilsudski during conversation with General Rydz- Śmigły (1920).

Source: http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plik:Pilsudski_and_Rydz-Smigly.jpg (accessed November 03, 2009)

After a long wait, Budyonny finally started to move his army towards Warsaw, but it was too late to change its result of the battle. Polish forces released from the Warsaw area were ready to contain and defeat his troops. So, although Tukhachevski was a brilliant commander and “an offensive specialist”²⁴ as well as the author of the deep operations concept a decade later, he was limited by commanding only half of the available forces. He also focused so much on the capture of Warsaw that he partially lost the whole picture of the flow of the campaign. The competition among the commanders was partially the result Russian commanders mostly being former Tsarist officers and they desperately needed to prove their worth to the new leaders of Russia. Only one commander of the North-Western Front had no military background from the Tsarist era and he was Khweshin, the Mozyr Group commander, who was left with inadequate forces to cover critical gap in the Russian armies. He failed in his mission. Even at the division level there was a kind of rivalry to seize Warsaw, as the troops were promised two days to loot the city. Some commanders

were so excited at this prospect that they even had maps with the richest districts and shops marked so to exploit this once Warsaw fell.



Fig. 3. **First Soviet marshals (1935).**

From the left: M. Tukhachevski, S. Budionny, K. Woroszyłow, W. Blücher and A. Jegorow.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshal_of_the_Soviet_Union (accessed October 27, 2009).

4.2. Morale

The war preparations were connected with an intensive propaganda campaign on both sides of the conflict. However, the focus and the messages were completely different. Poland's message underlined the fight for independence and the common stand against Soviet Russia, a very popular theme among the people. So this message was accepted with enthusiasm. Poland's past history with Russia had been painful and the partition of Poland in 18th century was a major part of the national consciousness. The whole Polish nation was painfully aware that a new occupation would spell the end of Polish independence. These feelings instilled a feeling of high morale among the soldiers and bolstered their dedication to the fight. National feeling was such that many new volunteer units were formed as students, workers, and peasants rushed to the army. Even the Polish Socialist Party raised a number of workers' battalions to support the national struggle.²⁵ The common idea of fighting for freedom and defending the nation's newly won independence untied the citizenry.

This level of support was necessary in order to effectively mobilize the whole force of the nation against communism. It also assured support for the army in the form of food and materiel that was collected by local groups and issued right to the military units.

Between August 13 and 15, Pilsudski inspected units of the 4th Army near Pulawy to raise morale. The soldiers of this force were tired and demoralized and the large number of newly arrived replacements reminded everyone of the heavy losses that Poland had already incurred. Pilsudski's personal visit raised the morale of soldiers and motivated them to fight bravely during the upcoming offensive. Moreover, the soldiers started to have confidence that they could change the course of the war. Equally important, the Polish soldiers had the full support of the local population, which resisted the communist message. Even the workers and peasants, which who ought to have supported the Russians per the communist ideology, instead supported the Polish leadership and the fight for independence. In Warsaw volunteer units were formed, groups were formed in the cities and villages to support the soldiers. These volunteers' ad irregular units jumped into the fray. For example, soldiers "of the 21st Infantry Division witnessed peasants armed with pitchforks accompanied by their wives carrying flails assisting soldiers in the bayonet charge on the enemy positions."²⁶ Thus, along with Marshal Pilsudski's bold and decisive plan, the bravery and dedication of the Polish soldiers was essential to carry out the plan to defeat the Russian advance. The full commitment of the whole society was an essential factor to achieving the victory.²⁷

In April 1920 the USSR declared war against Poland "not as a particular task of the Western Front, but as the central task of all of worker-peasant Russia,"²⁸ which should be supported by nation in every way. What was important to note that in "Russian strategy the political factor was equal to military aspect, including propaganda pressure, as a means to break enemy's will to fight."²⁹ To achieve the desired effect, the Western European communist newspapers published a flood of articles to tarnish the reputation of Poland. Polish communists were activated, and during the active operations Russian airplanes and special artillery launchers were used to distribute leaflets. Polish peasants and workers in conquered areas were promised a better life in an array of posters put up by the invading Russians. The Communists mounted a strong propaganda effort among their own ranks as well, as the soldiers were told that they were offering the Polish citizens freedom and social justice. The Red soldiers were to

have no doubts that they were on the way to create a global Soviet Republic.³⁰ To implement the new communist system in Poland, a temporary civilian government was prepared to take the power after the Poles were militarily defeated. The propaganda effort was so intensive and thorough that even the top Russian commanders were convinced that their campaign would be short and victorious. The pervasive propaganda influenced the Russian intelligence to make an incorrect estimate of their Polish opponents, to misread their disposition of forces and troop strength.

Another factor was the speed with which the Russian force moved at the beginning of the campaign. It had moved so fast that it had largely outrun its supply lines. The soldiers were tired and undersupplied, and this forced them to seize supplies from the peasants. Even though soldiers were told to win the support of the people, the widespread looting of the Polish countryside aroused hatred for the Russians among the Polish peasants. It became impossible to effectively spread propaganda among the Polish population. Indeed, as the Soviets advanced, there was a total lack of support from local population.

Tukhachevski was somewhat overconfident regarding his troops' morale. In his memoirs he stated that, "taking into account the superior morale of our troops, we were absolutely right to count on our victory."³¹ However, his memoirs were an official publication, so the rhetoric had to be official as well. The Russian view of their morale advantage proved to be exaggerated when in just two days, 16-18 August, four armies became a nothing more than a mass of rapidly retreating troops, with evident panic and a lack of control at higher levels. The moral factor did not take into account that Poland had been devastated in the First World War and later by the Civil War. Soldiers were weary, and the effectiveness of propaganda declined as logistics failed and the advance was stopped by the powerful and unexpected counterstrike. The expected victory was turned into defeat, and the Red Army soldiers were not mentally strong enough to adapt to the changed conditions.

Even Lenin commented that Polish citizens' spirit was completely different from what the Russian leaders had assumed before the war. He said, "The revolution which we counted on in Poland did not take place. The workers and peasants defended their class enemy, and let our brave Red Army soldiers starve, ambushed them, and beat them to death... Radek predicted

how it would turn out. He warned us.”³² Soviet Russia expected a significant peoples’ opposition to rise against the legal government of Poland and a Polish Revolution Committee (Polrevkom) was created to take the power in Poland and to set up a Bolshevik state controlled by Russia. The Polrevkom waited in vain in a special train near Bialystok for Warsaw to collapse³³.

4.3. Intelligence as a tool of war

Among many other aspects of the campaign, the most important element of information superiority on the Polish side was the accomplishment of Lieutenant Kowalewski, an officer attached to the cryptographic section of Polish General Staff, who broke the Russian High command codes in September 1919.³⁴ This breakthrough allowed Polish commanders to have full access to the radio exchanges among the Russian commanders. This intelligence was critical in planning and executing the battle. Polish plans were not based only on intuition, but also on hard data. Especially important was the intercept of the radio message of 13 August 1920 from the Front Headquarters to the Russian 16th Army. This message gave the Poles all the current Russian troop dispositions just before the Polish attack. The stunning success of Polish cryptographers influenced the whole war. The Russians had poor security for their communications, so the high level messages could be checked and confirmed from other sources. One of the sources important to Poland was agents operating inside Russian-held territory that had been left behind to provide information to the Polish High Command. Polish forces also used air reconnaissance effectively. Aerial reconnaissance was a primary task of the air force, next to attacking enemy columns. However, Polish intelligence made a few mistakes as well. It was not effective in recognizing the real power of the Mozyr Group, which was just light screening force. Although the Mozyr Group’s 57th Division was recognized, there was no credible information about other forces. Pilsudski had to deal with an operational vacuum in that area.

One of important episodes of the campaign took place on 12 August. As the Polish 5th Army faced three Russian armies the situation was very serious. That day the VIIIth Cavalry Brigade broke through enemy lines and its 203rd Uhlan Regiment attacked Ciechanow, where Russian 4th Army Field HQ was located, and it “captured most of its staff, together with a

rich body of records, plans and ciphers.”³⁵ Seizing the radio station of the 4th Army and later jamming of other radio traffic proved to be effective, as 4th Army HQ lost contact with its Front HQ and continued marching toward Torun and Plock, unaware of Tukhachevski’s order to turn south and annihilate the Polish 5th Army. This was possible because Polish intelligence knew the fixed frequency of only radio station left to the 4th Army. To jam the radio station the radio jammers in Warsaw transmitted a recitation of the book of Genesis in Polish and Latin.

For the Soviet forces the main problem with getting desired intelligence was connected with lack of local support and the very weak support from the Polish communists. The negative attitude of the population made it difficult to activate a Soviet occupation government and to effectively employ spies and agents in service of the Bolsheviks. Some attempts were undertaken to create disorder and internal troubles inside selected units of Polish armed forces, but they were generally unsuccessful. One important intelligence incidents occurred on 13 August when a copy of the Polish plans accidentally fell into Soviet hands. It was provided to Front HQ, but because some units mentioned in the plan were engaged in battle in the Ukraine some hundreds of kilometers away, the Russians decided that it was a deception plan focused on decreasing pressure on Warsaw. It was ignored and this proved to be a crucial mistake for the Russians. In addition, poor communications existed between the Western Front Headquarters and its subordinate armies during decisive period of the battle. The northern front also experienced a failure to coordinate operations the 4th Army and Cavalry Corps headed west instead of south, as ordered. This lack of coordination on the Russian side provided the Poles good conditions for beginning their counteroffensive.

4.4. Principles of war- Surprise and Economy of forces

During the war surprise was an important factor that shaped the final outcome of the battle. At the beginning of the campaign a decisive strike by the Russian forces that massed their units along decisive avenues of approach won some real success. This worked at first because the Polish units were dispersed too thinly along a very long front. Later on, the surprise outflanking actions conducted by the Russian 3rd Cavalry Corps were effective in destroying the cohesion of the Polish defense. On the other side, surprise played critical role to conduct Polish counteroffensive,

taking into consideration time, place and forces involved. The direction of Polish attack was definitely a surprise for Tukhachevski, as he underestimated his left flank's capabilities when trying to capture Warsaw. Pilsudski commented after the battle, "I thought that I was dreaming... It had to be a trap. The Red Army's rear simply could not be that empty."³⁶ Due to this the surprise was complete and the Soviet Army, which on 16 August was close to Warsaw with the possibility to quickly capture the city, was in a disorganized withdrawal northeastward looking for any possibility to organize defensive line only two days later. The Weak Mozyr Group was not strong enough to face a fast and focused blow by the Poles. However, there it appears that the commander in chief of the Russian armed forces was aware of possible attack due to the capture of some Polish plans. He tried to take some action, but because of political intrigues among the Soviet leadership, his cautionary actions were not carried out.

Economy of force played important role in the case of Polish 5th Army. The numerical superiority of the Russian troops facing Sikorski³⁷ proved to be not enough to defeat the defenders and to cross the Vistula River. A skilled commander was able to split the Russians and later to crush them using some bold maneuvers and highly motivated soldiers. The 5th Army under Sikorski's command "apart from splitting the enemy forces on the north front, would relieve direct pressure on Warsaw and divert more Russian forces from their left wing, improving the chances of success for Pilsudski's main strike forces."³⁸ Sikorski was able to conduct an active defense and to shift his troops quickly in order to destroy enemy piecemeal.

On 04 July 1920 the Northwest Front achieved ratio of 4:1 for the main effort and was strong enough force to reach the Vistula river line just in two weeks. But such a rapid progress also meant that the Front had taken heavy losses, had overstretched lines of communication, and "the Red Army did not have necessary reserve to make use of this opportunity to capture Warsaw and advance further westward."³⁹ The economy of force was also basic factor in the case of the Polish "Assault Group" which was much stronger than Mozyr Group – a ration of 6:1. When such the ratio is combined with surprise and a huge gap between the Russian fronts, the outcome was rather easy to predict. Polish troops exploited the situation and decisively struck northward defeating a surprised and confused enemy, who was sure that the Polish armed forces were in no shape to oppose their strike into Warsaw. One of Russian division commanders, Vitovt

Putna, admitted that, “we retreated from the Vistula in complete chaos. ... The catastrophe assumed proportions even more grandiose than the Poles could possibly have hoped for.”⁴⁰

The war of 1920 was very much a war of maneuver as huge cavalry formations encircled or outflanked the enemy. At the same time, it was the last war where cavalry played such a large role. The 1920 war influenced the development of cavalry in Polish armed forces. The development of Polish military thought focused too much on cavalry and, as a result, decades later the army was not well prepared for a new type of war.

4.5. Logistics

After the First World War, Poland was heavily damaged the rebuilding of infrastructure in the newly established country was a challenging task. The war with Russia came at a very difficult time and Polish logistics were a serious problem for the Polish forces: “Logistics were a nightmare, as the Polish army was equipped with guns made in five countries and rifles manufactured in six, each of them using different ammunition. Adding to the problem was the fact that the equipment was in poor shape.” Moreover, Poland had relied on support promised by the Western European countries, but that support started to arrive relatively late in the struggle with the first supplies only arriving at the beginning of August 1920. In the case of the air force’s pilots it was a matter of no time to “become accustomed to their new machines.”⁴¹ At the beginning of war the Polish lines of communications had been quite long and this factor made the flow of troops and supplies difficult. On the other hand, the quick retreat of Polish troops westward, in a logistical sense, was favorable for Polish combat service support as supply lines were significantly shorter and they were running through friendly areas. This proved to be a proved to be very important factor during the battle as new formed units could be moved to the front fast and in large numbers. The strong morale of the Polish society also enabled the flow of supplies and their security. Polish combat units did not have to waste troops to guard supply lines against sabotage as the Russians did.

The Russian commanders understood the significance of the supply and logistics problems in Polish Army, so they wanted to capture Torun or Plock (cities north of Warsaw) in order to cut both the railway and water

lines of communications. The northern 3rd Cavalry Corps, led by Gayk Bzhishkyan, partially achieved this goal by seizing bridgeheads in the vicinity of Wloclawek. Russian armies suffered greatly because of the lack of supplies, especially ammunition, as they “scarcely existed, and the rear of the Red Army had almost no organization” and it influenced especially fresh reinforcements. This “was a critical problem, because the Red Army badly needed fresh troops.”⁴² That factor badly degraded Russian combat power and the Russians’ ability to continue effective operations as the Red Army culminated its advance as it faced Warsaw, located just a few kilometers ahead. Regarding logistics, the Red Army was simply not ready to support a war in the West, especially when initial victories and quick initial advance surprised the Russian leadership. As the political leadership strove for rapid against Poland, the Russian leaders ordered their forces to accomplish difficult tasks while not taking into account the worsening logistics situation of advancing armies. The commanders also contributed to such the wrong picture of capabilities of the Russian forces. If the poor situation of the local resources was added and huge damages to the agriculture and industry after the First World War, it was clear that the underestimate of logistics heavily contributed to the Red Army performance. Yet, ideology won over the reality of logistics and the outcome for the Russians was disaster.

Conclusions

From a military viewpoint the war still continued after the Battle of Warsaw, but under completely different conditions. Although, Tukhachevski finally managed to reorganize his forces during their retreat eastward, and by September was able to establish defensive line near Grodno, he was still not strong enough to change the situation. During the battle of the Niemen River, which lasted from 15 to 21 September, Polish forces once again defeated the Soviet troops. Finally, the last battle of the war took place next to the Szczara River on 12 October and it was the time when both sides were exhausted by that intensive war, which covering a huge operational area, involved hundreds of thousands of soldiers, and devastated large parts of both countries. Another important factor was that soldiers and citizens were exhausted both physically and morally. On the Russian side this situation could threaten the hold of the Communist Party and start new internal disturbances for a government not fully anchored. Thus, a Peace agreement was highly desired by both belligerents. At the

same time, diplomatic pressure from France and Britain generated a cease-fire. On 18 October combat operations stopped and negotiations led to the signing of the Treaty of Riga, definitely ending the war⁴³.

From the Polish perspective the Battle of Warsaw was one of decisive victories in the history of the nation as it secured Poland's independence and eastern borders. It was an important factor in the building of a new country that had been heavily damaged by the World War and the Polish – Russian War. The Soviet intentions were clearly visible during negotiations in Minsk in the middle of August 1920. The Russian delegation recognized the critical situation of the Polish army and offered listed peace conditions "formulated in such the way and included such claims that if Poland had accepted them it would have been totally subordinated to Soviet Russia."⁴⁴ The lack of support from the West made the situation less favorable for Poland. For the most part, the Western support was rather passive, as the Western powers waited for the outcome of the war and considered the future threats if the Poles failed. For Germany it was especially important as local communists were still active and the problem of borders with Poland was not fully solved. The victory proved to be important in containing the communist movement in Poland. Especially important was the historical triumph over a superior Russia that had defeated Poland many times in the past. Such the victory had great importance for the whole society as people were gained confidence in the performance of their new political system. According to lord d'Abernon, the battle for Warsaw was one of the eighteen decisive battles in the world history. It was also the eighth battle for Warsaw since 1794⁴⁵.

