



JOINT SERVICES COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

COMPONENT STUDIES ESSAY

**TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE BRITISH ARMY
ABLE TO MEET THE JOINT OPERATIONAL
CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE?**

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*Predictions can be very difficult – especially about the future.*¹

*If you chose not to decide, you still made a choice.*²

New combinations of threat are emerging in a world of increasing global imbalance of wealth, health, power and resources. The traditional causes of war, ‘God, Gold and Glory,’³ remain extant but the ways of waging war have been transformed by social, economic and political revolutions wrought by and in reaction to the phenomenon of globalisation. Consequently, the twentieth century witnessed the growth in forms of war that were simultaneously old and new.⁴ Whilst the incidence of conventional interstate warfare did decline at the end of the century, it has not become obsolete. However, warfare at the beginning of twenty-first century continues to be characterised by the ascendancy of irregular warfare. Prosecuted by terrorist organisations, criminal groups, and militia to warlord armies,⁵ it is this new form of warfare that now presents more immediate threats to national security.

The rise of these unconventional and complex threats demands a new set of security and defence capabilities with which to engage in new forms and styles of intervention. Accordingly, the UK has examined the various levers and instruments of state power with a view to adaptation in order to meet the new security challenges of the future in a coherent manner. From a military perspective, an ability to mount force on force operations will continue to be necessary in an uncertain world. However, the Ministry of Defence has undertaken a number of initiatives to ensure a valid and appropriate response of the Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air Force to the wider threat spectrum.

In creating a military component of state power, capable of addressing the most likely future challenges both effectively and efficiently it would be preferable to start with a blank sheet of paper. However, a legacy born out of the Cold War and its immediate pre-history has created a strategic culture that confers a preference and indeed a technological propensity for high intensity warfare and conventional conflict. The existing equipment programmes, manpower and skill sets, together with the British strategic approach to warfare and utility of force, must be appreciated when planning for change. Whilst the intellectual exercise in planning for the future continues apace a number of factors, primarily a procurement system where the sheer inertia in lead times for communication and weapon

¹ Danish quotation, Anon.

² Peart,(1980).

³ Martyn,(2006), p.17.

⁴ Van Crefeld,(2005), p.25.

⁵ Melillo,(2006), p.22

systems is now measured in decades, hampers the implementation of change. Moreover, any potential for innovation takes place against a background of fiscal prudence and HM Treasury scrutiny.

A simple analysis of current British Army capability, force structure, readiness and sustainability provides a one-dimensional view of an Army trained, equipped and organised predominantly to conduct major combat operations.⁶ A more critical analysis reveals a flexible organisation, with a broad mix of military competencies capable of a far wider range of operations, capable of being a force for good. As future war is unlikely to be a primarily military function, the British Army has recognised the need to be flexible enough to operate and co-ordinate with a multitude of actors, in a range of environments, across a widening spectrum of national security operations. In pursuing additional flexibility there is a risk that the British Army ends up prepared for nothing. However, a natural compromise has been achieved. The intent is to build a force, which is robust across multiple alternative futures but still tailored to meet the challenges of the most likely future events.

This essay will examine the current trends in warfare and the various predictions proffered by academics and military planners on the most likely security challenges that the UK may face in the next 20-25 years. The implications of these predictions will be considered in the context of the existing strategic plan for the re-organisation of the Army as conceived in *Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities* (2004). Analysis of the planned re-orientation of the British Army, focussing on force structure, equipment and multi-agency interoperability will demonstrate that the British Army is capable of meeting the joint operational challenges of the future. The essay is restricted to consideration of what is currently planned and its applicability in twenty-first century warfare. Whilst acknowledging the potential impact of changing UK demographics, attitudes and skill base this essay will not consider the broad spectrum of human resource issues that also have a role in determining the future capabilities of the British military.

