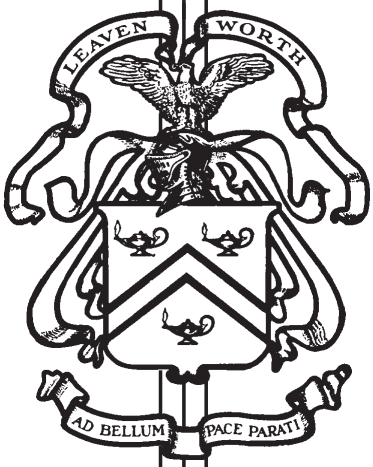
COMPOUND WARFARE
That Fatal Knot

Thomas M. Huber
General Editor



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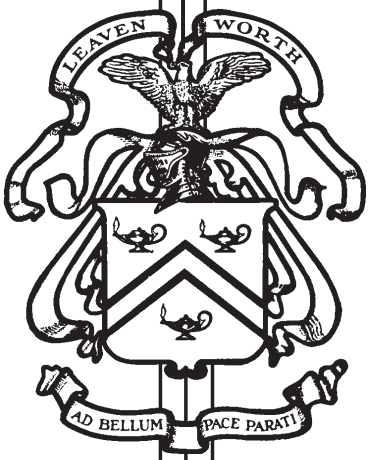

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T. M. H.

Contents

Acknowledgments iii

Preface.....vii

Compound Warfare: A Conceptual Framework 1
Thomas M. Huber

The Wars of Colonial North America, 1690-1763.....11
Michael D. Pearlman

Washington as Strategist: Compound Warfare in the American Revolution, 1775-1783.....53
Jerry D. Morelock

Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare 91
Thomas M. Huber

Compound Warfare on the Great Plains: A Missed Opportunity ...113
Jerold E. Brown

The Anglo-Irish War of 1919-1921: "Britain's Troubles—Ireland's Opportunities" 135
John T. Broom

Compound Warfare in the Military Thought and Practice of Mao Zedong and the Chinese People's Liberation Army's Huai Hai Campaign (November 1948-January 1949).....169
Gary J. Bjorge

Compound Warfare in the Vietnam War 221
Randall N. Briggs

Compound War Case Study: The Soviets in Afghanistan 285
Robert F. Baumann

Conclusion.....307
Robert F. Baumann

About the Contributors.....317

Preface

In the long history of warfare, a recurring theme is the combined use of regular and irregular forces to pursue victory. The American colonists relied upon regular Continental Army troops and local militia in their war for independence. British troops commanded by Wellington fought alongside Spanish peasant guerrillas against Napoleon in Spain. The Chinese Communists under Mao Zedong organized local militia units, regional forces, and a regular army for use in their struggle to topple the Nationalist government. In these and many other cases, the practice of employing regular and irregular forces together was not only applied, but also instrumental in bringing victory to the side that at the beginning of the conflict seemed clearly inferior to its opponent.

In 1996, in an article entitled "Napoleon in Spain," Dr. Thomas M. Huber of the Combat Studies Institute (CSI) coined the term "compound warfare" to describe this phenomenon of regular and irregular forces fighting in concert, as he examined the reasons for Napoleon's failure to pacify the Iberian Peninsula. The article, written to support CSI's course in modern warfare at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, received high praise from student officers, from the CSI faculty, and from the Institute's director at the time, Colonel Jerry Morelock. Impressed by Dr. Huber's analysis of the synergistic effects achieved by Wellington's British Army and Spanish guerrillas as they worked together against Napoleon's forces, Col. Morelock suggested that other members of CSI examine examples of this pattern of warfare in other times and places. This book is a compilation of their studies.

While the basic concept of compound warfare is easily grasped, in practice, the phenomenon can assume many forms. Dr. Huber's initial chapter provides a conceptual framework that can be used to facilitate analysis of the problem. The most straightforward form of compound warfare is that in which one side has a regular (conventional) force and irregular (unconventional) forces fighting under unified direction. In this situation, the full complementary effects of compound warfare can be realized, as each type of force conducts operations that give full expression to its own capabilities. A crucial aspect of the complementary relationship between regular and irregular forces is the way in which they increase the number and the variety of threats faced by the enemy. Irregular force operations pressure an enemy to disperse forces that otherwise would be concentrated against regular forces.