The victory had great importance for Europe because "if the battle would be Soviet victory, it would be turning point in European history, as with no doubt, in such the case the whole Central Europe would be open for communists propaganda and Soviet invasion, which would have been difficult to face."⁴⁶ Poland stopped an attempt to merge Soviet power and the communist movements in Europe and blocked the rise of European disorder.⁴⁷ The "export of the revolution" was definitely stopped for long time and the West won time to contain the revolutions in West, Central and Southern Europe. Consequently, Poland top commander, supported by the nation, saved the new country and contributed to stopping the spread of revolution and its spread to Western Europe. The Western European countries gained time to deal with internal problems, to consolidate their armed forces and to recover from the damage caused by

the First World War. It was done in an impressive manner, as Charles de Gaulle stated on 20 August 1920, “Yes, it is complete victory, triumphal victory. Of the Russian Armies, endangering Warsaw, they will not be coming back”⁴⁸.

Russia suffered much during the 1920 war and her leadership realized that the new country was not strong enough at that time to export revolution. Russia turned to a focus on internal affairs and would, for the next years, observe the development of the situation in Europe. In short, the expansion of Soviet Russia and communism to the Western Europe was stopped for twenty years. At the same time the Red Army turned inward and began a process of its own development and reorganization. The Red Army’s development drew much from the experience of the Polish War and included new concepts like deep operations concept, developed by Tukhachevsky to face the future challenges. At the same time armed forces reorganization and modernization was initiated along with new weaponry acquisition. The war influenced also very negatively armed forces leadership afterward, as relations between Stalin and Tukhachevski (and other high level commanders) were spoiled⁴⁹.

The Battle for Warsaw is one of many examples in military history that demonstrates that every conflict has some unique characteristics. In this case, there were several military and nonmilitary factors that influenced the final outcome of the struggle. These factors can influence a conflict in such a way that the weaker combatant does not always end up losing the confrontation. For the weaker power to achieve success, it must have talented leaders, strong morale, and be able to recognize and exploit opportunities. Thus, it is useful to study past wars in order to understand some current conflicts and develop some insights as to how the changes in warfare occur. The problem of the weak against strong is a common part of many conflicts and is useful to the discussion of this theme. The Polish – Russian War was the first major experience of a strong Russia with new leadership and its position just after defeating a powerful opposition inside her own territory. On the other side, there was Poland, which had recently regained independence and had huge internal differences and faced serious problems in creating a new identity. In this case Russia was definitely overconfident and underestimated the opponent. The Soviets had been driven too much by their ideological framework and had ignored some social – political realities. Many nonmilitary characteristics, mentioned in the paper, were strong enough to counter Russia’s position as a great

power and contribute to the victory of the Polish troops. So, when waging war, Sun Tzu's famous aphorism is still validated—one must know one's own capabilities and strengths along with the true capabilities of the enemy.

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- ¹ Yu Lin Ong, *Understanding why the "Inferior Defeats the Superior"* *Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces*, Vol. 34 No 4, 2009, p. 14
- ² Chow-How Wee, *Sun Zi Art of War. An Illustrated Translation with Asian Perspective and Insights* (Singapore: Pearson Education Asia Pte Ltd., 2003) 266.
- ³ Yu Lin Ong 2009, p. 15.
- ⁴ For more information see *Estonian War of Independence, 1918 – 1920 Reprint of a Summary of prepared in 1938 – 1939* (New York: Eesti Vabadusvõitlajate Litt, 1968).
- ⁵ For Polish diplomacy both sides of Russian internal conflict were not supportive. Negative approach of West countries toward Poland was especially visible during conference in Spa, Belgium where was a pressure to accept peace talks with Russia with extremely tough preconditions for Poland to agree. Gerard Labuda, and Waldemar Michowicz (eds.), *The history of Polish Diplomacy X-XX century*, (Warsaw: Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Sejm Publishing Office, 2005) 476.
- ⁶ Torsti Siren, *State Agent, Identity and the "New World Order". Reconstructing Polish Defense Identity after the Cold War Era* (Helsinki: Strategic Research No 26, National Defense University, 2009) 190.
- ⁷ Jerzy Borzęcki, *The Soviet – Polish Peace of 1921 and the creation of Interwar Europe* (London: Yale University Press, 2008) 41.
- ⁸ Labuda and Michowicz 2005, p. 477.
- ⁹ Norman Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star* (London: Pimlico, 2003) 190-191.
- ¹⁰ Tomasz Nałęcz, "Obroniliśmy niepodległość, uratowaliśmy Europę" *Super Express*, Warsaw 14 August 2009.
- ¹¹ Juliusz Englert, *Józef Piłsudski. Komendant, Naczelnik Państwa, Pierwszy Marszałek Polski* (London: Polska Fundacja Wydawnicza, 1991) p. 124.
- ¹² Richard M. Watt, *Bitter Glory. Poland and its Fate 1918 – 1939* (New York: Barnes&Noble, 1998), p. 139.
- ¹³ Richard M. Watt, *Gorzka chwała polska i jej los 1918-1939* (Warsaw: A.M.F. PLUS Group, 2005).
- ¹⁴ Borzęcki 2008, p. 52.
- ¹⁵ Nałęcz 2009.
- ¹⁶ Robert Jackson, *Battle of the Baltic. The Wars 1918 – 1945* (Barnsley: Pen&Sword, Books, 2007) 38.

- ¹⁷ Based on Lech Wyszczelski, *Bitwa na przedpolach Warszawy* (Warsaw: Bellona, 2000) 210-353, Davies 2003, pp. 200-207, and Adam Zamoyski, *Warsaw 1920. Lenin's Failed Conquest of Europe*, (London: Harper Press, 2008) 64-109.
- ¹⁸ Based on: Bitwa Warszawaska, the website dedicated to the Battle of Warsaw http://www.bitwawarszawska.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37&Itemid=26 (accessed October 23, 2009).
- ¹⁹ Stalin was Chief Political Commissar of the South-Western Front. Looking for private glory he wanted to capture Lwów. Jegorow and Budyonny were following Stalin's suggestions. He was also against the adventure to the West, as at the moment he wanted to completely annihilate internal opposition. Davies 2003, p. 212.
- ²⁰ Keith Sword (editor), *Sikorski: Soldier and Statesman* (London: Orbis Books, 1990) 81.
- ²¹ *Józef Piłsudski; Rok 1920 and Michaił Tuchaczewski: Pochód za Wisłę*, (Łódź: Publishing House - Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, based on: Józef Piłsudski, Pisma zbiorowe, tom VII, Warszawa 1937); comments by profesor Arnulfi Garucki, 1989, p. 233.
- ²² The bad blood between commanders is similar to the bitterness between Russian generals Samsonov, and Rennenkampf during the Battle of Tannenberg in August 1914. During this decisive confrontation between the Russian Empire and the Germany at the beginning of World War I this division between commanders helped cause the annihilation of the 2nd Russian Army.
- ²³ Stalin was convinced that Southwestern Front had unfairly received the less important mission, and he could not accept it. So capturing Lwow was more important for him, or at least as important as capturing Warsaw. Moreover he wanted to spread revolution via Czechoslovakia and Austria to Balkans. Wyszczelski 2000, p. 158.
- ²⁴ Borzęcki 2008, p. 52.
- ²⁵ Davies 2003, p. 193.
- ²⁶ Witold Lawrynowicz, *Battle Of Warsaw 1920*, <http://www.hetmanusa.org/engarticle1.html> (accessed October 28, 2009).
- ²⁷ The speech by Poland's President Lech Kaczyński, "Mamy prawo być dumni", Super Express, Warsaw 15 August 2009. http://www.se.pl/wydarzenia/kraj/mamy-prawo-byc-dumni_106445.html (accessed November 03, 2009)
- ²⁸ Borzęcki 2008, p. 75.
- ²⁹ Wyszczelski 2000, p. 141.
- ³⁰ Wyszczelski 2000, p. 144.
- ³¹ Sword 1990, p. 79.

- ³² Karl Radek was active Bolshevik functionary, who in Germany in 1918-20 was trying to organize the German Communist movement. He was warning that Polish citizens would not support Red Army. Norman Davies, *God's Playground. A History of Poland, Volume II 1795 to present*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 297.
- ³³ Watt 1998, p. 140.
- ³⁴ Watt 1998, p. 143.
- ³⁵ Sword 1990, p. 80.
- ³⁶ Watt 1998, p. 146.
- ³⁷ Russian Armies (3, 4, 15) counted about 69 000 soldiers, and the Polish 5th Army had about 26 500 soldiers. Sword 1990, p. 84.
- ³⁸ Sword 1990, p. 77.
- ³⁹ Siren 2009, p. 189.
- ⁴⁰ Witoyt Putna was the commander of 27th and his actions saved remains of 16th and 3rd armies from complete annihilation. Zamoyski 2008, p. 109.
- ⁴¹ Jackson 2007, p. 38.
- ⁴² Watt 1998, p. 143.
- ⁴³ The peace treaty between Poland and Soviet Russia was signed in Riga on 18 March 1921 (the Riga Treaty).
- ⁴⁴ Labuda and Michowicz 2005, p. 478.
- ⁴⁵ Sword, p. 82.
- ⁴⁶ Englert 1991, p. 124.
- ⁴⁷ Nałęcz 2009.
- ⁴⁸ “*Ta bitwa ocaliła całą Europę*”, Super Express, Warsaw 15 August 2009.
- ⁴⁹ In 1937 the war had terrible consequences for the Red Army leadership, which were rooted in the Stalin’s political games in 1920. It was connected with accusing Stalin that his was partially guilty of the defeat; they were raised by some top level commanders and political leaders.

Air Power and Small Wars: Current Operations

By James S. Corum

Introduction

The last ten years have seen the US and Western powers engaged in ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. These are conflicts in which airpower has played a constant and important role. Yet the conflicts that the Western nations, and especially the Western air forces, have been fighting are not the ones they trained for or were organized for. They are certainly not the conflicts that American and major Western forces prefer to fight.

This paper is about the problems confronting the effective employment of US and allied nation airpower in the current fights in Iraq and Afghanistan, and against insurgents and other irregular forces in other conflicts around the world. Part of the problem that airmen face is the difficulty in adapting to conditions of warfare that were not expected by the US or Western military leaders a decade ago. Some problems have arisen due to the tactics developed by irregular and non-state forces and movements. Part of the problem is the difficulty of air forces and military leaders in overcoming their own concepts, and assumptions about the nature of war and the best methods of waging war.

This article will examine some of the key lessons that have come out of the conflicts of the last decade and will assess what has become the primary threat to the effective use of US and Western air power. This article will; also offer a path forward for the most effective means to employ airpower in the future in the struggle for Western nations and their allies against insurgents and terrorists and various radical non-state forces.

1. A View of the Revolution in Warfare 1991-2001

Since 9-11 the US and NATO air forces have had to rethink their approach to aerial warfare. Changing the way air forces think about warfare is, in many respects, a far more difficult proposition than changing the equipment. The difficulty in adapting to new conditions in the post 9-11

world lies largely in the legacy of the 1990s and the type of thinking that was pervasive in the US Air Force and was passed on to allied nations. In short, much of the difficulty in adapting to a new model of warfare against irregular and non-state forces is due to some wrong conclusions drawn from the 1991 Gulf War that pitted a grand coalition against Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

The victory of 1991 was a dramatic one for airpower. Indeed, with little loss Coalition airpower destroyed or crippled much of Saddam Hussein's army before the ground offensive finished his forces off in a four day offensive. The relentless air attack so demoralized Saddam Hussein's army that it was already melting away by desertion when the Coalition ground offensive hit. Afterwards, the Gulf War exercised a huge effect on military thinking—not only in the US but also in Europe and Russia. The idea that airpower would dominate future warfare was commonly expressed at the top levels of military leadership.¹ The common view in Western armies in the 1990s, and certainly one that became a dogma in the US military, is that technology was what mattered. Superior technology gave a nation an insurmountable advantage in warfare. The phrase Revolution in Military Affairs – and the term RMA became one of the best recognized buzzwords in Western military thinking in the 1990s—was even defined by the American military in terms in terms of technology. The common view was that RMAs were about technology, even though many of the most significant events that had initiated genuine transformations in warfare have had nothing to do with technology. For example, the military revolution of the Napoleonic era, or the rise of “peoples War” in the 20th Century were about the political and social changes that profoundly affected warfare—but not technology. Yet the concept that technology is what matters took hold in America and the developed Western nations. For Americans, given the huge technological advantage that the Americans enjoyed in the 1990s, it was an especially comforting theory.

For air forces, the RMA of the 1990s meant that future warfare would be dominated by airpower. Manpower-intensive warfare was to be a thing of the past. Even the US Army extolled the importance of high tech in future warfare as it shed a great part of its manpower and looked to high tech equipment. The major conflicts that the Western powers engaged in after the Gulf War also seemed to support concept that airpower was now the main player in deciding conflicts. The 1995 NATO military campaign in

Bosnia that forced the Serbs to accept the Dayton Peace Accords featured an air campaign alongside the Bosnian/Croatian ground offensives. The 1999 conflict between NATO and Serbia featured a NATO air campaign over Kosovo and Serbia that ended with the Serbian evacuation of Kosovo after a painful 78-day aerial bombardment.

All these conflicts clearly pointed to the dominance of airpower – or did they? Indeed, there is plenty of evidence that the effects of airpower had been overrated by its enthusiastic advocates and that the capability of airpower was much more limited than the US Air Force was willing to admit.

For example, the First Iraq War in which airpower was so successful was fought under almost ideal conditions that are unlikely to be replicated again. The Coalition forces faced an incredibly incompetent opponent. The war featured political isolation for the Iraqis, six months for the Coalition to carefully prepare, a huge advantage in leadership, training and equipment—and a total control of the air. In fact, a set of favorable conditions like these will likely not be repeated again—certainly not for a long time. Yet, after the remarkable victory over Iraq during the Gulf War of 1991, there appeared a kind of euphoria among many of the top US and Western military leaders. The rapid and decisive victory over Saddam Hussein's large army was won through the application of superior technology and at a price of less than 200 fatalities on the American side. The decades of training and preparing for the high tech conventional war had paid off handsomely. For most of the US military, and most of the American public, the Gulf War seemed to prove that American technology presented such an overwhelming advantage that the US could apply the same formula to defeat almost any potential enemy quickly, efficiently, and decisively—and at minimal cost.² Richard Cheney, US secretary of defense during the First Gulf War and Vice President during the Second Gulf War, embraced the high tech vision of warfare demonstrated in the Iraqi and Kuwaiti deserts, "This war demonstrated dramatically the new possibilities of what has been called the 'military technological revolution in warfare.'³

The US Air Force pointed to its brief 1995 air campaign that coerced the Bosnian Serbs into a peace deal as a model air campaign. Yet it ought to be remembered that the air campaign, which received most of the press coverage in the West, was also carried out in tandem with a highly effective ground campaign by the Bosnian/Croatian forces.

Then there came the 1999 NATO air campaign against Serbia which, after 78 days, forced the Serbs to evacuate the province of Kosovo. This campaign, called Operation Allied Force, was seen by some airpower advocates as yet further proof that a war could be won by airpower alone. During the coercion the Serbs accept NATO's demands, the USAF and NATO air forces reported hundreds of Serb heavy weapons destroyed. US Defense Secretary William Cohen said that the air strikes had "severely crippled Serb military forces in Kosovo destroying more than fifty percent of their artillery and one third of their armored vehicles."⁴

There were several versions of the battle damage assessment of major Serbian weapons systems destroyed in the air campaign. There had been 3000 NATO combat sorties and 14,000 bombs had been dropped with the Serb 3rd Army the focus of the air campaign. Yet, despite the massive air assault and the supposed loss of a vast amount of their equipment, in the middle of the bombing campaign the Serb forces in Kosovo were still able to carry out a thorough ethnic cleansing campaign against the Kosovo Albanians and drove hundreds of thousands of them outside the province.