Despite the East-West rapprochement in the final years of the twentieth century, Francis Fukuyama's promise of the end of history proved premature.⁷ The new world order did not bring with it a decrease in global conflict, the reality is new world disorder. Since 1989 some 60 major conflicts, the majority arising out of ethnic and tribal rivalries, religious zealotry and transnational terrorism have occurred.⁸ However, in terms of global and regional significance the most notable conflict in the

⁶ ADP Land Ops (2005), p.27.

⁷ Fukuyama,(1992).

⁸ Melillo,(2006), p.23.

immediate post Cold war era was an interstate war, the 1991 Gulf War. From a British Army perspective, the first Gulf War was a major driver in the thinking about future wars. The conflict fought in the sands of Iraq has been described as the 'cradle of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA)'.⁹ The 1991 military victory was achieved by the effective translation of a well-crafted military strategy to the operational and tactical levels. This was affected through a joint approach to warfare across the whole battle-space. Integrated manoeuvre warfare, better weapon systems, superior intelligence and excellent logistics all conferred a strategic synergy that the Iraqi opponents could not match.

In the immediate aftermath of victory, the Gulf conflict was cited as an example of the first of the new wars. It was claimed that Desert Storm heralded the utility of smart-technology and standoff capabilities, allowing an enemy to be defeated with the minimum of engagement by the allies. Disengagement was made possible by air-delivered technologies; it reduced friendly casualties whilst allowing choice to be exercised about the enemy's casualty rate. However, post conflict, a real debate began on the requirement for military action and forces of the future. At the centre of the debate was the nature of future conflict and the forces needed to fight it. Proponents of the 'new war theory' saw disengagement as highly desirable made possible by the full exploitation of air, space and the electromagnetic spectrum. By exploiting technology, a state could project military power with lighter, more mobile and lethal forces. It was proposed that the essential lesson from the Gulf conflict was that future military forces could reduce their land and maritime components whilst investing in air, space and smart-technologies. The persuasive proponents of the 'new war theory', actively supported by an expanding technology-orientated Defence Industry, drove the RMA agenda. A transformation to Network Enabled Capability and Effects Based Approach was initiated. In the UK, the aim of this transformation was to equip and structure the British military for conventional dominance against state forces using precision weaponry and highly trained personnel. In essence, the role of the British Soldier and the need for 'boots on the ground' was to be subordinated to technology.

In opposition to the 'new war theory', the Israeli strategic thinker, Martin Van Crefeld, considered the 1991 Gulf War as the last example of old wars rather than a model for the future¹⁰. He argued, in his book *On Future War*, that very few commanders would be as inept as Saddam Hussein and elect to take on the West by playing to its strengths. Instead, he proposed that the Clausewitzian trilogy was collapsing and that the world would see fewer classical inter-state conflicts but an increasing number of failed states and intra-state struggles. To meet this challenge, Van Crefeld agreed that there was a need for the military to exploit new technologies but the fundamental ingredient for success would be the ability to engage with populations not to disengage. Military force

⁹ Sloan,(2002), p.3-17.

¹⁰ Van Crefeld,(1991), p.192-233.

would still be required on the ground to underpin political initiatives.¹¹ Thus, land components remain central to future capabilities.

Van Creveld's contention that a new form of conflict, inaccurately labelled "low intensity" warfare, would replace large-scale internecine conflict between states has proved correct. An increase in intrastate conflict between ethnic groups characterised the end of the twentieth century. Following the Gulf War 1991, the British Army experienced a period of involvement in Operations Other Than War (OOTW), e.g. Bosnia (1992), Rwanda (1994), Kosovo (1999) and Sierra Leone (2000). Rather than deploying overwhelming high-tech force with heavy firepower (as the US has tended to) the British emphasis was one of low-key soldiering¹² and a policing role employing the tenet of minimum necessary force.¹³ This was exemplified in the Balkans deployments of the 1990s where the necessity to build a framework of trust and confidence required restraint despite the panoply of military hardware available to commanders.¹⁴ This restraint and philosophy of minimum force is born of the same pragmatism and Victorian values that enabled a small British Army to rule an Empire and then withdraw from it reasonably painlessly.¹⁵ Historically the British appear to have excelled in small wars, whilst our American counterparts have always painted on a larger canvass. In practice, this has meant that the British remain closer to the Clausewitzian approach and that the organisation is more aware of the political significance of its actions. Whilst the British operational experience has always been constructed in terms of political endpoints it is perhaps, the luxury of unchallenged power that seems to have inoculated the United States from such basic constraints.