Regular force movements pressure an enemy to concentrate forces that he would like to disperse to counter irregular force attacks. Unless the enemy has forces large enough and mobile enough to engage all threatening actions by both types of forces simultaneously and effectively, the side possessing regular and irregular forces should be able to achieve local superiority in certain places at certain times. That local superiority is critical because it establishes a foundation upon which to build a larger, more capable force structure and fight even harder.

The importance of achieving local superiority is addressed by Dr. Huber in his development of the idea of "fortified" (strengthened) compound warfare. This variation of compound warfare exists, according to Dr. Huber's definition, when a regular force is shielded from destruction in some definitive way. This situation can be created when a regular force has superior agility and mobility, has an advantage in technology, is protected by terrain, or has constructed a strong defensive position. It might also be created by diplomatic activity and the establishment of an alliance with a major power that can exert military pressure on the enemy. When an entity fighting compound warfare reaches the point where it is "fortified" (possesses indestructible local superiority in some area), there is room for optimism about its prospects for future success.

While there can be significant differences between "fortified" compound warfare and the simple form of compound warfare, what they have in common is that a regular force and an irregular force coordinate their operations. But what of a conflict where irregular guerrillas fighting for a cause act independently from a regular conventional army? Can the dynamics of compound warfare still be present? That issue is addressed in the essays dealing with Ireland and Afghanistan. In both cases, an *equivalent* for a regular army existed and that equivalent served to limit the military resources that were directed against the guerrillas. It is also possible for there to be an equivalent for the major-power ally that Huber makes a major feature of "fortified" compound warfare. In the Chinese civil war, central Communist direction over regular conventional and irregular guerrilla units made this a case of simple compound warfare. But this war became a variant of "fortified" compound war when the Imperial Japanese Army invaded China and inadvertently aided the Communists by forcing the Nationalist government to withdraw troops from campaigns designed to exterminate Mao's forces. Unintentionally, the Japanese army performed a service for the Communists equivalent to what could be

expected from a major-power ally. Clearly, while the concept of compound warfare is simple, the dynamic relationships and effects of compound warfare can take many different shapes and appear in many different environments.

This collection contains studies of conflicts that occurred in three different centuries and in many different social, political, economic, and military environments. While the cases examined are dissimilar in numerous ways, they are linked by the presence within them of some variant of compound warfare. Dr. Michael Pearlman's essay on eighteenth-century Indian wars describes an environment in which a wide variety of military operators were interacting. Pearlman concludes that French and British adversaries both employed elements of compound warfare. Dr. Jerry Morelock's study evaluates Washington's achievement as a main force commander in a compound warfare environment. Dr. Huber's analysis of Napoleon's long campaign in Spain—the seminal article on compound warfare—illuminates the ingenious methods of the phenomenon practiced by Wellington. Dr. Jerold Brown's treatment of Indian warfare on the Great Plains explores lost opportunities of the U.S. Army to employ compound warfare methods. Dr. John Broom's article on the Anglo-Irish conflict (1919) analyzes the multiple pressures the Irish independence movement sought to apply to the British. Dr. Gary Bjorge's analysis of the Huai Hai campaign shows how Mao Zedong, one of the modern masters of compound warfare, brought its tenets to bear against Chiang Kai-shek in the Chinese civil war. Randall Briggs' view of the American experience in Vietnam sheds light on the complex problems the United States faced in the compound warfare environment there and how America tried to resolve those problems. Dr. Robert Baumann's essay on the Soviet war in Afghanistan surveys Afghan tribesmen using compound warfare methods effectively against the Soviet Union.