The early reports of destroyed Serb equipment that came from the US Defense Dept and Joint Staff on 10 June 1999 gave the following estimates of Serbian heavy weapons destroyed by air attack: 120 tanks and self propelled guns, 220 armored personnel carriers, 450 towed artillery pieces and mortars – equaling 790 major weapons systems. A SHAPE assessment of 11 Sept 1999 estimated the destroyed Serb weapons at: 93 tanks and SP guns, 153 APCs, 389 towed guns and mortars—equaling 635 heavy weapons.

The estimates were taken from pilot reports and intelligence photos – and endorsed by the USAF as their official figures. These figures, later presented to the US Congress, seemingly proved the accuracy and effectiveness of air forces. Yet later the claims made for the precision and destructive effects of airpower were refuted by the findings of a team of US and NATO military experts who went in on the ground in Kosovo to examine the evidence of destruction at each recorded site of a NATO air attack in Kosovo. The Allied Force Munitions Effectiveness Assessment Team spent weeks examining the on-site evidence and looking for destroyed Serbian equipment. The Final Report of the team published on 15 May, 2000 provided a startling contrast to figures that the USAF had

already certified. In counting only hard evidence of destroyed equipment the Allied team reported the following items of Serb equipment destroyed: Tanks and SP guns: 14, APCs 18, towed guns and mortars 20 – equaling 52 heavy weapons systems.⁵

There are two possible conclusions to the widely varying accounts of airpower damage: Either NATO and the US Defense Department have grossly overestimated the capabilities of airpower and have an exceptionally unreliable intelligence system for battle damage assessment, or the Serbs have managed to operate the most successful battlefield clean up campaign in all of human history, removing all evidence of hundreds of destroyed heavy vehicles and weapons without anyone noticing this huge effort.

Frankly, the evidence, points to the latter conclusion. When the Serb 3rd Army withdrew from Kosovo it did not look like an army that had seen most of its heavy weapons destroyed. The journalists were amazed at the amount of heavy equipment that emerged from the woods and villages of Kosovo. The Serb units withdrew to Serbia as complete units with good morale—nothing resembling an army that had been broken or paralyzed by air attack. The 1999 campaign ought to have been a wake up call in terms of understanding the limits of airpower. Yet it was not. The US Air force still clung to its discredited figures and refused to acknowledge the failure of airpower to cripple the Serb forces.⁶

The same problem of overestimating the capabilities of airpower cropped up again only two years later when, in the wake of the 9-11 attack on the United States, the US initiated a massive air campaign against the Taliban regime of Afghanistan that had sheltered the al Qaeda terrorists. In a campaign that lasted only a few weeks, and featured US airpower in support of indigenous friendly local forces, the Taliban regime was broken and pushed out of power—to retreat along with its al Qaeda allies to their mountain strongholds on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The rapid progress of a campaign that featured only a handful of US forces on the ground was impressive. It offered to many among the US government and military leadership a vision of a “new way of war” in which the US could defeat its enemies with minimal use of US ground forces by relying on indigenous allies to do the ground fighting while supported by US airpower in the starring role.⁷

Indeed, some studies by USAF personnel tended to paint a very positive picture of airpower after the initial Afghanistan campaign and drew overly broad conclusions from the Afghanistan model that overlooked some of the hard facts of the campaign. In 2005 an article by Dr. Richard Andres and Col. Thomas Griffith USAF (Griffith is a USAF Colonel and Andres a PhD working for the Air Force) argued a view popular with the USAF Air Staff that airpower using the 2001 Afghanistan model could substitute for the deployment of US troops on the ground.⁸ It was a model of what that the Bush administration wanted to hear. It was also not surprising that such an idea would be warmly received in an administration whose top three military decision makers—President George W. Bush, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Richard Meyers, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld--- were all former fighter pilots.

However, this optimism that the answer had been found with the Afghanistan model and US airpower could serve as the main solution to future campaigns was deflated when Stephen Biddle of the US Army War College brought out two critical, and very thorough, studies of the use of airpower in the Afghanistan Campaign.⁹ Biddle pointed out that the Air Force model of relying on indigenous forces worked only to a point. When the opposition consisted of poorly trained Taliban forces that were confronted by the Afghani Northern Alliance fighters that were backed by US airpower, the model worked fine and the Taliban forces were easily defeated. However, when America's Afghani allies and American airpower confronted the better trained and led al Qaeda fighters, then the model did not work effectively. In the eastern Afghanistan mountains in Operation Anaconda in early 2002, the Al Qaeda fighters showed that they could quickly adapt to the conditions of overwhelming US airpower and still fight and mount a dangerous and effective defense. There were scenes reminiscent of the Kosovo campaign of 1999 during Operation Anaconda campaign. Despite days of intensive US space and air reconnaissance of a ten square mile region—fewer than half of the al Qaeda fighting positions were identified before Coalition ground troops went in to action. Despite a massive preparation of the battlefield by Allied airpower, al Qaeda forces were still ready and able to mount a tough defense of their mountain stronghold. Once the attack was joined, the al Qaeda forces got in close to the Coalition ground forces in order to neutralize the heavy firepower advantage of the Coalition airpower. The al Qaeda had learned some lessons quickly from the 2001 air campaign in Afghanistan.

Finally, the policy of using minimal US manpower and too much reliance upon the indigenous Afghan allies proved a mistake. The Afghani allies failed to close the perimeter around the mountain defenses of the al Qaeda and Taliban forces and a large number of the al Qaeda fighters were allowed to escape into Pakistan and fight on. The lesson of Anaconda was that overwhelming airpower advantage could not make up for a lack of trained and well prepared ground forces.¹⁰ It was a lesson that had to be learned again in Iraq when US forces required a significant increase in ground forces to turn the situation around in 2007. The need to increase US troop commitments to Afghanistan in 2009 also suggested that a high tech, low-manpower approach to counterinsurgency was not working and that old fashioned “boots on the ground” was still essential in a counterinsurgency conflict.

2. 2001 to the Present. Lessons from the Counterinsurgency Era

After the initial victory over the Taliban in 2001—the US and NATO nations learned to their dismay that the fight was not over—it was just the beginning of a drawn out insurgency against Taliban fighters backed up by Islamic militants.

In 2003 a US-led international coalition again saw a dramatic conventional victory against Iraq. As in 1991 airpower again proved to be the trump card. With a much smaller forces than in 1991, and from a running start with no preparatory air campaign—Coalition forces again defeated Saddam Hussein’s much larger army with much smaller ground forces in a short, sharp campaign. Airpower was able to catch and cripple a great part of the Iraqi armored forces even before they reached the battlefield. The complete mastery of the air and the relentless air attacks so demoralized the Iraqi Army that even the elite Republican Guards units had largely melted away from desertion before ever seeing the Coalition ground forces. The final push into Baghdad resembled much more of a triumphal entry than a battle. But the feeling of triumph from the conventional victory was soon replaced by confusion as the US and Coalition forces found themselves facing an insurgency that they had not planned for.

Largely because the doctrine of the US military was based on various bad assumptions and fallacious thinking about the nature of future war, there had been little planning for the occupation of Iraq. After the US and

Coalition forces won the conventional victory in 2003 Iraq quickly descended into chaos and civil war. For a long time after the start of the insurgency, the US military and civilian leadership failed to understand the conditions in Iraq.¹¹ Despite the recent experience of the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, when large forces on the ground had been necessary to stabilize the situation, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Myers insisted upon occupying Iraq with a force far too small to establish order. In 2003, when the United States tried to establish order in a country of 25 million with only 130,000 troops—this was an absurdly low number to do the job. As a result, the postwar looting, crime, and disorder continued in Iraq and the power vacuum invited all the factions to arm, organize and make their bids for power. A minimum level of security was never established for a large part of the population that suffered through the wave of murder, kidnappings, and other illegal behavior.¹² If there is any lesson that ought to come from the Iraq War, it is that in order to combat and defeat an insurgency, one must provide establish a basic level of security for the population as the first priority mission. in order to do this effectively, a lot of manpower is needed.

Some critics of traditional counterinsurgency concepts argue that the presence of large foreign forces is a negative, and that a heavy foreign military presence provokes the population to resistance. If this were true, then the violence in Bosnia and Kosovo would have escalated with the intervention of a large outside force. In fact, the opposite happened in those countries and order came with large intervention forces. In Somalia in 1991-1992 the initial large force deployed there stopped the violence. The warlords only escalated their resistance in 1993 when the US and UN withdrew the main combat forces. It is true that U.S. and Coalition forces provoked the resentment of many Iraqis, but most resentment came because there were too few Coalition troops to establish a secure environment in 2003-2005 and stop the ongoing disorder.

In 2003 many in the top US military leadership forgot was that successful counterinsurgency requires constant human interaction. This interaction, in turn, requires troops on the ground rather than sophisticated space surveillance or airplanes at 30,000 feet. There is no doubt that space assets and air assets make the forces on the ground much more effective, but the physical and observable presence of security forces on the ground remains the key to effective counterinsurgency.

3. The US Army and Marine Develop a New Counterinsurgency Doctrine 2003-2006

With no clear plan the US and Coalition forces in Iraq faced a rapidly growing insurgency without any plan, strategy, or effective doctrine. While the top leadership in the US military failed badly to lead and to adapt to conditions that they had not been trained for, a few intermediate commanders showed some talent for counterinsurgency and many in the US military and government started to look to these officers to provide some answers. The most notable leaders and innovators in Iraq was General David Petraeus, commander of the 101st Airborne Division in Iraq from 2003 to 2005. Promoted to lieutenant general in 2005 he took over the US Army Combined Arms Command. As the general responsible for the combat arms doctrine development for the US Army, General Petraeus was determined to develop a new and thoroughly comprehensive counterinsurgency doctrine developed under his tenure. Moreover, it would not just be an army doctrine, but he would bring the US Marine Corps into the process so that the doctrine would have more authority as being a joint service project. Finally, Petraeus would have the new counterinsurgency doctrine take up the role as “capstone” doctrine—that is, one of the six primary Army doctrine manuals from which all other Army doctrine flowed. This was not to be a stopgap measure for the Iraq War—it was to shape the thinking and strategy and operations of the US Army for the next decades it struggled with conflict against insurgents and irregular, non-state forces that appear to be the normal face of future conflict.

The process of crafting the doctrine was a complete departure for the US Army and its usual bureaucratic style. Petraeus knew he would likely have only a short tenure as chief of the Combat Arms Command, so he cut through the Army’s overly bureaucratic doctrinal development methodology in order to get a new counterinsurgency doctrine written in one year. Upon assuming command of the CAC General Petraeus organized a small, specially selected group of army and Marine Corps officers and civilian experts under the leadership of retired Lieutenant Colonel and PhD Conrad Crane. The team was given the broad mission to develop a new, comprehensive counterinsurgency doctrine to respond to the challenges facing the US military in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to be a foundation for future thinking. The doctrine writing itself was carried out

in an open, academic manner. The style of the doctrine was to be more of a book format, and to be written in clear English, eschewing the usual barely readable Army doctrine style. The first draft of the doctrine was published in February 2006 and representatives from all US Military services, from the State Department, from allied nations and from academia and NGOs were all invited to Ft. Leavenworth for a two day conference in order to hear presentations on the chapter drafts, to question and debate the doctrine authors, and to provide comments on the published drafts. Through 2006 the author team reviewed the comments, refined and developed its counterinsurgency doctrine. General Petraeus reviewed and personally approved the several drafts of the doctrine as it evolved. The final version of the doctrine was essentially a combination of classical counterinsurgency theory and practice with a few new elements, such social network analysis and a thorough exposition of the role of leadership in counterinsurgency. One of the new and original elements of the counterinsurgency doctrine was an annex of the doctrine, Annex E, that was devoted to “Airpower in Counterinsurgency.” In December 2006 the Army and Marine Corps published their first comprehensive counterinsurgency doctrine since the Vietnam War, *Field Manual FM 3-24*, also published as *Marine Corps Doctrine MCWP 3-33.5*.

The new US doctrine generated worldwide interest. In the first 24 hours that it was available tens of thousand of electronic copies of the doctrine were downloaded. A civilian publisher quickly brought out a copy of the doctrine which has sold in the tens of thousands of copies.¹³ Very few issues of any military manual have ever generated as much interest as this one or been as widely read.

The first part of the Army/Marine Airpower doctrine described airpower as an important support arm and force multiplier, as part of a joint force.¹⁴ In keeping with the tone of the whole doctrine, airpower, as was all aspects of military power, is seen as just one part of a comprehensive whole. Describing airpower as a support arm in no way denigrates the contribution of airpower. The doctrine also repeatedly points out that the military should not be the lead force for may of the major elements of counterinsurgency. The doctrine stresses that parts of the counterinsurgency mission that include nation building, police training and civil infrastructure development are best led by civilian agencies with the military serving in support.

In setting guidelines for the employment of airpower in counterinsurgency, the Army/Marine doctrine briefly describes the main missions of airpower in counterinsurgency—strike, transport, surveillance, medevac. The doctrine noted previous examples of counterinsurgency campaigns in which airpower had played a key role in supporting the government forces.¹⁵

However, while pointing out the positive aspects of airpower some of the negatives were also addressed. The most notable and controversial subject addressed was the collateral damage that is often caused by airstrikes has a powerful propaganda effect for the insurgents. The doctrine did not argue against using airpower in the strike role, only that the use of airpower as firepower had to be thought through carefully in light of the likely political effects.¹⁶ The Airpower Annex of FM 3-24 notes, “Even when destroying an obvious insurgent headquarters or command center, counterinsurgents must take care to minimize civilian casualties. New, precise munitions with smaller blast effects can limit collateral damage. When considering the risk of civilian casualties, commanders must weigh collateral damage against the unintended consequences of taking no action. Avoiding all risk may embolden insurgents while providing them sanctuary. The proper and well-executed use of aerial attack can conserve resources, increase effectiveness, and reduce risk to U.S. forces. Given timely, accurate intelligence, precisely delivered weapons with a demonstrated low failure rate, appropriate yield, and proper fuse can achieve desired effects while mitigating adverse effects. However, inappropriate or indiscriminate use of air strikes can erode popular support and fuel insurgent propaganda. For these reasons, commanders should consider the use of air strikes carefully during COIN operations, neither disregarding them outright nor employing them excessively.”¹⁷

This caution about the use of airpower is not a condemnation of airpower or an advisory not to employ airpower. This caution merely follows one of the primary tenets of FM 3-24 – that the counterinsurgent must always be aware of the long term and political consequences of using force. In short, each commander must consider using force in terms of a cost benefit analysis—the immediate and long term benefits of using an air strike versus the long term political costs. It also means that the counterinsurgents must have a highly competent media and strategy team and must be ready to respond quickly and effectively to criticisms that will

inevitably be leveled— by foes and even allies—whenever airpower is employed.

Paragraph E-16 addresses the positive contribution made by US high tech assets—with space and advanced surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities playing a key role in operations today. At the same time, and operating in the historical vein of the whole doctrine, the doctrine pointed out that the lower end of the technology scale also has a highly useful role to play. Third World allies with very limited resources have found very effective ways for light and inexpensive aircraft and simple “off the shelf technology” to be used effectively in several roles.¹⁸

An important section of the US Army and Marine counterinsurgency doctrine provides a set of guidelines for building the capability of host nation air forces.¹⁹ This annex, Annex E, is linked to one of FM 3-24’s longest chapters, “Chapters 6: Training Host Nation Security forces.” The doctrine stresses that, “Developing effective host nation security forces is one of the highest priority counterinsurgency tasks.”²⁰ A core doctrine of modern counterinsurgency is that the counterinsurgency effort must be focused on helping the host nation fight and win its own internal war. A foreign nation or coalition can buy time, provide aid and advisors, training, and support. But, in the end, the goal must be for coalition allies to enable the host nation capabilities so that the host nation can stand on its own feet.

The Army/Marine doctrine stressed the effort that US and coalition partners should undertake to help the host nation build an air force and conduct its own air operations. Because US aviation equipment tends to be very expensive and complex, and beyond the capability of all but a few air forces to operate, the equipment for a third world allied nation ought to be low tech that is capable enough to fulfill the core missions of counterinsurgency, but still simple and inexpensive enough for a third world nation to operate with minimal support from outside.

The publication of a capstone joint service doctrine with an annex titled “Airpower in counterinsurgency” quickly got the attention of the US Air Force. According to those involved in the doctrine process, some senior US Air Force officers questioned whether it was even appropriate for the US Army and Marine to write an airpower doctrine. The Army and Marine doctrine writers had, in fact, anticipated a protest on these grounds by the

US Air Force and in the introduction to the Airpower Annex had defined airpower broadly as consisting of all manned and unmanned aerial and space vehicles, thereby making the point that if you define airpower broadly, then the Army with its huge helicopter force and large number of tactical UAVs, and the Marines with their tactical air wings and fighter bombers, certainly have enough airpower to write a doctrine for it.