The ascendancy of the United States, the surviving hegemon, and its all pervasive influence in cultural, economic political and military affairs has become the strategic reality of the post Cold War era. Their dramatically increased situational awareness, responsive processes and ability to maintain a high tempo of operations underwrites the unparalleled dominance of the US in high-intensity war fighting. The paradox is that overwhelming military superiority and the virtual guarantee of success in conventional warfare has prompted potential adversaries to seek alternative courses of combat. A new form of warfare is evolving as insurgents, revolutionaries and terrorists recognise that attempting to win by conventional means is futile. Thus, conflict in the twenty-first century is no longer limited to linear battlefronts and mass manoeuvre, as demonstrated during recent events in Iraq and Afghanistan. The vital ground is the information domain, as adversaries seek to directly attack the minds' of the decision makers to destroy political will, in a new form of warfare defined by Lind as

¹¹ Van Creveld,(1991).

¹² Mockaitis,(1995),p.117.

¹³ Kaldoe,(1999),p.171.

¹⁴ Stewart,(1993),p.16.

¹⁵ Thornton,(2004),p.83.

Fourth Generation Warfare.¹⁶ The new agile, intellectually prepared enemy (the advanced irregular warrior) no longer visualises war as a primarily military function but uses all available networks – political, economic, social and military to achieve his ends.¹⁷ The concept of ‘war beyond limits’ includes domestic terrorism, hacking into financial and information networks, media manipulation as well as hybrids of conventional warfare and insurgency.¹⁸ The success of the advanced irregular warrior is evident in Somalia and Chechnya and in the on-going conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan where the superficially most powerful force failed or is struggling to achieve its strategic objectives.¹⁹

The altered security landscape was eloquently captured in an observation by former CIA Director James Woolsey, *“We have slain a large dragon, but are now finding ourselves living in a jungle with a bewildering number of poisonous snakes, in many ways, the dragon was easier to keep track of.”*²⁰ The multiple dilemmas of the twenty-first century geopolitical situation remain in a continual flux. Whilst no forecast can guarantee what lies over the next hill, certain features of the current security environment are likely to remain extant for the foreseeable future. Factors, such as global poverty, environmental degradation and disease patterns can provide appreciable trends and it is possible to estimate several probable flashpoints. There are already:

*“32 failed states within 20 complex emergencies declared by the UN, five of these in Africa. There are 66 countries with millions of refugees, 59 countries with plagues and epidemics, 41 countries using child soldiers, 33 countries with massive starvation, and active genocide now ongoing in 18 places, three of these in Indonesia.”*²¹

The emergence of influential Non-State actors within the international system alters economic, political, military and cultural dynamics. Globalisation of technology, transport and communications creates economic volatility and is frequently accompanied by the export of violence and instability. Ethnic and religious tensions are further compounded by contests over artificially created borders, climate change and natural disasters. It is response to the continuum of multi-dimensional threats, the spread of anarchy and international terrorism that a policy of security through pre-emption (a need to combat threats to national security before they hit the home shore) has arisen.

¹⁶ Lind et al (1989),p.22.

¹⁷ Hammes,(2004),p.224.

¹⁸ Liang & Xiangsui (1999),p.5.

¹⁹ Griffin,(2005),p.226.

²⁰ Woolsey, (1996),p.xi.

²¹ Steele,(2004).