All of these case studies contain information on their respective conflicts that may be new to readers. That may be reason enough to read them. But what should prove to be most stimulating about this collection is the common application and examination of the compound warfare concept that all the studies share. Approaching these conflicts from this abstract perspective will give readers a better sense of why these conflicts developed as they did. One can hope as well that this collection will also allow readers to understand better the powerful dynamics that are present in that pattern of warfare in which regular and irregular forces are used in concert. Even as this work first goes to print,

a new variant of compound warfare has surfaced in the Afghan theater of the global war on terrorism. There, technologically sophisticated guerrillas (allied Special Operations Forces) are supporting a much larger but relatively unsophisticated conventional force to achieve a stunning victory over a common foe. Knowing how the dynamics of compound warfare have affected the outcome of past conflicts will better prepare us to meet both present crises and future challenges of a similar nature.

Combat Studies Institute
August 2002

Compound Warfare: A Conceptual Framework

Thomas M. Huber

Napoleon Bonaparte called his disastrous war in Spain "that fatal knot."[1] Throughout history, talented commanders have been often perplexed, and sometimes defeated, by the challenges posed by guerrilla warfare, and especially guerrilla warfare used in concert with a regular force. The long history of warfare is replete with instances where regular forces and irregular forces have been used together. In some cases, the outcomes of these conflicts have seemed to defy analysis because weak forces have defeated strong ones and because victory in battle has not led to victory in war. How did ragtag Spanish guerrillas defeat the mighty legions of Napoleon? How were the Viet Cong able to stand so long against the overwhelming strategic might of the United States? Spain (1808 to 1814) and Vietnam (1965 to 1973) are two of the best known examples of this kind of warfare, but students of history know of many others. The "compound warfare" [CW] conceptual framework is a new way of approaching these troublesome cases where regular forces and irregular forces have been used synergistically. The term "compound" is used because there are two different force elements in play that complement, or compound, each other's effects.

Compound Warfare

What is compound warfare? Compound warfare is the simultaneous use of a regular or main force and an irregular or guerrilla force against an enemy. In other words, the CW operator increases his military leverage by applying both conventional and unconventional force at the same time.[2] In this essay, the term "CW operator" usually means the overall commander in a CW struggle who effectively directs it, though the term may also be applied to other CW leaders.[3] Compound warfare most often occurs when all or part of a minor power's territory is occupied by an intervening major power. Usually one country will not be disposed to, or succeed in, occupying another unless it has superior force. However, once the greater power's forces are distributed over the lesser power's territory, the lesser power is then in a position to conduct compound warfare.

The great advantage of resorting to compound warfare is that it pressures the enemy to both mass and disperse at the same time. If the enemy masses, the CW operator's irregular force may attack and damage his lines of communication. If the enemy disperses to protect his lines of communication (LOCs), the CW operator's regular force may destroy him in detail. By greatly increasing the security problems faced by his enemy, the CW operator gains disproportionate leverage over him. Facing a double challenge may in itself make the enemy irresolute and keep him off balance. In other words, CW methods allow the operator to impose more pressure on his enemy than that operator could if he were using all his assets in one way.

In many respects, the operations of the regular force and of the irregular force are complementary. The irregular force provides important advantages to the regular force. It conveys superior intelligence information while suppressing enemy intelligence. It makes food and supplies available to the main force or expedites their passage through its territory. It denies food and supplies to the enemy and interdicts his passage. It may augment the personnel of the main force itself if need be by adding to it combat power or labor power at key moments. It may also attrit the personnel strength of the adversary. In sum, the irregular force enhances the effort of the regular force by offering information, goods, and troops, while denying them to the enemy.

Similarly, the regular force can provide important advantages to local irregular forces. Pressure from the main force can oblige the enemy to withdraw and relocate troops from localities in which the guerrillas are operating, thus giving the irregular forces greater freedom of action. The main force may furnish specialized training, equipment, and funds to the guerrillas. The main force can provide strategic information, advising the guerrillas of when and where to act to accommodate the overall effort. If the irregulars are suppressed and forced into political passivity by enemy action, the friendly regular force, passing through the locality, can depose the collaborators, embolden the guerrillas, and revive their political and military activity. This main force provides the guerrilla force with relief from the enemy's presence in the locale, with training and supplies, with strategic information, and with local political leverage. All of these complementary interactions between regular and irregular forces make compound warfare an especially effective form of warfare, one in which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Historically, there have been many instances of compound war. The most famous cases in the early modern period are perhaps those of Washington's lieutenants—Nathaniel Greene and others—in the American War of Independence (1775 to 1883) and Wellington in Spain (1808 to 1814). The best known examples in the twentieth century are perhaps Mao Zedong in China's revolutionary wars (1927 to 1949) and Ho Chi-Minh in Vietnam's (1945 to 1975). Most serious students of military history can cite numerous cases of compound warfare and are aware that this is an especially effective form of war. Most would also agree that it is important to understand how compound warfare works and why it is so powerful.