4. The New US Air Force Counterinsurgency Doctrine

The pace in which the Army and Marines produced a new counterinsurgency doctrine prompted the US Air Force to produce a major counterinsurgency doctrine document only seven months after General Petraeus published the Army/Marine doctrine.

Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3, *Irregular Warfare* (1 August 2007) is a 94-page document detailing the Air Force's vision of the employment of airpower in counterinsurgency.

On several major points the US Air Force doctrine agrees with the Army/Marine doctrine. In a major, and fundamental, concession to the other services, the Air Force doctrine clearly states that counterinsurgency can only be understood and effective as a joint effort. Furthermore, the Air Force doctrine agreed with the Army and Marines as to the true center of gravity in counterinsurgency operations, "The COG for both the counterinsurgency and the insurgency is usually some segment of the relevant population."²¹

However, in most respects the two doctrines stand in notable contrast with each other in style, methodology, and substance. Indeed, the two doctrines reflect two fundamentally different service cultures. The Army and Marine doctrine relies heavily on historical experience and emphasizes traditional counterinsurgency strategies such as the principle of legitimacy. There are a few new elements in the Army/Marine doctrine, such as models for analyzing social networks. However, the main elements of the Army/Marine doctrine are familiar to anyone familiar with classic counterinsurgency theory and practice. The Army/Marine authors of FM 3-24 rejected the notion that technology is the dominant factor in counterinsurgency. In fact, the doctrine argues that most aspects of modern counterinsurgency are not new developments and that historical experience is very relevant.

The US Air Force's counterinsurgency doctrine, Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3, *Irregular Warfare* (August 2007), takes a completely different approach to the subject of airpower and counterinsurgency. The USAF generally ignored America's historical experience in counterinsurgency and instead focused on highlighting how the current high tech USAF could fight insurgents. The vital mission of training the host nation air forces to fight their own war is hardly mentioned, and there is little in the content of the doctrine that supports the notion of host nation legitimacy.²² The mission of training host nation forces is mentioned only on a few pages, and then the mission is described as an optional one—not as an essential mission. “The US government *may* (author's italics) need to make equipment and training available to the PN (partner nation) and its allies.”²³ “AGS (Agile Combat support) leadership *may* (author's italics) assess a PN's (partner nation's) ACS feasibility...”²⁴ In contrast with this minimalist approach to supporting the host nation, every part of the USAF doctrine stresses the USAF high tech capabilities. In short, the Air Force doctrine is essentially a public relations document laying out how the USAF will employ American airpower to win the host nation's internal war, with the host nation—the people who the counterinsurgency effort is all about-- are scarcely featured.

Some senior leaders in the US Air Force, most notably Major General Charles Dunlap of the Air Staff, strongly disagreed with the US Army/Marine Corps counterinsurgency doctrine and argued in a series of critical articles and books for a very different approach to counterinsurgency than the one proposed by the US Army and Marine Corps. In a book published by Air University Press and in articles in the *Joint Force Quarterly*—the main intellectual Journal of the US armed forces – General Dunlap accused the authors of the Army/Marine doctrine of being too traditional and hidebound in their approach to counterinsurgency.²⁵ In a 125 –page book rushed out by the Air University Press upon the publication of the Army/Marine counterinsurgency doctrine, Dunlap strongly criticized FM 3-24 because it “undervalues technology.”²⁶ He argued that the Air Force could bring “air mindedness” to counterinsurgency—although it hard to make the case that the thousands of Marine Corps and Army aviators somehow lack the understanding of airpower that the wearing of Air Force blue seems to bring.²⁷ General Dunlap repeats a common theme in his books and articles

that the Army/Marine counterinsurgency doctrine is flawed because of its “ground-centric” approach orientation.²⁸

Dunlap consistently argues from the high tech preference of the US Air Force culture. In one article Dunlap pointed out that, “the Air Force identifies the past with obsolescence and for the air weapon, obsolescence equates to defeat. This is why, for example, FM 3-24’s heavy reliance on experiences in long-past counterinsurgency efforts does not always resonate with Airmen the same way it does with Soldiers.”²⁹ Dunlap also explains the US Air Force’s reluctance to look at historical experience in developing its counterinsurgency doctrine, “Examining the past for “lessons learned” is certainly something Airmen value, but they know that today’s capabilities easily dwarf yesterday’s technological limit. Historical models are of limited value in an Airman’s mind because of the nature of the air weapon gives him a keen appreciation of how quickly technological change can alter the warfighting equation.”³⁰

Yet the Air Force approach to doctrine does not hold up well to scrutiny. The core of the Air Force doctrine consists of data about Air Force high tech capabilities, a repetition of slogans found in Air Staff statements, and broad assertions about airpower with no examples to back up the assertions. Indeed, there is little evidence as to why the Air Force assertions must be right. In short, what the Air Force produced is best described as a “faith –based doctrine.” Indeed, while senior Air Force officers have often accused the Army and Marine Corps for being hidebound and holding onto rigid traditional formulas, in fact, in its counterinsurgency doctrine it appears that the US Air Force is endlessly stuck in with the conventional, high tech war model as it expresses the same doubtful dogmas that made their appearance in the aftermath of Gulf War I almost 20 years ago. Try as you will—successful counterinsurgency cannot center on technology in the way that a conventional war does. Insurgency and counterinsurgency centers on politics and human interaction—not on destroying infrastructure and equipment. The Army/Marine doctrine is admittedly ground-centric, not because those services are bound to traditions, but because the doctrine writers of those services understand that the effort in counterinsurgency must center on winning the support of the population and in securing the population from the insurgents. Populations cannot be secured, a nation’s political, social and economic problems cannot be addressed, and infrastructure cannot be built from 30,000 feet. In short, today the US military is stuck with

essentially two competing airpower doctrines, one of which fails to address some of the most important core issues in counterinsurgency.

5. Airpower, Media and Insurgent Propaganda

Certainly one of the core issues in counterinsurgency today is the means by which non-state groups, insurgents, and terrorist forces have developed a strategy to limit the use of airpower by the major Western powers. Since insurgents and terrorists have few means to directly counter Western airpower, the insurgents' best alternative is to make it difficult for their enemies to employ airpower effectively. Insurgents and terrorist groups have found that they can limit the use of Western airpower by means of a skillful media and propaganda campaign. Even when airpower is employed, the media campaign of the non-state forces can turn every airstrike into a propaganda victory. Indeed, the insurgent/terrorist media campaign has become the most effective single weapon to counter the Western powers' airpower advantage.

The effective use of the mass media by revolutionaries and insurgents is nothing new. Richard McKenna's famous 1962 novel, *The Sand Pebbles*, though a work of fiction, still accurately depicts the confusion and frustration of US military officers on a gunboat in Chinese waters when they are confronted the anti-Western propaganda campaign of the Chinese revolutionaries in the 1920s. McKenna had been a US Navy "China sailor" in that era, and had lived many events described in his novel. It was a time when a conventionally trained US military force with superior technology found itself unable to deal with an enemy whose way of war included propaganda and mass demonstrations more than fighting. His description of the revolutionaries' use of newspapers, mass agitation and pamphlets in the 1920s rings true for any US officer confronting irregular warfare today.

In the novel, Lieutenant Collins USN, Captain of the *USS San Pablo*, a gunboat stationed on the Yangtze River in 1926, tells his crew about receiving orders to restrict their operations to keep order in revolutionary China: "For instance, our little sortie against the river pirates last month, they fired first, and we killed only one pirate. But the consul has a clipping from a local newspaper stating that we killed 30 unarmed people, including women and children. They have suddenly begun making fantastic charges against gunboats on the main river. That is why we have new orders not to

fire back blindly against ambushers, because if we do the students will make a big lie of each occasion. We are up against lying as a matter of planned strategy.... We are fighting lies now, not armed men.”³¹ What Collins describes in 1926 is a very familiar scene to American soldiers combating enemies in Iraq, to NATO forces fighting in Afghanistan, or Israeli forces trying to suppress Hezbollah attacks.

It is not a question of irregular factions targeting airpower, per se, but targeting the technological advantage of the major powers. In the 1920s the Western technological advantage was the gunboat. Today, insurgents and non-state forces confronting Western regular military forces will usually focus their propaganda efforts against the airpower advantage of the counterinsurgent forces. In many respects, airpower is the most obvious symbol of the Western way of war. Artillery and mortars and infantry weapons probably cause far more civilian casualties and collateral damage in Iraq and Afghanistan than airplanes—but airpower provides the most dramatic example of Western advantage and Western oppression and get far more press attention.

One reason why airpower is a special target of insurgent propaganda is that it is easy to make fantastic charges against air forces and accuse them of deliberately bombing civilians. This is because when air is the primary weapon the insurgent still controls the ground at the end of the day. Holding the ground means that the insurgent also controls the story—and accusations of brutality through airpower makes great for sensational news stories. In authoritarian and third world states the news media is notoriously dishonest and, at best, unreliable, normally serving the agenda of a state or party with little regard to the journalistic standards of democratic nations. Yet the Western media, which is supposed to have some objective standards, routinely print insurgent and radical group casualty claims without disclaimer or critical evaluation – even while repeated for Western audiences ludicrously high figures of civilian casualties and damage.

One of the most common critiques made by officers involved in counterinsurgency operations around the world is that the counterinsurgent forces are doing very poorly in employing the media to get the government message out— while the insurgent, terrorist, and radical groups are using the media very effectively.³² For one thing, insurgents, radical groups, and the states that support them, are not

hindered by any requirement to stick to the truth. Disinformation campaigns and deliberate falsifications are standard methods of attacking the legitimacy of counterinsurgency operations, and in whipping up local and world opinion against the US and Coalition allies.

Placing military units and heavy weapons in the midst of civilian, and using civilian facilities as the bases for military attacks has been a standard tactic of Middle Eastern non-state groups such as the PLO, Hezbollah and Iraqi insurgents. This is, in effect, a win-win tactic for modern insurgents facing Western forces. On one side, Western military forces face pressure at home to keep civilian casualties to a minimum and to not inflict collateral damage. So, by placing military personnel and weapons among civilians non-state groups can deter attacks and limit the ability of a major air force to target their forces. If the Western forces do act to destroy enemy forces located among civilians, then the resulting civilian casualties will be shown to the world as evidence of Western brutality and win sympathetic media coverage in the world press for the insurgent and terrorist groups that use this tactic. Of course, using civilians as human shields in this manner is expressly against International Law and the Laws of Warfare. But although there are many documented cases of such behavior—by the PLO in Lebanon for example—there is apparently no interest to prosecute the offenders or hold them responsible for such war crimes.³³ In places such as the UN and in European parliaments there commonly exists a double standard, in which Western forces are held to the most stringent standards, and third world irregular forces given a free pass for even the most horrendous acts of terrorism against civilians and repeated violations of international law. When the Israelis did target PLO heavy weapons in Lebanon in the 1982 invasion, some international organizations and much of the world press referred to Israeli air operations as “terror bombing” and “indiscriminate bombing of Muslim civilians.”³⁴ In fact, the reported figures of hundreds of civilian casualties after thousands of Israeli air sorties refute the charges that the attacks were indiscriminate. With over 600 modern combat aircraft in the IAF inventory the Israelis could have simply leveled every Lebanese city with relative ease.

The dilemma of fighting an irregular enemy that uses civilians as a shield is not unique to Israel. It is now a standard practice in the Middle East. There irregular forces exhibit a callous disregard for civilian casualties if it suits their purpose. Insurgents have also used the civilians as a shield tactics regularly in Iraq. In the fighting in Fallujah in 2004 the Iraqi insurgents

placed munitions and weapons in twenty mosques, and routinely used mosques as fighting positions this forced the Americans to rely to fire from mosques with the consequent bad press. Of course, targeting a mosque that is being used as a military installation is a perfectly acceptable act under the laws of war. Yet, although the US employs precision weapons, and tries to keep damage to mosques to a minimum, there was just enough damage in Fallujah to ensure that insurgents could portray the conflict there as Americans attacking Islam—a theme that resonates throughout the Arab nations and helps further radicalize the Islamic opinion against the West.

Israel's strike into Lebanon in 2006, carried out in response to Hezbollah rocket attacks against Israeli towns, illustrates the exceptional ability that irregular third world forces have developed to manipulate the Western media through disinformation.

In contrast to earlier Israeli incursions into Lebanon, the Israelis relied primarily upon airpower, rather than ground forces, to stop the Hezbollah attacks. Thousands of sorties were flown by the Israeli Air Force that employed mostly precision bombs under careful rules of engagement. As with other Western Powers, the Israeli Defense Forces, for the first (and probably last) time under command of an Air Force general, overestimated the capability of Israel's large and highly sophisticated air force to take down the Hezbollah forces and stop the attacks. By relying so heavily upon airpower, the Israeli defense forces failed to plan for a ground campaign to occupy southern Lebanon. Instead, airpower was used on a massive scale with 11,800 sorties flown over Lebanon in the seven weeks of conflict in the summer of 2006. The Israeli's claim that, for the massive tonnage of bombs dropped, that civilian casualties were very low and that their rules of engagement had been successful in limiting civilian casualties. The Israelis claim that the many thousands of tons of bombs it dropped killed only 1,187 civilians—and this claim is highly probable. Still, even a huge air campaign using some of the most sophisticated surveillance and strike resources in the world failed to stop Hezbollah from firing thousands of rockets into Israel. In the end, a considerable number of Israeli ground forces were required and the campaign concluded with Hezbollah battered but still in the field. Even by Israeli accounts, the war was a moral victory for Hezbollah.³⁵

The problem was that in relying upon airpower, Hezbollah was on the ground at the end of the day and had complete control over the story at the end of the day. Journalists operating in Lebanon were under the complete control of Hezbollah. They could see what Hezbollah allowed them, talk to whom Hezbollah allowed and could only repeat the story Hezbollah provided them – under the threat of being expelled from Lebanon for non cooperation or be detained as hostages if the journalists strayed from the story. The conflict was characterized by an appalling lack of competence on the side of the Israelis to get their message out to the world—how their town and civilians were being deliberately targeted by Hezbollah rockets while the international news coverage largely ignored this and uncritically accepted the Hezbollah view. The Hezbollah position included not only huge claims of civilian casualties, but many doctored photographs showing dramatic images of civilian suffering that made it to the top journals in the world to include the New York Times. In fact, many of the images found in the international media had been posed, doctored and manipulated as pure Hezbollah propaganda. But in the media it is the first image that matters, and the later expose of the earlier false image is often scarcely noticed. In short, Hezbollah won the media and information war hands down. Israel might have won some military victories—but the political victory belonged to Hezbollah.³⁶

Because aerial attack is automatically viewed in the Third World as cruel and heavy-handed, it creates a paradox for policymakers. While airpower is often the most effective means to strike at insurgents and terrorists, its use will provoke outcry in many quarters of Western society and throughout the Third World. In short, there is a heavy political price to pay when airpower in the form of air strikes is used.³⁷

6. The International Media's View of the Afghanistan Air Campaign of 2001

Even under ideal conditions airpower gets very bad treatment in the third world and even in the Western media. The best illustration of the abuse that Western airpower gets in the world's media comes not from a bombing campaign, but from the very successful program to deliver food to starving Afghans in 2001.

In October 2001 when the US initiated an air campaign to take down the Taliban government of Afghanistan the opening of the air campaign featured USAF transport aircraft dropping food to starving Afghans who had been cut off from humanitarian food shipments by the Taliban regime. It was a unique air campaign, dropping thousands of tons of food to save starving civilians while simultaneously striking the Taliban's military targets with precision bombs. The humanitarian side of the operation, the food drops, had an operational purpose as well. Feeding Afghans in their home villages ensured that they would not migrate in search of food and enter into active combat zones where the probability that they would either become abused by the Taliban, or caught in crossfire, was very high.

If the Western and third world media has routinely reacted negatively to Western air forces dropping bombs on irregulars and terrorists, then one might think that those same air forces dropping food to starving people might get a more positive response.