The UK Government's policy of wider involvement in twenty-first century international affairs is based on the concept that failed and failing states not only present humanitarian dilemmas, but more importantly a safe haven and breeding ground for international terrorists. Whilst British involvement in OOTW during the 1990s may be considered as involvement in wars of choice, the events of 9/11 have conferred a strategic validity upon the commitment of military forces to international causes as a key to providing national security.

*"preventing states from failing and resuscitating those that fail is one of the strategic imperatives of our times."*²²

Jack Straw UK Foreign Secretary 06 September 2002.

The first six years of the twenty-first century have seen the displacement of conventional conflict by irregular warfare. Whilst of lower intensity, conflict is becoming a continuum of effort that persists in multiple dimensions in environments, which are 'grim and gritty, fraught with complexity and chaos.'²³ Analysis of current security trends indicates that the British Army of the twenty-first century is unlikely to meet a predictable, readily templated enemy force. The new enemy will not operate by any clearly defined rules and will draw no distinction between civil or military targets.²⁴ Our new adversaries will seek to draw us into increasing levels of complexity and inhibit our ability to achieve information dominance or apply the full range of our capabilities.²⁵ Based on the recent experience of US and UK troops and the probability of likely flashpoints, it is concluded that the major challenge of the future operational environments is the transposition of war into centres of population. Apart from the physical dynamics of urban warfare the human constituents of the urban landscape create a unique friction that must be overcome. Engagement with the civilian population is essential to ensure freedom of action. This engagement will rely on cultural awareness and a credible action/reaction cycle that will be subjected to legal and ethical scrutiny under the ever-present media spotlight.

Critically, "potential adversaries monitoring developments in Iraq are likely to conclude that counterinsurgency is a major weakness of Western Military forces,"²⁶ especially in the urban environment. By conducting a series of dilemmas simultaneously from air, ground and sea the new opponent will attempt to disrupt and disorientate. Key targets are not necessarily the military but the agents of stabilisation, fundamental to a politically, economically and socially stable state. Targets

²² Straw,(2002).

²³ Krulak,(1999).

²⁴ Lindley-French,(2004), pp.1-15.

²⁵ Couzens, (2006),p.2.

²⁶ Bensahel,(2006),p.278.

that the military will need to protect. General Krulak's description of the 3 Block War²⁷ is an apt description of modern geographically based conflict featuring networked, dispersed individuals using terrorist tactics, surrounded by non-combatants within an urban setting.²⁸ The response to such tactics demands a joint ability to deliver a range of physical and cognitive effects across all dimensions of the strategic environment, through the application of a much broader range of techniques.²⁹ The military must be prepared for an opponent that will continually adapt to avoid strengths and exploit any perceived weakness. With the emerging phenomenon of trans-regional militancy, supported by cybernetic networks and nodes "the [rapid] spread of state of the art insurgency tactics that have prove effective elsewhere"³⁰ will be a recurring phenomenon.

The analysis of potential trends in warfare and the rise in intra-state conflict would tend to indicate a need to re-orientate and develop an enhanced ability to respond to the 'advanced irregular warrior' and his panoply of kinetic and non-kinetic effects. The Army should prepare for protracted, manpower intensive operations with conceptually and technologically adaptive opponents. However, caution must be exercised in attempting to predict the future as over confidence may lead to good preparation but for the wrong war. Despite its intuitive appeal, the 'new paradigm of war amongst the people'³¹ should not obliterate the potential for conventional war. Traditional state-based risks will continue to exist. Iran with its track record of xenophobic foreign policy and support for terrorism and the paranoid, totalitarian regime in North Korea will continue to pose conventional and nuclear threats, threats that are unlikely to disappear in the near future. The rise of China also creates a need for military capabilities that support a policy of 'robust deterrence and dissuasion'.³² However, most strategic planners agree that in the near term the likelihood of global or nuclear war is minimal.

The real dilemma facing strategic planners is that the vision of future warfare cannot be conveniently captured by a single paradigm. The 2020 international environment is likely to be characterised by constant tension and intensifying competition; the quandary is how this will manifest itself. By its very nature the future remains unpredictable but an expectation and preparation for a broad range of armed conflicts does offer contingency against the inevitable phenomenon of surprise. Strategic planners cannot afford to assume that conventional war fighting is obsolete, it must be assumed that combating the spread of terrorism and reviving failed states will encompass both regular

²⁷ Krulak,(1999).

²⁸ Couzens,(2006),p.3.

²⁹ Couzens,(2006),p.22.

³⁰ Bensahel,(2006),p.278.

³¹ Smith, (2006),p.3.

³² Fitzsimmons,(2006),p.131.

and irregular combat.³³ The range of options afforded by joint operations means that they remain the cornerstone of most potential military responses to the new threats.³⁴ However, a purely military solution is unable to comprehensively deal with the new combination of threats. A range of culturally sensitive political, social, economic initiatives must be integrated. The Army must be prepared to work alongside an assortment of actors that will populate the future battle space.

In accepting Van Crefeld's argument for the continuing utility of the Land Component, the current trends of change in strategic environment and the advancements in technology must affect the way in which the Army organises and conducts operations. The British Army has been accused of being a prisoner of history, learning lessons from the last war in order to prepare for the next. It continues to believe that by preparing for major war, it also enables it to prepare for lesser conflicts and that is the current doctrine.³⁵ Indeed preparation for war in Europe during the Cold War era, the legacy of imperial expeditionary forces and counter-insurgency experience has been beneficial in the training, doctrine and procedures currently at play in the Middle East. If, as Major General Richards states, "conflict in 2020 will fundamentally be no different to today,"³⁶ then the hard lessons learnt in conflict must not be disregarded. Good practices must be retained if the potential for the British Army to adapt to 'war amongst the people' is to be realised whilst retaining conventional war-fighting capabilities. Combat proficiency will still be required but Land forces must ensure that these skills are matched by an aptitude for peacekeeping and ability to support and if necessary carry out humanitarian tasks.

The new global security issues and developing trends in warfare have forced a re-evaluation of the posture and organisation of the Army. Whilst the relatively lean organisation that developed in the post Cold War era was focused on facing conventional state sponsored forces planners are now creating a modular force capable of a wider spectrum of expeditionary and joint operations. The change, which is obviously needed, does not, however need to be wholesale. The current challenge is for planners to embrace that which is beneficial and exploit potential without being transfixed by technology.

The requirement for a responsive flexible multi-force package, capable of rapid deployment, strategic mobility and tactical speed³⁷ was acknowledged and set out in *Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities* (2004). Developments to produce a balanced expeditionary

³³ Grey,(2005),p.190.

³⁴ Griffin,(2006),p.231.

³⁵ Strachan,(2006),p.ix.

³⁶ Couzens,(2006),p.22.

³⁷ Hoffman,(2006),p.399.

force, with a medium to light capability, whilst retaining some heavy capability for the conventional threat have been implemented. Under Future Army Structures (FAS), the Army is moving towards a more balanced deployable force organised around two armoured brigades, three mechanised brigades, a light brigade and an air assault brigade, supported by appropriate deployable specialist units.³⁸

The planned re-orientation for a more expeditionary Army has altered its equipment requirements and consequently there is a demand for rapidly deployable, multi-role systems that can operate in a range of environments. Given the long lead in times, procurement of the right equipment capable of fulfilling its tasks will create a lag in the realisation of FAS. Significantly, the equipment procured today must be able to meet changing threats throughout its often-long service life. Consideration must be given to the whole range of potential missions, potential allies and collaborative partners as well as the nature of the opponent. This places a premium on the ability to upgrade and adapt equipment through life, particularly in information and communication systems. The joint approach to operations also requires increasing compatibility of equipment systems across all three Services. In pure economic terms, such an approach makes absolute sense but there are also major benefits in terms of the logistic burden, re-supply and maintenance. The amalgamation of the three separate Service Procurement departments under the umbrella of the Defence Procurement Agency (DPA) has streamlined a number of anachronistic practices and improved the potential for compatibility of equipment across all three Services. Unfortunately, this has come too late for many of the British Army vehicles procured under FRES. Designed to be air transportable, the dimensions of FRES are not compatible with the newly procured A400 tactical lift aircraft. The re-invigoration of 'Smart Acquisition' principles and individual project governance to ensure performance, cost and time targets are met has potential to re-dress many of the procurement disasters of the last 20 years. However, if the current decline in Defence spending (down from 5.3% GDP in 1983-84 to 2.3% GDP in 2006) continues British troops will retain their reputation as "the best trained but worst equipped advanced military in the world."³⁹