In fact, in a 2004 study examining the news coverage of the humanitarian food drops of 2001 in 64 major newspapers and news magazines from the US to the Europe, the Middle East and Asia it is clear that the overwhelming majority of the stories pictured the American food airdrops in a negative light. Every criticism of from NGOs and from people claiming Middle Eastern expertise was magnified and repeated. The hard facts of the story-- that starving people were indeed being fed by airdrop -- was downplayed.³⁸

In short, the use of airpower – even airpower in its most benign and humanitarian form of saving lives and feeding the starving—is turned into a propaganda defeat in the hands of third world and even Western European media. So strong is the media bias against the American military that the use of airpower in any form by the West can sometimes appear to be a “lose/lose” situation.

In Afghanistan as the counterinsurgency air war waged by NATO forces has progressed, it has been characterized by the world media by exaggerated and often false claims of civilian casualties. The same bomb attack produces news stories with civilian casualty estimates ranging from 20 enemy fighters killed with no civilian casualties to no soldiers killed and 80 innocent civilians dead. Despite the huge discrepancies, only the US forces seem to make any real effort to verify and inspect the damage and produce accurate reports. The Afghans themselves under the Karzai

government seem ready to sometimes make claims of huge civilian losses caused by the air strikes of their allies. This is certainly a way to distance the Karzai regime from its dependence on Coalition firepower. Unfortunately, these grossly inflated, and often highly improbably claims and accusations of mass civilian casualties are accepted uncritically by international organizations as well as by much of the Western media.

Just one example of widely divergent press coverage was air strikes on the Taliban forces on 22 August 2008. By the US account, Coalition forces were fired on first by the Taliban. The NATO forces called in air strikes. Afterwards, the Afghani armed forces (Afghani Western Command) AND the Taliban publically claimed that no Taliban had been killed by the air strike --but that 90 innocent civilians died—15 men, 15 women and 60 children were all killed. This was uncritically accepted by the UN. The US headquarters sent officers to conduct a thorough on-site investigation and collect evidence—as such claims are taken very seriously by the US military. The reality, compiled after a complete investigation, was that the air strike had killed 25 Taliban and 5 civilians. Furious at the political tactics employed by their Afghani allies, the US military spokesman called the claims by the Karzai regime forces “outrageous.”³⁹

However, the anti-airpower barrage in the media, no matter how improbable or implausible the stories, has actually worked to greatly limit the use of strike airpower by US and NATO forces. The year 2009 saw a major decrease in the number of air strikes in Afghanistan due to a policy of limiting civilian casualties and bad press. In the summer of 2009 NATO fixed-wing aircraft dropped 1,211 bombs and other munitions compared with 2,366 bombs during the same period in 2008. General Stanley McChrystal, the US Commander in Afghanistan, published new directives limiting the circumstances in which commanders could call for air strikes. McChrystal stated in September 2009, "Destroying a home or property jeopardizes the livelihood of an entire family — and creates more insurgents."⁴⁰ The perception that airstrikes caused excessive civilian casualties was stated as the main reason for the limits placed on aerial bombing.⁴¹

7. The Solution to the Media War— Building Indigenous COIN Air Forces

As difficult as the problem of the media war is, the Western forces in places like Iraq and Afghanistan have a solution at hand to bring airpower back into the battle. The problem is not necessarily the employment of airpower against insurgents and non-state forces—it is the people flying the planes and dropping the bombs. In Afghanistan you have Christian, American or Western pilots, under US or NATO command, flying high tech Western aircraft and dropping bombs on Moslem, Afghani tribesmen. The clash of cultures is the key feature in these scenarios. It is also the involvement of the Western powers that makes the use of airpower so newsworthy.

Let me propose another scenario. You have a Moslem, Afghani pilot, under Afghani command, flying an Afghani Air Force aircraft dropping bombs on Moslem Afghani tribesmen. Same effect on these insurgents—but now there is literally no media interest, no outcry. The question is—is such a scenario realizable? If past experience is any guide—indeed it is.

From the 1940s to the 1990s the US Air Force had a remarkably effective record in building and training counterinsurgency air forces for American's small nation and third world allies. In Greece between 1947 and 1949 the United States helped the Greeks train and develop a highly capable close air support air force that played a key role in decisive battles that defeated the insurgents in 1949. In the Philippines in the 1940s and 1950s the USAF helped build an exceptionally effective Philippines Air Force that helped defeat the communist Huk rebellion. In the 1960s the greatest success story of the US advisory support to South Vietnam was the development of the South Vietnamese Air Force, by far the most effective of South Vietnam's service branches. A less well-known story, but one that illustrates the exceptional competence of USAF training teams was the effort to train Laotian pilots to fly T-28 fighter bombers against the communist forces. In the late 1960s, and early 1970s, with few losses, the Laotian Air Force was remarkably effective—destroying more North Vietnamese trucks on the Ho Chi Minh Trail than the US 7th Air Force's high tech jets.⁴²

The USAF helped the Thai government build up an effective counterinsurgency air force in the 1970s. From 1981 to 1992 the US Army

and Air Force helped build and train a highly effective counterinsurgency air force for El Salvador. Since the 1990s, the US military has aided the Colombians to build up their air force to be one of the most successful counterinsurgency air forces in the world. Since Plan Colombia and was initiated by the Colombian government in 2002, the Colombians have broken the back of the FARC rebel insurgency—driving their numbers from more than 20,000 at the start of the decade to less than 6,000 in 2009. Airpower in every form—strike, precision bombing, troop transport, and surveillance—have all played important roles in the Colombians' success. Yet, although the Colombians use airpower extensively in the strike role, and even employ Kfir fighter bombers using precision guided bombs against rebel headquarters, there is no notice in the world media, nor is there any condemnation of Colombia for using many of the same tactics and following the same rules that NATO follows in Afghanistan. That is because it is a matter of Colombian aircraft and Colombian pilots under Colombian command dropping bombs on rebel Colombians.

Yet, despite the impressive record of American forces in helping foreign allies develop very effective air forces for the counterinsurgency battle, this mission is not one that receives much attention. Arguably, the success generated by the air advisory and aid programs have been the one of the most cost effective and successful uses of airpower in the last 60 years. Moreover, the strategic effects of this employment of airpower have been impressive. With the air effort and US aviation assistance playing an important role, allied countries in the case of Greece, the Philippines, Thailand, and El Salvador all successfully managed to put down major insurgencies. But this low tech and low key approach to conflict does not fit in the USAF mainstream culture. So for decades the mission has been shunted off to the Special Operations Command—a force well outside the mainstream of USAF operations. In the Special Operations Command, a very small cadre was established—until recently only one squadron, that specializes in the airpower advisory and training mission.

Before 9-11 the US Air Force had fewer than 200 personnel in the 6th Special Operations Squadron that had the worldwide mission of training foreign air forces. Since 2001 there has been only a modest expansion of the 6th Special Operations Squadron. However, the USAF has finally moved to expand the unit to a group or even wing size. Yet the small force dedicated to the training mission still remains far too small for the

worldwide effort of supporting small nation allies in the war against radical movements and terrorists.

Standing up capable indigenous forces ought to be the central focus of any American counterinsurgency effort. Considering the success in past operations--all waged at low cost and with relatively few personnel -- the benefits of training and supporting small nation air forces is obvious. Yet the cultural preferences of the US military are to view US military operations as the main effort and the training and equipping of foreign forces as a very secondary mission. In Iraq, the US Army and Marines did not make building the Iraqi army a priority mission until 2005. Little was done to begin building an Iraqi air force until a few small efforts by the USAF began in 2006 when the USAF set up a command created specifically to train and advise the Iraq air force. The USAF 370th Expeditionary Advisory Squadron is currently working with the nascent Iraqi Air Force to provide training for enlisted personnel but progress is very slow and the Iraqis, who once had one of the largest air forces in the Middle East, have a very small military aviation force.⁴³

Because of a lack of interest in the training mission, the Iraqis and Afghans are now years behind in any effort to field capable counterinsurgency air forces. The issue of time is especially important for air forces, because it takes much more time to build an air force than it does an army. The Afghans have been asking for assistance to build an air force for years and in 2005 the Afghani Defense Minister Rahim Wardak requested that the US supply him with Apache helicopter gunships and A-10 ground attack planes.⁴⁴ Of course, it is extremely doubtful that the Afghans could currently maintain and support equipment as sophisticated as the A-10 and Apache helicopters. Yet these relatively sophisticated weapons are not the only solution. There has been little effort to train the Afghans and to find simple and easy to maintain aircraft for their aviation force. As in Iraq, the USAF gave a very low priority to building an Afghani air force. At the current slow pace of building the Afghan Air Corps, Afghanistan will have no more than one helicopter battalion to support its troops in the field in 2010 and the Afghans will remain almost completely dependent upon the US and Western nations for years to come.⁴⁵

One reason for the slow progress today is that the US and NATO allies do not currently have a readily available a fleet of less sophisticated trainer or

surplus combat aircraft that Iraqis, Afghanis or third world allies could operate and maintain effectively. A key element of the success of building, training and advising small nation counterinsurgency air forces from the 1940s to the 1980s was the ready availability of rugged, inexpensive, easy to fly, capable military surplus aircraft or simple trainers that could be adapted to the counterinsurgency light strike role. In providing the right aircraft to small nations, especially third world nations, simplicity, ease of maintenance and cost are all important qualities. In short, a low tech approach has proven to work.

In countries such as Colombia today, the A-37, a modified trainer, or the Brazilian-made Super Tucano fighter bomber, also a modified trainer design, have proven to be exceptionally effective strike aircraft. Unfortunately, the US is no longer producing the A-37 and there are no suitable American-manufactured counterinsurgency aircraft readily available. Nor are the European aircraft industries producing suitable aircraft specifically for the light strike role in counterinsurgency.

Luckily, there are some good solutions available. One possibility discussed in the US Air Force is to adapt the Raytheon T-6 turboprop trainer into a light counterinsurgency strike aircraft. The T-6 is inexpensive, easy to operate and maintain, and can be modified to carry weapons. It is already in production.⁴⁶ On the other hand, a purpose built counterinsurgency aircraft would likely do the mission more effectively – and still be inexpensive and simple to operate. For example, in 2003 a group of designers and manufacturers formed the U.S. Aircraft Corporation and began to design a simple and inexpensive counterinsurgency aircraft. The result is the A-67 Dragon, a light two-seater turboprop specifically designed for survivability (armored cockpit), light strike, and long endurance. Its simplicity ensures that a third world air force can operate and maintain it. The low cost makes it possible for the United States to provide it in adequate numbers to allied nations. The A-67 has several features that are important for counterinsurgency. It has long endurance, over 10 hours, which means it can keep a large area under surveillance for a long time. In fact, the use of aircraft in the surveillance role has historically been one of the most effective means of observing insurgent activity and inhibiting insurgent movement.

Another concept for small air forces air support is the gunship, modified from light transport aircraft. The old C-47 transport plane, armed with

three .50 caliber machine guns, was used as a gunship in El Salvador and was the most effective close air support aircraft of the Salvadoran Air Force in its successful counterinsurgency war. Other twin-engine transports such as the Israeli Arava have been modified and armed with 40mm and 20mm cannon to make lethal gunships. At this time, the U.S. Aircraft Corporation is experimenting with modifying the CASA 212 twin-engine transport as a gunship. This is a very worthy path to follow. In the case of the light strike counterinsurgency plane and the gunship, good solutions have been found in short order. The problem only lies in the lack of investment and interest in simple low tech platforms in the USAF Air Staff.

There are many other areas where a simple solution might prove effective. Small air forces do not need highly sophisticated and expensive American-style UAVs that are designed to penetrate sophisticated air defense systems. Given the more benign environment, a cheap and simple UAV is appropriate and could be managed by the Afghani or Iraqi air forces.

The U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command has shown a good deal of interest in these low tech initiatives and is currently expanding its efforts and experimenting with various low tech concepts. While the new USAF counterinsurgency doctrine represents the mainstream thinking in the USAF leadership, the USAF Special Operations community-- the one part of the USAF that has considerable knowledge and training in counterinsurgency--takes a very different approach. The 6th Special Operations Squadron currently operates a variety of low tech equipment such as the simple Mi-17 helicopter and the A-37, and the Air Force Special Operations forces are skilled in the advisory and training mission.

A good sign is that the importance of the aviation advisory mission and helping allies build counterinsurgency air forces is getting attention and support from some fairly mainstream sources. A 2006 Rand Corporation Study for the Air Force examined the demand for advising and training host nation air forces--and argued that it was considerable. The Rand experts noted the urgent heavy demand for training and advising third world allied air forces and argued that the number of USAF personnel assigned to this mission is far too few for the task. Rand's Project Air Force panel recommended that the depth and breadth of the USAF specialist personnel for the training and advisory mission be significantly increased. Rand recommended creating a wing-level organization devoted

to the training and advisory mission and the current force structure of one squadron expanded to several squadrons.⁴⁷

Recently, a major study by Col. Thomas P. Erhard (USAF ret.) of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments addressed the long term requirements for the US Air Force in facing irregular opponents in the next decades. Ehrhard came out strongly in favor of improving and increasing our support mission to small allied air forces and in looking for imaginative ways to adapt low tech platforms for small nations facing insurgencies.⁴⁸ What is notable about Ehrhard is that he served formerly on the USAF Air Staff and does not come from the Special Operations community.

Conclusion

While there is no airpower solution to counterinsurgency, there is certainly a large role for airpower. Airpower can bring firepower, transport, reconnaissance and constant presence to the fight—and these are all things that the counterinsurgency force needs. Currently, the greatest obstacles to doing this mission are not material ones—but what lies in our own minds and our own military cultures. Operations involving supporting small allies and employing low tech solutions in long term operations goes strongly against the prevailing US military culture—and especially the culture of the US Air Force preference for high technology and rapid, decisive operations. Yet, success in counterinsurgency and stability operations comes from a series of small successes—not grand ones. And it all takes time.

While the US senior military leadership is reluctant to embrace the aviation advisory and aid mission as the preferred means to defeat insurgents, we can be optimistic that that message is now getting beyond the small circle of airpower and small wars experts and winning support from many more mainstream airpower experts. Hopefully, and sooner rather than later, the US Air Force will recognize the importance of the low tech approach and the aid and advisory mission and allocate the necessary priority and resources to make such a program work. Counterinsurgency operations are not going away-- and the US and Western allies need to craft an appropriate, long term strategy to deal with insurgencies and to help embattled nations. Recognizing the importance of the training and

advisory mission to small air forces, and committing adequate personnel and funding to this mission would be an important step forward.

¹ The author is referring to his own experience in working for the US Air Force from 1991 to 2004 as a professor at SAASS—the USAir force’s premier school for strategists. In those thirteen years I had close contact with the USAF Air Staff and many of the leading Air Force thinkers and strategists around the world.

² On the US military’s lessons from Gulf War One and the belief that the conflict represented a fundamental change in the nature of war see James S. Corum, *Fighting the War on Terror* (St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2007) pp. 51-82.

³ Cited in Thomas Keaney and Eliot Cohen, *Revolution in Warfare?* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1995) p. 188.

⁴ *International Herald Tribune*, 11 May 2000.

⁵ See Draft Rand Report, *Disjointed War: Military Operations in Kosovo*, 1999. See also Allied Force Munitions Assessment Team, *Kosovo Strike Assessment Final Report*, 14 October 1999.

⁶ See the “DOD Report to Congress: Kosovo/ Operation Allied Force After Action Report,” 31 January 2000. Even after the conflict and indications were clear that the damage to the Serb forces was overestimated, the US Defense Department argued that it had hit 60% of its targets in the campaign and the “confirmed figures were given as: Serbe weapons destroyed—93 Tanks, 153 APCs, 339 Military vehicles and 389 artillery pieces and mortars.. See pages 80, 85-86.

⁷ A good intellectual expression of this view is provided by Richard Andres, Craig Wills, and Thomas Griffith, “Winning with Allies: the Strategic Value of the Afghan Model,” *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3, Winter 2005, 124-160.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ For a refutation of the Andres, Griffith article see Stephen Biddle, “Allies, Airpower and Modern Warfare: The Afghani Model in Afghanistan and Iraq,” *International Security* Vol. 30 No. 3 Winter 2005 161-176.

¹⁰ See Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for the Army and Defense Policy*, Strategic Studies Institute Monograph (Carlisle PA: Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, November 2002)

¹¹ There are many recent accounts of the failure of US strategy and leadership in Iraq. For one of the best accounts see Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (London: The Penguin Press, 2006)

¹² On the historical troop requirements needed for interventions and stability operations see James T. Quinlivan, “Force Requirements in Stability Operations”, *Parameters*, winter 1995, 59-69. Quinlivan points out that in Northern Ireland, Malaya, Bosnia and a host of other stability operations required as many as 20

soldiers per 1,000 civilians to effectively control the population. The US force ratio in Iraq from 2003-2005 was less than five soldiers to every 1,000 of the population.