To fulfil its expeditionary role effectively, the British Army needs to deploy rapidly. To achieve this it requires on-call strategic lift, ideally air transport. With no organic strategic lift capability, the Army relies on support from the RAF and Royal Navy. However, the deficit in RAF strategic lift capability forces the Army to contract civilian aircraft for deployments. A similar lack of strategic maritime lift also demands a civilian solution, which has the potential to limit rapidity of deployment. The challenge of co-ordinating deployment (whether by military or civilian assets) and its subsequent

³⁸ MOD Annual Report 2005-2006.

³⁹ The Business, 24 Jan 2007.

sustainment has been addressed with the creation of a Joint Force Logistic Command, as the single authority for the coupling-bridge and lines of communication. The trend towards centralised logistic control has streamlined the logistic process, leading to a more efficient use of resources. This will be augmented in the near future with a system capable of tracking assets and material, improving visibility of both assets (in the civilian and military arenas) and requirements. The multi-dimensional aspect of future warfare means that in addition to the military a broad range of non-military personnel must also be sustained, such as the media (e.g. embedded journalists), civil servants from Other Government Departments (OGDs, i.e. Dfid) and potentially other contributing nations. Catering for the additional demands and meeting civilian expectations remains a challenge yet to be comprehensively addressed.

Future operations will see increasing integration of the British Army with not only the other two Services but a myriad of other agencies. At the national level, this will certainly include OGDs. At the international level, deployment of the British Army as part of a Coalition force is highly probable whether this be with the US or European partners. Pivotal to any Joint/Coalition operation is communication and co-ordination. This demands a robust networked information management system to collect, process, disseminate and use information and intelligence effectively.

For Land component commanders to exploit the chaos and confusion of the future land environment they need responsive means of control and a communication system with resolution of the environment that allows Air, Maritime and other agencies to react to the short notice demands of the Land commanders. With multiple operators, air-ground synchronisation of effect is imperative to avoid Blue-on-Blue. Whilst technological aids such as 'Blue-Force Tracker are available there is currently no all pervasive communication system available. Sufficient bandwidth and connectivity could be created but the realisation of a network with an all informed, constantly updated cross-environment picture is technically challenging. Aside from the technical difficulties, the security and OPSEC issues are immense and the risks of information overload are high unless advances in data management, sifting and compression can be achieved.⁴⁰

As observed by Major General Dutton, Commander UK Amphibious Forces, "a common or consistent operating picture, is a useful start, this must be matched by a common understanding of the information provided."⁴¹ Technological advances are already providing greater granularity to situational awareness through improved connectivity and shared situational awareness but issues remain, particularly at the environmental seams. The first phase of the provision of a Networked

⁴⁰ Couzens, (2006),p.42.

⁴¹ Couzens, (2006),p.44.

Enabled Capability (NEC), the progressive roll out of the Defence Information Infrastructure (DII), the Joint Operational Command system which links UK Forces and headquarters worldwide and Skynet 5 (satellite communications), is starting to deliver information management benefits. However, it is not simply about acquiring the right equipment and technology. It is more about the way in which all the organisations involved in national security integrate and make best use of information to deliver effects based approach to operations.

This new technology is a double-edged sword. It affords commanders an increasing ability to gather detailed battlespace information through the NEC long-telescope. It also has the potential to allow higher-level commanders to drill down to the tactical level and impose their views via a 'long-handled screwdriver'. Great emphasis will need to be placed on the restricted use of the NEC enabled 'long-handled screwdriver'. This must be bound together with the development of a command culture that will resist reaction unless it is evidently appropriate to do so. Used properly NEC has the ability to facilitate the formulation and rapid dissemination of commanders intent and act as an enabler to mission command.

The British Army doctrine of mission command remains highly relevant within the context of twenty-first century war-fighting. Its success lies in the clear and unambiguous expression of intent and its subsequent cascade down through all subordinate levels. This allows unity of effort, freedom of action, trust and timely and effective decision making. However, the expected future requirement for the British Army to operate amongst wider military coalitions and with increasing numbers of non-military organisations makes mission command a more complex issue. Tensions are bound to arise, even within the three Services and the civilian elements of Defence style and approach to command and control varies. Difficulties have been overcome by the current joint concept of the Supported/Supporting construct, which remains useful without disrupting the individual Service characteristics of command and control. Attempts to enforce a single pan-Services approach to command and control have been resisted on the grounds that its application in the joint arena will produce a sub-optimum compromise. Even with common operating procedures managing the interfaces between different actors and developing the human aspects of interoperability becomes a critical factor in planning and executing campaigns. The UK/US interoperability problems during Op TELIC at the Land/Maritime boundaries were principally human interoperability rather than technical. The issues tended to centre on a more centralised US command style, which continually referred problems upwards for resolution.⁴² Steps are being taken to militate against the 'human factor' through collaborative planning, war-gaming and the development of working relationships across

⁴² Couzens, (2006),p.48.

Services and agencies. Joint training and exercises involving all agencies have been initiated. However, significant financial and human investment in this area is required if the joint operational challenges of the future are to be met.

Future warfare will remain manpower intensive. However, the manpower requirements include a broad range of civilians (Government and Non-Government, national and multi-national) as well as military personnel whose roles, functions and processes must be integrated and co-ordinated in order to effectively address crises.⁴³ It is understood that the nature of future campaigns must be planned using a holistic framework with a series of mutually supporting lines of activity. Critical to success in these new “war[s] amongst the people,”⁴⁴ will be the information domain, not only intelligence but public and international opinion. Culturally sensitive media operations and influence activities will be significant effectors and must be carefully targeted to maximise impact throughout the whole of a campaign. The effects of influence operations must be diligently monitored and measured to inform all agencies of the next move or action

Perhaps the most poignant lesson from the US experience in Somalia 1992-1993 was the lack of appreciation, by the US forces, of the Somali population as a psychologically distinct entity and a lack of understanding and unfamiliarity that extended across the whole gamut of organizations (e.g. other national contingents in the UN force and the wide range of Humanitarian Relief organizations that had been working in Somalia since 1980). It was the lack of a culturally sensitive focus to a campaign, which relied on winning over the will of the people that ultimately undermined the mission.

With almost all future conflicts requiring ‘hearts and minds’ to be won in parallel with achieving military objectives, culture has become a strategic factor in its own right. It has a critical influence on the cognitive dimension of war and a balance has to be struck in achieving effects through the integration of kinetic and non-kinetic means. The British Army has an historical legacy of ‘hearts and minds’ operations, lessons learned are being revised and successfully adapted to current conflicts with an emphasis on a culture-centric approach. British experience in Malaya, Kenya, Aden and Borneo all show that an integrated co-ordinated interagency approach can win the war of ideas rather than just winning battles on the field. The major challenges faced by contemporary commanders are the synchronisation and harmonisation of effects and the lack of feedback mechanisms available to identify, measure and critically assess the effectiveness of any activity and thus inform the next move. With significant lag between application and realisation of effect, the ability to measure non-kinetic

⁴³ Grossman-Vermass,(2006),p.207.

⁴⁴ Smith,(2006),p.3.

effects is very demanding. Further research and development is currently underway, with doctrine already reflecting the requirement for Measures of Effectiveness.