¹³ Published as *The US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Manual*, forward by John Nagle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, July 2007)

¹⁴ FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency, Dec 2006. Annex E, para 1

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Annex E paras 1-4

¹⁶ *Ibid* paras 5-6

¹⁷ *Ibid* para E-6

¹⁸ *Ibid* para E -17

¹⁹ *Ibid* E-27-33

²⁰ FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (December, 2006) para 6-22.

²¹ AFDD 2-3 *Irregular Warfare* (August 2007) p. 48

²² AFDD 2-3 viii, 10.

²³ *Ibid.* 54.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 42.

²⁵ See Charles Dunlap, "Developing Joint Counterinsurgency Doctrine: An Airman's Perspective," *Joint Force Quarterly* No. 49 2nd Quarter, 2008, 86-92.

²⁶ Major General Charles Dunlap, *Shortchanging the Joint Fight? An Airman's Assessment of FM 3-24 and the Case for Developing Truly Joint COIN Doctrine*, (Maxwell Air force Base: Air University Press, 2007) 6.

²⁷ *Ibid* p. 7

²⁸ *Ibid* pp. 8-11.

²⁹ Major General Charles Dunlap, "Understanding Airmen: A Primer for Soldiers," *Military Review*, September-October, 2007. 126-130. See 127.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Richard McKenna, *The Sand Pebbles* (1962, Reprint: Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2000) 343.

³² I have polled students at the US Army Command and General Staff College, talked with Philippine officers fighting insurgents on Luzon and the southern Philippines, and talked with NATO officers dealing with insurgents in Afghanistan. All single out our weakness in using the media to get across the government message to the population.

³³ During Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the PLO placed artillery pieces and anti-aircraft guns in civilian neighborhoods, on the roofs of apartment houses, and even on hospital grounds. They hoped to provoke the Israelis to attack targets with the assurance of heavy civilian casualties. Still—an international group of

“peace activists” expressed little sympathy for the Israeli dilemma or any outrage against a clear violation of international law as they acted as apologists for clear violations of the laws of war by the PLO. See Chair Seán MacBride, *Israel in Lebanon: Report of the International Commissions to Enquire into Reported Violations of International Law by Israel during its Invasion of Lebanon* (London: The International Commission, 1983) 147. The international commission noted that the PLO had placed flak guns on top of civilian building, but said that attacks on such targets were illegal as the guns posed no threat. In fact, the Israeli Air Force lost several aircraft to AA fire.

³⁴ Ibid. 104, 146, 190-91.

³⁵ See Avi Kober, “The IDF and the Second Lebanese War, journal of Strategic Studies, vol. 31, Feb 2008, 3-40. This provides a very critical and detailed analysis of Israeli operations. See esp. pp 13 on civilian casualty claims and 17-21 on Israel’s overestimation of airpower.

³⁶ For some good studies of disinformation and Hezbollah’s media operations see Marvin Kalb, the Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006: the media as a weapon in asymmetrical conflict, Report of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, politics and Public policy (Harvard University, February 2007). For an analysis of doctored photos (especially Reuters) published by Western news agencies see John Burtis, “Media in Lebanon- the Fevered Manufacture of the Liberal Agenda,” *Canada Free Press*, 8 August 2006. A very thorough examination of the falsified photos in Lebanon is: Stephen D. Cooper, “Concise History of the Fauxtography Blogstorm in the 2006 Lebanon War,” *American Communication Journal* Vol. 9, No 2, Summer 2007.

³⁷ A very good analysis of the effectiveness of Israeli airpower in the 2006 Lebanon conflict is Sarah Kreps, “Air Power’s Role in Asymmetric Operations: The Case of the Second Lebanon War,” in *Air Power, Insurgency and the “War on Terror,”* ed. Joel Hayward, (RAF Centre for Air Power Studies: Cranwell, 2009). 141-156.

³⁸ See Major David Farrow, *Dropping bombs and Bread in Parallel: The Effects-based Food Drops of Operation Enduring Freedom*, SAASS Thesis (Maxwell AFB: Air University press, 2004)

³⁹ See “UN finds Airstrike Killed 90,” Washington post 22 August 2008. See also “Afghan officers say troops in raid were fired on first, *Los Angeles Times* 1 September 2008.

⁴⁰ “Airstrikes in Afghanistan drop by almost half, “ *USA TODAY*, 8 Sept 2009

⁴¹ “U.S. Tightens Airstrike Policy in Afghanistan, “ *New York Times*, June 22, 2009

⁴² For an overview of the role of airpower in the conflicts in Greece, Philippines, South Vietnam, El Salvador see James Corum and Wray Johnson, *Airpower in Small Wars* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003). On the success of the US training programs see James Corum, “Air Power and Counter-insurgency: Back to

the Basics,” in *Air Power, Insurgency and the “War on Terror,”* ed. Joel Hayward, (RAF Centre for Air Power Studies: Cranwell, 2009) 205-220. See esp. 218-220.

⁴³ On training the Iraqis See Staff Sergeant Jon Cupp, “Iraqi air force makes strides toward transition,” USAF Office of Public Affairs September 7, 2007 and Tech. Sgt. Kevin Williams, Iraqi air force takes flight with help from U.S. Airmen.” USAF Public Affairs office April 4, 2007.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Jason Straziuso, “Afghan air force struggles to take flight.” *Air Force Times*, 10 October, 2007.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of this option see Major Arthur Davis (USAF), “Back to the Basics: An Aviation Solution to counterinsurgency Warfare,” ACSC Paper, Air University Press, December 2005. See pp. 5-6. Major Davis makes a strong case for a simple COIN aircraft like the T-6 to be used for convoy escort and similar duties that require long loiter times.

⁴⁷ Alan J. Vick, et. al, *Air Power in the New Counterinsurgency Era: The Strategic Importance of USAF Advisory and Assistance Missions*, Rand Study MG-509 (Santa Monica: Rand, 2006) 126-127, 129-132, 136-143.

⁴⁸ Col. Thomas P. Erhard USAF ret., *An Air Force Strategy for the Long Haul* (Washington DC, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2009)

Main Features of the Operational and Tactical Leadership in the Estonian War of Independence (1918–1920)

By Maj. Paul Villemi (introduction and translation by Andres Seene)

Paper by Major Villemi – Estonian Army (1937-1938)

In 2008/2009 ninety years had passed since the Estonian War of Independence (1918–1920). This is considered to be the most important military conflict in the history of Estonia. The Estonian victory enabled the formation of an independent state and allowed an independent cultural development during the following two decades. This was a crucial event in shaping the national self-consciousness and the cultural identity of the Estonian nation.

Despite the considerable amount of literature written in the period between the World Wars concerning the War of Estonian Independence there is a lack of thorough operational and tactical analysis and studies that offer a broad overview of the conflict. Understandably, contemporary people were still too close to the events to produce objective studies. However, there were some general historical studies written by senior military officers and later the Committee of the History of the War of Independence was formed. Their main task was the preparation of a popular history of the war which was issued in two volumes in 1937 and 1939.¹

During the Soviet occupation in Estonia a free and objective study of the conflict was impossible. All research had to be conducted only under the ideologically specified limitations of the theme “civil war and foreign intervention in the Baltics.” The Estonian authors in exile were free to write, but they lacked access to the source materials in Estonia. Since the restoration of independence almost twenty years ago few academic publications have appeared about the Independence war. The main publications have been a few reprints of old memoirs.² The material available in English about the Estonian War of Independence is also minimal.

As Estonians celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of independence we turn to the legacy of our military leaders and commemorate their achievements

whose academic commitment, and their extensive preparations and planning for national defense, were not destined to be used on the battlefield as Estonia entered the struggle for survival in 1940.

Major Paul Villemi's (1897–1942) Higher Military School's graduation paper "The Main Features of the Operational and Tactical Leadership in the Estonian War of Independence" (1937/1938)³ is a general work about the whole conflict and its different aspects. As the author noted at the time, he believed that the state of historical study of the Independence War was much as it is today, "For the future study of leadership and the foundations of leadership and operations, the War of Independence is an understudied treasure. Being conscious about the restricted limits of the present study, this work cannot hope to be a complete answer. It can be only serve as a basis for further research on the issue of military leadership in the search for deeper conclusions. "

About developing a study of the war for the use of future officers, Villemi noted, "Although we cannot find two battles that are completely alike, we can at least find two similar wars that shared many characteristics from the perspective of tactical and operational leadership. Nevertheless, the study of past wars is necessary. For us, this is especially true in the case of the War of Independence which was carried out in our conditions, in our terrain, and between nationalities for whom future conflicts are not impossible. A thorough study of the War of Independence gives us numerous lessons, although no firm rules for the future. This study should help shape the thinking of leaders, help them be more flexible, give them self confidence, and enable rapid and competent decision-making in the changing situation of warfare. It also serves to help apply the new means of warfare."

The translated introduction and summary of Paul Villemi's work published here deals with the Estonian War of Independence from an operational and tactical perspective, and reflects the contemporary tactical and operational understanding and views of the Estonian Armed Forces. In the study the future operational perspectives and challenges for conflict in Estonian conditions are stressed: the importance of adequate and properly-trained staff personnel, the importance of good reconnaissance and communications, developing a sound organization, and the effective use of reserves in case a nation faces long fronts and limited forces.

As the text is mostly focused on operational and tactical issues, some comments in footnotes and in the text are provided so the reader may better understand the contemporary terms.

Paul Villemi – an Armoured Train man

Paul-Aleksander Villemi's (1897–1942) military career⁴ started during the World War I when he was mobilized to serve in the Russian Imperial Army in 1916. After basic training he participated in the fighting on the Daugavpils (Dünaburg) front in Latvia in 1917. Afterwards he was seconded for further training to the Ensign School of the Northern Front in Gattchina, as were his more educated fellow-countrymen. After graduation from the course at the end of 1917 he was promoted to the lowest officer rank (ensign).

When the German occupation in Estonia ended at the end of 1918 he started his service in the ranks of the Estonian Peoples' Army on the Armoured Train No 1 as the reconnaissance unit officer who also acted as the train's assault company commander. The personnel of the armoured trains were formed mainly from volunteers. This fact, together with their higher fighting morale and better equipment, created a special spirit and image of them as of elite force. Paul Villemi himself was wounded three times in combat: against Red riflemen near the Estonian–Latvian border in the proximity of Sangaste manor at the end of January 1919; in the Lode Station battle against the Baltic Landeswehr in June 21st, 1919, and on October 18th, 1919 in the operation against Bermond-Avaloff in Riga. As for military decorations he was awarded by the Estonian Government with the Estonian Cross of Liberty and with the free land donation.

After the war he continued his service in armoured trains in the positions of assault company leader and, later, as a train commander. He was promoted to captain in 1924 and to major in 1931. He wrote during his late peace-time career many articles, books and other materials about different aspects of the War of Independence. He also participated in the work of the Committee of the History of the War of Independence, whose main task was the preparation of the popular history of the war. Because he served as a senior officer, had, personal experience, and had demonstrated research abilities, the thesis topic, "The Main Features of the Operational and Tactical Leadership in the War of Independence," was

probably assigned to its author as part of his studies in the Estonian Higher Military School Leadership Staff Course in 1936.

After his graduation from the Higher Military School, Lieutenant Colonel Villemi (promoted in 1938) served temporarily in the Armed Forces Headquarters in the department of intelligence and was appointed as the chief of staff of the Tartu defence district in 1939. After the Soviet occupation in 1940 he was forced out of the army and shared the fate of his many of his fellow countrymen. He was arrested he died in the Soviet prison camp in Siberia in 1942. The following text is a translation of Villemi's 1938 Staff College paper.

Main Features of the Operational and Tactical Leadership in the Estonian War of Independence (1918–1920) (1937/1938)

1. Operational and Tactical Leadership

1.1. About Leadership in general

The problem of leadership problem is as old as organized human society. Leadership is a many-sided field of human activity. At the present moment our interest lies in the military field.

As the main source and foundation of warfare is state policy, military leadership and management today properly belongs to the competence of statecraft. In earlier periods of history periods we know of political leaders who also acted as military leaders: Alexander the Great, Swedish King Carl XII, Napoleon etc. Today sophisticated military organizations and leadership techniques demand that one general leader be appointed to command of all the armed forces. The leaders of the state and of the military should work in very close co-operation.

According to our Battle Instruction⁵ the aim of troop leadership is to initiate, prepare and lead battle actions. The main aim of battle leadership is to ensure co-operation of subordinate leaders and the available arms at their disposal per the given task and circumstances. The leadership itself consists of two elements:

- 1) operational leadership of forces and
- 2) rear area economic-administrational leadership.

Leaders should place their troops in a situation that enables them to destroy their adversary with the smallest possible human casualties to themselves. This kind of leadership consists of decision-making, transmitting the commander's intent to subordinates, ensuring that orders are carried out, making sure all are kept informed, and allowing subordinate leaders to practice their initiative. In the process of leadership the most important part is decision-making, after which follows implementation. The decision depends on the given task and the true circumstances. As in war, the actual situation of the enemy forces and their intentions are usually unclear. Therefore, such conditions demand from the leaders the ability to predict events and an instinct for seeing the possible options from the enemy's point of view. "The art of leadership consists of recognizing when to make new decision." Consequently, "the process of forming operational decisions belongs to the realm of most difficult mental works." Decision-making is followed by implementation, which must be carried through with great energy and ceaseless determination. Only with a firm will is victory achievable. The leader expresses his will to subordinates with orders or directives. The leader executes his leadership with the assistance of its staff.

The main aim of leadership is to use available forces to the maximum extent to achieve victory.

1.2. About operational and tactical leadership

For a closer analysis, military leadership is generally divided into different parts. The Germans distinguish higher, medium and lower levels of command. The higher level reaches down to corps size units, middle level is considered to be divisional units, and the lower level from the division to the soldier. Generally, the art of war is divided into strategy and tactics. Between these two aspects of war lies the operational art. The concepts of strategy and tactics are often defined quite differently. The lecturer of strategy in the Higher Military School, General Herbert Brede, brought out about ten definitions of strategy from noted military leaders and scientists. He concluded that strategy consists of organizing and co-coordinating certain set of operations. Strategy prepares battles as far as possible to ensure they are fought under the most favorable conditions and achieve

the best possible results. Strategy matters before and after the battle. During the battle tactics is what matters. For our conditions Brede notes that the whole territory is a theater of war. Thus, makes no sense for us to distinguish strategy from the operational art.

The French understand general tactics in very broad sense. They say that every struggle and battle, no matter which size of units is included, from army or regiment, belongs under the concept of general tactics.

The Russians recognize the concepts of tactics, operational art, and strategy. Under this the essence of tactics is considered the application of the technique for the demands of battle. Tactics should focus on the one way that a single battle is studied. The highest unit in question is the division.

General Nikolai Reek gives detailed a definition of tactics and says: Tactics are divided into two parts: tactics for the different arms and general tactics. The first of these is the study of the different characteristics of the main arms and their use in battle. Combined arms units and their battle actions, which is field of study for general tactics, consists of two organic and integrated parts: a) joint arms co-operation and their use in battle and operational field and, b) the questions about their leadership and general staff service.

There are different views among foreign and our military theorists how to distinguish tactical and operational level units. Principles of our battle instruction have been interpreted in the manner that our brigade is generally considered as an operational unit and the same time in its frames tactical co-operation between different arms is organized. Therefore in our circumstances brigade has partly operational-strategic and partly tactical unit character. Colonel August Traksmäa derives: In our [Estonian] conditions chief of the brigade is primarily tactical leader as divisional⁶ leader in foreign [Great] countries. In leadership question he equalizes brigade with operational group. The same question was handled by General Reek shortly after the end of the War of Independence. He concluded that in War of Independence we were operating with strengthened infantry regiments and this situation may repeat in the future. Therefore Reek generalizes that in our conditions it is adequate to consider that operational unit is “strengthened regiment” and division (but not “infantry division”) is evaluated as “strategic unit”.

In the War of Independence we had to operate with weak forces on wide fronts. Our regiments (polk) and even battalions were usually given very responsible tasks. As a synthesis from facts mentioned above we can derive following:

- tactical leadership is art of using arms in the battle with the final aim to destroy the enemy;
- operational leadership consists of co-operation of battles for using them for further goal.

Operational units were regiment, which was usually strengthened, operational group and brigade. Consequently direction of the division gives subdivision units operative tasks and direction of the strengthened regiment gives to their sub-units tactical tasks.

Operational leadership presupposes framing of the operational plan, troops assembling to the starting point, rear administration of the battle units and real battle leadership for achievement of raised goal. Operational leadership directs and regulates fulfillment of the tactical tasks. Strategy gives its tasks to the operational art and it gives them to tactics, thereby these elements often entwine between themselves and intervene to other spheres.

In real practice it is hard and even impossible to distinguish clearly in which moment tactical leadership ends and operational leadership starts or latter transcends to strategic leadership. Normally we should expect that in case of the War of Independence divisional chief gave to its sub divisional unit's operational tasks, but in practice we can often find facts that direction of the division gave battle orders and instructions to company size units. We can often see, especially in the initial phase of the conflict and in his rides to the front that Commander in Chief⁷ was acting in questions of operational leadership. We can find single battalions and initially also 6th Infantry Regiment which were placed under Commander in Chiefs direct operational command.

Taking into account all above-mentioned facts, I shall conclude that for completion of the present study it is necessary to study all operational archival and literal sources starting from Commander in Chiefs document

collections and ending with company, squadron and battery literal collections.

1.3. Main features of leadership

War and battle doctrines can be identify with leadership doctrines or principles in corresponding scale. Leadership notion can be covered with leadership doctrine notion but not in every case. Leadership doctrine presupposes existence of the certain developed regulations (or study) and pursuance of standing principles of the art of war. Main features of leadership can be found also in cases when war was waged without certain developed war and battle doctrine as it was in our War of Independence. In this case we even lacked proper warplan.

Arms development changes means and methods of the battle management. But we can also find standing components – nation with its character – which will affect our action in future warfare. Professor Alexander Baiov asserts that in foundation of war or battle doctrine it is necessary to reckon with pertinent nations special character, which builds up the army.

For present study we should define the notion „War of Independence“. Under this notion I conceive the struggle of Estonian nation, mainly its Peoples Army and its auxiliaries for Estonian national independence and sovereignty from 27th of November 1918 till January 3rd 1920 1030 am.⁸

2. Conclusions and learned lessons from our Operational and Tactical Leadership in the War of Independence

2.1. General principles

Our leadership of the Peoples Army started the war with theoretical knowledge and practical experiences acquired from Russian Imperial Army. Operating in changing environment of the war demanded from the leaders of all levels of command a lot of decision-making not so much on the ground of theoretical knowledge but more on common sense based and logical conclusions. There was shortage of experienced staff officers because we had only few officers with higher military education⁹. We had to start the war without warplan and leadership lacked firm and even battle doctrine. Concluded from the facts mentioned above we could ask,

whether it is justified at all to talk about certain features of operational and tactical leadership in the War of Independence. The chief of staff of the Commander in Chief in the War of Independence [Major-General Jaan Soots] mentions about the question following: From strategic and tactical principles and methods point of view the War of Independence did not give much new. It confirmed generally familiar principles and methods of strategy and tactics, especially those which command to act under the present circumstances. Soon after the end of the war in question Colonel N. Reek insisted the need for elaboration of our own military doctrine. These examples conceal with conclusions of the present study. In details we can find in operational and tactical leadership of the War of Independence original features, which need to be observed for formation of our own war and battle doctrine.

For future studies of leadership and for a foundation for military studies, the War of Independence is a treasury not studied enough. Being conscious about the restricted limits of the present study, it can not resolve the important questions completely. It can only be a useful source for further research on the leadership question and to later develop more profound general conclusions.

Below I will try to make some conclusions and note some of the lessons learned from our operational and tactical leadership in the War of Independence.

2.2. About Operational Leadership

Especially during the period of retreat, the operational leadership on the North-Eastern Front (Viru Front) differed much from the similar field of actions in the Southern Front, to the disadvantage of the latter. Immediately after the accession to his position as the Commander in Chief, Colonel Johan Laidoner visited Viljandi to discuss the leadership arrangement on the Southern Front. He resolutely removed the incompetent divisional chief Colonel Ernst Limberg from his duties and appointed a more appropriate leader to this post. This decision encouraged the more active leaders and soldiers. The firm handed approach by the commander in chief was generally felt in Peoples Army. The lesson from this is that before making appointments to positions of both operational and tactical leadership, the true personal capabilities of the officer should be considered before simple rank and service time. Employment of this

principle enabled the selection of leaders motivated the leaders to more energetic activity and deeper loyalty.

The Commander in Chief should understand the situation rapidly and act accordingly. For example, in the last days of December 1918 the Commander in Chief was ordered to form defence battalions in every county. Ten days later he ordered the organization of all existing volunteer units under the firm military organization according to its size (squad, platoon, company, and battalion). All organized units had to be subordinated to the larger formations and their leaders.

The High Command's pursuit for forming a solid organization and a centralized command in the armed forces gave good results, although it met partly long-time resistance in several units. This resistance was caused by deep rooted particularism of our nation. This side of the national character had already become evident from past conflicts. During the ancient fights for independence¹⁰ Estonians were fragmented, they failed to unite as a single fighting organism – and they lost.

During the War of Independence General Laidoner was able to form from the separate bands a single force – although with great difficulties – where his leading hand was recognized in every section of the military organization. This was one of the most important pillars of our victory.

For the future existence of Estonian independence it is important to persistently cultivate the importance of state defence and the spirit of national unity, which should be raised to the status of holy idea, a cult, which must accompany the citizen's development from childhood until death.

The biggest hardship that negatively influenced the leadership organization was the extreme lack of senior leaders and staff officers. There was general lack of officers with higher military education for the positions of divisional chief of staff, not to mention for post of chiefs of divisional staff sections. The brigade chiefs of staff also lacked proper theoretical preparation and also had no adequate assistants. Operational leadership, in sense of planning and preparing of subordinate troops, was beyond the real capabilities of these staffs. There were also no capable officers for who could successfully serve as in the regimental chief of staff (adjutant) position.

Because of the growing sophistication of the leadership system in future warfare, the preparation of higher educated officers in necessary numbers has a considerable importance.

In the War of Independence we fought on the inner operational lines. In these conditions the Commander in Chief had no larger reserves at his disposal. The troops were located on the front of quieter areas formed the strategic reserve of the High Command. In this respect armoured trains deserve to be mentioned. The naval force also acted as a strategic reserve at the disposal of Commander in Chief. The operational deployment of troops in the direction of the decisive strike was not always carried out. Units were often sent to offensives “in piecemeal,” for example in the case of the Pskov operations. The co-operation between the divisions on the Southern Front was inadequate. This situation emerged because the general commander of the whole front was not given authority over all the responsible actions and forces. However, small and maneuverable reserves were successfully applied. Wide fronts and small defence forces under our conditions demand from us in the future good maneuverability. Therefore we need maneuverable forces and a good road system.

Despite the weak communication possibilities, cooperation between land forces and the navy provided good results. Because of the long coastal border, this is also important for the future perspective. Our navy’s performance in offensive operations carries the character of an outflanking maneuver.

Moral factors had especially great weight in this warfare. In the period of retirement there were many deserters because of a general lack of faith in the possibility of winning. The successful offensive of January 1919 raised the self-confidence of the soldiers and gave them a general belief in their own capabilities. After the Russian White auxiliary troops had demonstrated some inner intrigues and certain hostility against the Republic of Estonia, and then showed signs of incompetence and a lack of interest in destroying the communist government of Russia; our troops’ fighting morale deep inside Russian boundaries declined considerably. Nevertheless, in the final fights on the North-Eastern front (Viru Front) our Peoples’ Army fought bravely and with success.

Also, from the perspective of future warfare, it is beneficial for us to transfer the theatre of war to the adversaries’ territory. Therefore we have

to impart to our armed forces, and to the whole nation in peace-time, appropriate spirit and understanding. We have to avoid similar situations as happened in case of taking Narva (January 19th, 1919) when the Finns categorically refused to pursue adversary forces into Russian territory.

The fiercest battles of the War of Independence were fought in Latvian territories (The Landeswehr campaign¹¹) and in struggles with Latvian Red riflemen (the battle of Paju Manor¹²). It was necessary because the Latvian national government (Ulmanis government) was not able to validate its authority without our support. We should be accustomed to the idea that the Latvians may need our help also in future. We should explain to Latvian authorities (especially to their military ones) that they should not place redundant hopes on us in case of war. Latvians should also reorganize their forces in manner so that they could offer efficient resistance on the first days of mobilization, or even, if possible, show some activity near our common borders.¹³

a) Main features in offensives

In offensives we can notice two active principles. Some leaders persistently carried out frontal attacks, while others tried to perform outflanking moves under every possible occasion. The latter leaders' main aim was not so much the seizure of geographical points with g massive forces as the destruction of the adversary's manpower. In the case of frontal assaults our losses (killed and wounded) were considerable. But the outflanking offensives usually shook adversary's morale considerably. The offensives unexpected nature and their impact on the adversary was of great importance, especially when the leader of the flanking force showed self-initiative and quickness in action.

b) Main features in defensive actions

Our defensive activities could mainly be characterized as an active defence on wide fronts.¹⁴ This was especially true in the circumstances of the Southern Front. Activities behind Pskov can also be viewed as an example of an active defence on wide front. Colonel Siegfried Pinding acted there as a commander of the Pskov group or, in more contemporary terminology, chief of the brigade. He co-coordinated operational and even tactical activities of the Pskov group units and gave them joint tasks. The group commander did not co-ordinate activities between infantry and

artillery units. This combined arms co-operation was performed on regimental and battalion level, at whose disposal the artillery was. Colonel Pinding's staff consisted of a few officers at his disposal together with some clerks. The rear administration questions were handled on this brigade level only to a minimal extent. These rear arrangement matters were completely placed on the shoulders of the divisional or independent unit's responsibility. It seems to be necessary in the future to give more independence to our brigades in a manner so that the brigade leadership could coordinate the arms at its disposal and solve some questions of rear administration. A similar need is also underlined in our Battle Instruction (§14): "success in the battle is achievable with all-arms co-operation." In our operational circumstances all-arms co-operation arrangement should usually be the unit's task. As a rule it is the task of the reinforced regiments or under the operational group's direction.

c) Artillery

The artillery regimental commanders acted as chiefs of the divisional artillery in the given divisions. Artillery fire control centralization was performed only on rare occasions. Because of the lack of senior artillery officers the artillery battalion commanders had to often execute the battery commander's duties. Therefore they could not devote their total energy to the command of the battalion.

d) Armoured trains

The operational leadership and co-operation of armoured trains with infantry and artillery was unsatisfactory. Because of special conditions in the War of Independence the group of armoured trains grew up to a division-sized formation. There were also independent infantry units which belonged to the organization of the armoured trains division. The train's assault force consisted of up to the battalion size formation (3 companies and reconnaissance commando). That kind of large assault force was possible to keep on the train because the enemy aviation force was not active against us. Also the enemy's long-range artillery did not harass us sufficiently. In the future, that kind of armoured train assault force is not likely to be deployed as before. Instead of the assault force we should practice in peace-time a tight co-operation between infantry and armoured trains. Infantry leaders should know how to give correct and practical orders to the armoured trains.

e) Cavalry

Our cavalry consisted mainly of the 1st Cavalry Regiment, whose performance and nature was influenced by its leader's character. Most the most successful use of cavalry was when it was used against the open flank of enemy infantry in the breakthrough battle, and in the adversary's rear. In this case, a great deal of independence was allowed for the cavalry squadrons. Cavalry attacks took place in exceptional occasions. On the defense, cavalry served together with the infantry. On a wide front, the cavalry defended quiet areas, safeguarded flanks, and formed mobile reserves. In retirement battles the cavalry activities had the character of delaying actions.

f) Navy

Our relatively weak naval force performed very actively and bravely. The navy arranged landing operations behind the adversary's lines for checking its offensives and for supporting our counteroffensive. The commander of naval operations had radio contact with the commander in chief. Keeping communication with the infantry was quite problematic. Our naval operations were usually defended and supported by the British Royal Navy in the Gulf of Finland.

g) Communications and reconnaissance

In practice, the shortage of technical means of communication and experienced teams was felt. The communications arrangement lacked a systematic character. The creation of technical communication was mostly taken care of by the Commander in Chief and by the chiefs of staffs of major formations and unit commanders. The prior planning and ability to keep the Commander in Chief's Staff informed was especially inadequate by the headquarters of the 2nd Division.

The operational reconnaissance was organized insufficiently. Both we and the adversary lacked effective aerial reconnaissance except during the Landeswehr campaign where airplanes were used in this manner by the adversary.

h) About operational command

Operational leadership was executed mainly by written directives and also with oral orders. The Commander in Chief conducted the command of operational troops mainly by means with short written directives, which were written exclusively by himself. In these divisions where the chiefs of staff had higher military preparation was the operational leadership generally and in more important operations in their hands, for example, in the 1st Division in January 1919, Alūksne–Jēkabpils operation,¹⁵ the Landeswehr campaign, Pytalovo–Ostrov operation.¹⁶ The operational activity of the regiments and single battalions was personally overseen by their commanders. They seldom issued written operational orders. The battalion commanders conducted command of their subordinates mainly by verbal means or with single page written instructions. Leaders at all levels of command looked for personal contact with their subordinate leaders, which was beneficial. The higher commanders could create a clear picture of the location and give adequate and rational directives and instructions appropriate to the development of the situation.

2.3. About Tactical Leadership

Tactics was dependent on leaders theoretical preparation for war, their former practical background and experience, technical conditions (weaponry, communication and transportation means available to them) and of the military situation in a specific operation.

The greatest percentage of the formation commanders in the War of Independence originated from the positions of World War I Russian company and detachment leaders. About ten officers had served in positions of the company junior officer. The majority of our battalion and company commanders in the War of Independence had previously served in Russian army as the World War I company junior officers. These officers were mainly promoted to the rank of ensign at the end of World War I and had mostly no battle experience, at least not as leaders.¹⁷ At the end of the War of Independence the company junior officer duties were usually successfully executed by excellent non-commissioned officers, who were presented for promotion for the warrant-officer status. In November 1919 the first graduates of our own Military School also arrived at the front.¹⁸ There were not enough World War I era NCOs even to staff the positions of sergeant majors. Therefore, smart and brave soldiers were promoted to NCO rank. Thus, the training of our junior leaders was quite

insufficient. The lack of theoretical knowledge was compensated with natural features of the Estonian character to include practical intelligence, the ability of act independently, coolness, toughness, and a readiness of the subordinates to support their leaders.

a) Armament

Especially in the initial period of the War of Independence, the Peoples Army's armament was very incomplete. There were not enough rifles for all combatants. There were very few machine guns, and the artillery was at first non-existent.

The rifles varied of their pattern, mostly being of Russian pattern [Mosin-Nagant system]. Medium machine-guns were mostly Russian "Maxim," a smaller number were German "Maxims" and those of the "Colt"-system. As for light machine-guns, the "Lewis"-pattern was favoured instead of the "Madsen" because of the latter's sophisticated construction and their inclination to break down in case of unskillful management. Hand grenades were available only in very limited numbers. Many, especially those in the armoured train assault teams, did not use rifle bayonets. Accuracy of fire was very low on both hostile sides.

There was very limited amount of spades and gas masks were completely lacking. Only a few men had proper accoutrements. Therefore, rifle cartridges were mostly carried in pockets, in specially made bags or in textile belts. Rucksacks were used also to a very limited extent, which caused the unit equipment trains to be overloaded.

The diversity of weapons-systems, both in the infantry and the artillery, exasperated the ammunition supply problem. The amount of the technical means of communication was also very limited.

b) Situation

The situation was very diverse during the whole period of the War of Independence, which demanded different tactical modes at different times. In general we had to operate with small forces and insufficient means against a superior adversary on a wide front. Therefore, especially in its initial phase the War of Independence, hostilities had the nature of guerilla

warfare. The morale of the combat-team had of great importance for achieving success in battle.

c) Period of Retirement

In the period of retirement (December 1918) our units were lacking co-operational performance and mostly had no faith in winning possibilities. Because of these motives and of very tiring activities in isolated groups there was extensive desertion in infantry units. The adversaries offensive were tried to stop in the road directions. Retirement was accomplished with gradual positions taking of the retreating units because the reserves were non-existent. On single occasions also counterattacks were undertaken. In the direction of Tallinn–Narva the adversary's offensive was blocked by our armoured trains.