It is becoming clear that in order to contribute to success the British Army must be prepared to rapidly change its posture to reflect the changing security demands of the political and socio-economic spheres as well as the military arena. Recent events in Iraq and Afghanistan have clearly demonstrated that it is not just a case of winning battles but there is a necessity to fill the power vacuum; starting with establishing security and building effective governance. Failing to fill a post-conflict vacuum undermines the overall strategic objectives of an operation and allows insurgency to take root. As counterinsurgencies require extensive military, diplomatic and economic resources over prolonged periods of time, prevention is better than cure. Ensuring basic security in the immediate aftermath of conflict is essential. In most cases Land forces, whilst not ideally suited for civilian policing tasks, may be the only available option until an indigenous or international civilian police force can take on the security responsibilities. Similarly military engineering and health assets must also be prepared to initiate re-construction in conjunction with humanitarian organisations as part of the conflict resolution process. Unfortunately, the historical legacy of earlier defence reviews has significantly reduced manpower and capability in all three areas creating a capability gap that must be addressed, but is not insurmountable.

To avert prolonged counter insurgency in a post conflict environment requires a fully engaged joint approach to conflict and its resolution. Work has already commenced on the development of a concept known as the Comprehensive Approach. This holistic view of conflict draws upon a broad range of actors, across many mutually supporting lines of activity and ensures that conditions are created that are conducive to the stabilisation and post conflict regeneration processes. This interagency system for the co-ordination of action across governmental and non-governmental organisations integrates both kinetic and non-kinetic attack to achieve the desired effects and longer term outcomes. The very long-term nature of the Comprehensive Approach limits the assessment of its recent application in current operations. However, critical analysis of some of the short term and intermediate outcomes supports the utility of this approach.

In preparing for the joint operational challenges of the future, strategic planners have focussed on the 'most likely', considered to be irregular warfare away from the home base. The British Army has successfully embarked on a re-orientation and re-structuring process. These processes are complemented by doctrine and the procurement of adaptable equipment suitable for a twenty-first century joint expeditionary force. Thus ensuring that the British Army is set to become a more agile, flexible modular animal capable of rapid deployment and multi-agency interoperability.

Physically and psychologically, the British Army is adapting to a future battlespace that is more ambiguous and non-linear. It has been recognised that regular warfare will occur, but it is likely to rapidly disintegrate into insurgency and a continuation of conflict as a 'war amongst the people'. Drawing on its historical legacy, it clearly understands that the human dimension remains critical, with the need for 'hearts and minds' to be won in parallel with achieving military objectives and this is reflected in doctrine. However, consideration of the force structure and capabilities required in a post conflict environment would indicate the need for additional investment in the Provost, Engineering and Medical branches of the Army.

Combating the multiple dilemmas created by the new advanced warrior will require an increasing horizontal integration of naval, land, air and non-military actions to achieve given ends. Thus, whilst superficially operations may be of lower intensity they will entail higher levels of complexity arising from inter-agency working and synchronising different working processes. This will be achieved through the adoption of the Comprehensive Approach, facilitated by new command communication technology, which will also improve the level of situational awareness. To capitalise on the technological advances and build on the human dimension of multi-agency working, continued investment in training with all agencies across the whole conflict spectrum has been accepted.

The ingenuity of the irregular warrior, the latent but persisting threat of aggressor state action requires perseverance along a path of joint adaptation to meet the new security threats. However, in continuing to understanding the new threat dynamic and building on lessons learnt the Army is able to maintain its adaptable, flexible posture in preparation for the joint operational challenges of the future.

Critics have condemned the military as an organisation slow to change but in considering the three areas of force structure, equipment and multi-agency interoperability, the British Army has done much to prepare itself for the joint operational challenges of the future. The re-orientation of the Army articulated in *Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities* (2004), has provided a solid base for the future evolution of the British Army and its adaptation to the new security threats up to 2030.

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