The discipline was rooted in the leader's authority and it rose gradually in most formations. Together with aforementioned developments the combat effectiveness grew.

d) Offensives

In offensives all formations did not operate uniformly. Some of them showed greater energy in the assault and speed in pursuit of the adversary. Others were modest and slow in action. The companies and platoons approached the adversary in "single file". The assault was accomplished usually in tenuous "extended lines." Light machine guns moving close together to the start line of the riflemen. In company-size units reserves were totally absent or minimal. Frontal assaults were used at every favourable opportunity to be supported by assaults of some forces to the adversary's flank and rear. This was carried out in a very eager fashion by the Sakala Partisan Battalion. A unit designated for the flank attack varied from a few men equipped with a machine gun up to a few companies. Troops gathered for the offensive formed under cover of the darkness and the offensive was start in the early morning so that surprise could be achieved. The assault was supported with machine guns and artillery. The artillery preparation before the assault was seldom used, or if it was, it was of short duration because of the scarcity of artillery and ammunition. The attack followed the assault immediately, without any special pause. Attack was almost never developed to the bayonet fight because it was considered best to shoot the adversary at a short distance. Usually the adversary did

not respond to the attack, and retired or surrendered. The contact with speedily retreating adversary was usually lost, because after the assault and capture of certain designated areas, our relatively small and dispersed forces had to reorganize themselves before they could pursue the adversary forces. In case of the more extensive retreat operations of the adversary, horse transportation was used as a mean of pursuit. In offensives our leaders, and even some soldiers, showed up a lot of initiative and inventiveness. In the course of pursuit sometimes necessary precautions were forgotten.

e) Defensive activities

As for defensive activities, we had to accomplish these under conditions of a wide front and a small defensive force. So the defence was took a linear shape. There were few machine guns and artillery at our disposal. The medium machine guns were used singly and not in platoons. Adversary's breakthroughs were liquidated with depth-seated reserves counterstrikes. Energetic counterstrikes gave often good results. Greater attention was given to constructing trenches, shelters and positions at the ending-phase of the war on the North-Eastern front (Viru Front), where two or three positions with wire entanglements were built. Reserves we kept to accomplish the counterstrikes. In the earlier period we tried to act under the principle of the active defence. For keeping the initiative night-time expeditions were arranged to strike the adversaries' rear. It did not always give the hoped-for results. For example, explosives were not used properly for destruction of bridges behind the adversary lines and so on. Generally, the arrangement of these larger and smaller expeditions exhausted the enemy and made him nervous.

As a lesson to learn we can state that in the future for a more rational organization and displacement of forces in the defence, the leadership direction should be granted the possibility to form larger greater reserves for conducting the active defence. Medium machine guns should be used in platoons, or at least in pairs, and they should be placed in depth in a chessboard-pattern. More attention should be paid for the fortification of positions. The points of support and centers of the resistance system should be created for every possible occasion. In case of an enemy breakthrough these supporting points positioned on the flank should be able to hold even after the enemy penetrates the rear. The tough and stable character of Estonians should be used to the maximum in defence.

In the War of Independence our leaders were able to evaluate the importance of fire to a great extent. Because of the shortage of automatic weapons and artillery, maneuver was justifiably favoured-- especially in first half of the war. In the end-phase of the conflict, especially on North-Eastern front (Viru Front), the activity was based more on the effect of fire and active maneuver was less in evidence. Therefore, the hostilities ended with our favouring fire tactics. The best results, however, were achieved in the case of joining intense fire with quick and skilful maneuver. Demand for activity in the defence remained in force to the maximum extent.

f) Reconnaissance and communications

The reconnaissance and communications were very inadequate in the War of Independence. In the future we will have to pay very serious attention to these questions.

From the point of terrain familiarity in the areas the theatre of war we were not in better situation than adversary. There was a scarcity of maps at our disposal, and those available to us were mostly outdated. This aspect influenced our activities, especially our offensives at night. We have to pay serious attention to our leader's solid familiarization of likely future theatre of war areas.

The experiences of the War of Independence allow us to conclude that it is important for the leader to have the characteristics of deep patriotism, attention to duty, fairness, firmness of will, and self-control.

3. Final Word

The study of operational and tactical leadership gives us no definite doctrine which could be used as an undeviating instruction for the future. We could note that in the course of war the application of a single principle that guaranteed success in one operation would not work the same in another situation. We could also mention that leaders who had better preparation for leadership work could achieve better results. But there were also leaders whose theoretical preparation for war was inferior, but who could accomplish a good deal in very complicated situations with

the help of their iron willpower and self-confidence. Therefore the moral element had of great importance.

Although we cannot find two completely similar battles, the less we can find two similar wars from operational and tactical leadership perspective. Nevertheless the study of wars waged in the past is necessary. This is especially valid in case of the War of Independence which was performed in our conditions, in our terrain and between the same nationalities, between whom future conflicts are possible. A deep study of the War of Independence gives us numerous lessons, although no absolute rules for the future. It shapes leaders thought more flexible, gives self-confidence and enables quick and right decision-making in the changing situation of warfare also in condition of applicability of new means of fighting. Deep patriotism and unchanging loyalty are and remain principal values of every military leader.

Special feature: photos related to Major Villemi's paper



1. Major Paul Villemi (Estonian National Defence College War Museum)



2. Officers at the battallion observation post in the East-Southern Front (Autumn 1919) (Photo: Estonian Historical Archive)



3. Trench position of the Estonian 6th infantry regiment machine gun platoon near the River Gauja in Northern Latvia (June 19th 1919) during the Landeswehr campaign (Photo: Estonian National Defence College War Museum)



4. View of the Trenches in the East-Southern (Isborsk) Front (Autumn 1919) (Photo: Estonian Historical Archive)



5. LMG Lewis squad in position in the East-Southern Front (Autumn 1919) (Photo: Estonian Historical Archive)



6. Medium Machine gun (Russian Maxim) covered position in the East-Southern Front (Autumn 1919) (Photo: Estonian Historical Archive)

¹ Eesti Vabadussõda 1918–1920. Vabadussõja Ajaloo Komitee populaarteaduslik väljaanne. [The Estonian War of Independence 1918–1920. Popular publication of the War of Independence History Committee. 2 volumes]. Vabadussõja Ajaloo Komitee. Tallinn, 1937–1939. [Reprinted 2-volume issue from 1996–1997].

² Rosenthal, Reigo, 2008. Laidoner–väejuht. Johan Laidoner kõrgema operatiivjuhi ja strateegia kujundajana Eesti Vabadussõjas [Major-General Johan Laidoner as the Operational Commander of the Estonian Army during the Estonian War of Independence, 1918–1920]. Argo. Tallinn; Kröönström, Mati, 2008. Eesti sõjaväe juhtivkoosseis Vabadussõjas 1918–1920 [The Officer Corps of the Estonian Army in the War of Independence in 1918–1920]. *Dissertationes Historiae Universitatis Tartuenssis*. Tartu. Vol.16.

³ Original manuscript of the named thesis location: ERA [Estonian State Archive] 495/12/833.

⁴ Following data is based on Colonel-Lieutenant Paul Villemi's service record (ERA [Estonian State Archive] 495/7/6740).

⁵ Lahingueeskiri (LE). Kaitseväge staabi VI osakonna väljaanne. Tallinn, 1932. [Battle Instruction. Publication of the Defence Forces Staff, Section VI. Tallinn, 1932].

⁶ In the War of Independence altogether 4 divisions were formed (included with the Division of Armoured Trains).

⁷ In this case what is meant under this title is Colonel/Major General Johan Laidoner (1884–1953), who held the position of Chief of the Operational Staff of the Estonian Armed Forces from 14 December 1918 to 23 December 1918, and subsequently that of Commander in Chief from 23 December 1918 to 26 March 1920. For a closer study of his role as the operational commander see: Rosenthal, Reigo, 2008. Laidoner–väejuht. Johan Laidoner kõrgema operatiivjuhi ja strateegia kujundajana Eesti Vabadussõjas [Major-General Johan Laidoner as the Operational Commander of the Estonian Army during the Estonian War of Independence, 1918–1920]. Argo. Tallinn.

⁸ Dates marking the beginning of the war start with the first Soviet attack to Narva to the day when the armistice became effective in fronts between Estonia and Soviet Russia.

⁹ There were all together only 7 graduates of the Russian Nicholas General Staff Academies who participated in the formation and command of the Estonian armed forces in the War of Independence.

¹⁰ Here is meant the period of Crusades in Baltics in the beginning of the 13th century (1208–1227) when Estonians were conquered and subordinated to European crusaders (Teutonic Order and the King of Denmark).

¹¹ During the War of Independence the Estonian 3rd Division served on the Southern Front in an 80 kilometers deep offensive operation in the main direction of Valmiera–Riga from June 5th to July 3rd 1919. Adversaries formations here were formed of local Baltic Germans and of German (*Reichsdeutsche*) military personnel. In the first half of the year 1919 all real political power in Southern Latvia was in the hands of Major-General Rüdiger von der Goltz – the Commander of the 6th German Reserve Corps. At the time, his main purpose was realization of the political ideas of the German-Baltic block in the Baltics. For seeking these aspirations soon after the capture of Riga (end of May 1919) von der Goltz started to move forward towards Northern-Latvia. The Allied Mission in the Baltics insisted that German armed forces should not intervene in the interior matters of the Baltic States. Under the influence of the Allies, the German High Command made an arrangement with von der Goltz allowing him to transfer the Staff of the 6th German Reserve Corps from Riga to Jelgava. The German state units' advance northwards from Daugava River was forbidden. The Germans were not allowed to cross the Jugla Lakes line. General von der Goltz did not respect these demands. Already on May 29th instructions were given to the Baltic Landeswehr units for a deep advance into Northern-Latvia. According to the instructions issued, parts of the named formation moved from Riga in three columns towards the north, north-east and eastwards. The Landeswehr representatives demanded Estonian troops withdraw to the Estonian-Latvian language border. The Estonian side demanded their opponents' forces withdrawal behind the general line between the Gauja (Koiva) River and Vecgulbene. Both sides stuck to their demands and a settlement was not found. During the conflict grew between the formations. The German elements were thrown back from the position line of Limbaži–Straupe–Cēsis–Rauna to the Riga region, where the hostilities were stopped. This operation is known as Riga operation, or popularly, War with the Landeswehr, or Landeswehr campaign.

¹² The battle was fought for Paju Manor on the 31st of January 1919. This manor is located few kilometers before the Estonian–Latvian border city of Valga. The Latvian Red riflemen fortified the manor buildings, which were attacked across the open terrain by two companies of Estonians (from Tartu/Kuperjanov volunteer battalion) and two companies of Finnish volunteers (from the Regiment of Nordic Brothers). Thereby attacking companies were sent to battle one by one or “piecemeal” lacking also proper artillery support. The defending side opened devastating machine gun fire from the range of 400 meters. The Estonians and Finns lost (killed and wounded) 20% of the total participating force (13 officers and almost 140 soldiers), thereby also legendary Estonian battalion commander Lieutenant Kuperjanov was deadly wounded. Although the battle was finally won by Estonians, it is often considered as the bloodiest battle of the war where leadership failed because of enemy underestimate and the lack of arms co-operation.

¹³ In this section it is possible to distinguish some reflections of differences in the Estonian and Latvian operational planning and defence plans in 1930s.

¹⁴ According to calculations made by Lieutenant-Colonel Jaan Maide (1933), the average length of a front sector in the War of Independence (in case of shorter and better defence lines-- for example between the Gulf of Finland and Peipus Lake) covered by one Estonian regiment was approximately 12—15 kilometers long, one battalion covered 4—5 km and one company 1300—1600 meters long line. Therefore, the normal length of company's defence section during the conflict in question was 1000—1600 meters. The sections less than 1000 meters appeared seldom, but 1600—2000 meters long sections existed very often.

During the War of Independence altogether 18 annual callups of men were mobilized for the Estonian Peoples' Army (those born between 1882—1900—approximately 75 000 soldiers without officers. See Maide, Jaan, kolonelleitnant, 1933. *Ülevaade Eesti Vabadussõjast 1918—1920* [Survey from the War of Estonian Independence 1918—1920]. Kaitseliidu kirjastus. Tallinn. P. 456, 459.

¹⁵ In May 1919.

¹⁶ In November 1919.

¹⁷ The majority of division, brigade and single battalion commanders were commissioned officers. The War of Estonian Independence saw 35 officers serving as brigade and single battalion commanders. Amongst these 35 men, 14 were active officers. The proportion of commissioned officers commanding units below brigade level was considerably lower. Commissioned officers accounted for only 5 of a total of 60 commanders in charge of infantry battalions. Company commanders could boast of only 5 commissioned officers. These statistics reflect the fact that most of the regiment and battalion commanders were wartime officers. (Kröönström, Mati, 2008. *Eesti sõjaväe juhtivkoosseis Vabadussõjas 1918—1920* [The Officer Corps of the Estonian Army in the War of Independence in 1918—1920]. *Dissertationes Historiae Universitatis Tartuensis*. Tartu. Vol.16. P. 305).

¹⁸ The Military School of the Republic of Estonia was officially founded under the order of the Commander in Chief of April 3rd 1919. The curriculum of the school was adapted to the principles of former Russian reserve officer (war-time officer, the so called Ensign School) programme. In the first infantry course – 106 graduates were promoted to officer rank (ensign) on August 3rd 1919 after little more than three months of training. The cavalry cadets (25 graduates) were promoted on September 15th, 1919 and the artillery course (57 graduates) on October the 5th, 1919.

America's Most Notorious Naval Base

Stephen Schwab, *Guantanamo USA: The Untold Story of America's Cuban Outpost* (Lawrence: University press of Kansas, 2009)

Review by James S. Corum

For just over a century Guantanamo has been a major base for the US. It is a base with a unique status, being a sovereign part of Cuba, but also a base that is leased in perpetuity under an agreement that Cuba has no authority to abrogate. It is this unique status that made Guantanamo the best location to imprison terrorists and suspected terrorists in a secure location that was also out of reach of the US courts.

Guantanamo USA: The Untold Story of America's Cuban Outpost by Stephen Schwab, a history instructor and Latin Americanist at the University of Alabama, tells the story about the history of Guantanamo as a US base from the beginning. The story is an interesting one, and it's not your usual naval history. It's a combination of military history and diplomatic history. Guantanamo makes an unlikely, but very effective, vehicle for telling the story of a hundred years of Cuban-American relations. Indeed, the current disputes over the meaning of Guantanamo are nothing new—this large base—over 40 square miles of magnificent harbor, has been friction point in US-Cuban relations ever since it was occupied by the US Navy and Marines in 1898.

Schwab is a thorough historian and a good writer. He takes the reader through the development of the US Navy in the late 19th Century and explains just why a base in this part of the Caribbean was considered so essential for the US Navy in the early years of the 20th Century. Guantanamo was seen as a vital fleet base in time of war, a place where the US Atlantic Fleet could operate from as an advanced outpost to protect the Panama Canal and the southern coast of the US.

While the Navy insisted that Guantanamo was the one place the US had to keep when Cuban independence was granted in 1903, it was also a sticking point for Cuban nationalists who saw the base and its special status as a symbol of US power over Cuba. From the start, it was a major issue in Cuban politics.

The naval officers who insisted on keeping Guantanamo were right in one respect, it was a very fine base located in the right spot in the Caribbean for protecting US sea traffic. During World War II Guantanamo was the operational center and rally point where convoys from South America and the Caribbean where gathered, received their navy escorts, and were escorted through U-boat infested waters to New York City and on to Europe. During the critical moment of the anti-submarine campaign the operations staged out of Guantanamo played a key role in pushing German U-boats out of the Caribbean.

Guantanamo's recent history is that of a Cold War outpost. While there have been tensions, it is interesting to note that Castro and his regime have generally avoided open confrontation over Guantanamo. Schwab takes the reader through the complicated machinations over the outpost and its legal status from the Eisenhower era to the Bush presidency. The unique legal status of the base is nothing new—and it certainly did not begin with the detention of the 9-11 terror suspects there.

The title lives up to its name. No other book really tells the whole story. Schwab quite effectively combines the story of the US Navy, Cuban politics, Cold War politics and the current debates about terrorist imprisonment into a seamless story. Schwab has a masterful understanding of Cuban politics and explains with some sympathy the Cuban view of the base. At the same time, Schwab provides a full and fair account of the American view of the base. In short, it is thorough and objective history told without some of the polemical style that one often finds in Latin American history writing.

If the reader is looking for a good case study of a place where the military, politics and diplomacy come together then Guantanamo is the place. If the reader wants some essential background on the Cuban-American relationship then this book is an excellent place to start. Schwab combines solid scholarship with an engaging style. I highly recommend it. This book refutes the idea that diplomatic history is boring.