Fortified Compound Warfare

Compound warfare is most often decisive when "fortified." This insight may be the most important and the most original element of CW analysis. Compound warfare, although it offers a formidable challenge to its adversaries, can usually be overcome by first destroying the CW defender's main force and then suppressing guerrilla activity region by region. Fortified compound warfare [FCW], by contrast, is rarely overcome. It has nearly always defeated its opponents because the adversary's necessary first step to victory, destroying the FCW defender's main force, is almost impossible. It is for this reason that, historically, minor-power FCW operators have often defeated strategically superior major-power adversaries.

"Fortification" means that the CW operator's main force is shielded from destruction in some definitive way. (The term "fortify" is used here in its original abstract sense of "strengthen." It can, but often does not, refer to constructed defensive positions. Alliances, diplomacy, technology, terrain, agility, and other factors can help achieve "fortification.") Why is fortification, the accomplished invulnerability of the main force, so often decisive in a CW environment? The impact of compound warfare's complementarities is formidable. Add to compound warfare the pattern of fortification, and it is almost insurmountable. Any CW operator who can exempt his main force from destruction usually can use it to protect, nourish, revive, or replace collaborating local guerrilla forces almost indefinitely. Such a favorable situation places a continuing, inescapable double pressure on the major-power adversary. Historically, two conditions occurring together seem usually to guarantee main-force invulnerability: safe haven and a major-power ally. If the CW operator has a safe haven where his regular force can shelter, and a major ally that is at least a peer

of his major-power adversary, then in theory the CW operator can keep his regular force in being indefinitely. The main force can thus also protect and nourish the CW operator's guerrilla force in a similar fashion.

Almost always the major-power adversary, faced with these simultaneous pressures indefinitely, sees his campaign to be futile or too costly and eventually abandons it. In other words, the adversary is defeated. Fortified compound warfare in its original formulation thus features four elements that sustain a minor power conducting an FCW defense: 1) a regular or main force, 2) an irregular or guerrilla force, 3) a safe haven for the regular force, and 4) a major-power ally. (The most advantageous position in an FCW situation is that of the major-power ally of the minor-power FCW operator. The major-power ally enjoys extravagant leverage on his strategic rival at little cost to himself.) Fortification makes the difference between compound warfare, which is difficult to defeat, and fortified compound warfare, which is nearly impossible to defeat. For planners, it is an important distinction.

We should note here that "safe haven" for purposes of this analysis is, like "fortification," used in an abstract sense. It may refer to an actual place of shelter, such as Wellington's safe camp behind the famous Torres Vedras lines. But it may also refer to any factors that allow the main force to withdraw to a place inaccessible to the enemy. Safe haven may thus be determined by the physical realities of defensive architecture or geography, but it may also be determined by technological, diplomatic, political, or other factors. In Southeast Asia, the Cambodian and North Vietnamese border zones represented a safe haven for the North Vietnamese army that was established by intangible diplomatic and political factors, not by geographical or physical factors. Logically, of course, any factor or combination of factors that assure the survival of the regular force indefinitely amounts to fortification. For example, superior agility for the regular force, combined with ample non-restrictive terrain and secure supply, would normally be sufficient to preserve that force. However, in historical cases, the combination of safe haven and major-power ally is the circumstance that most readily seems to accomplish fortification.

The FCW conceptual framework may be the element of the present study that is most original. Earlier writers, notably Mao Zedong, have extolled the advantages of using regular and irregular forces together. This cannot be said of the main tenets of FCW, which seem not to have been systematically developed by earlier writers. FCW tenets include the idea that indestructibility of the main force is the essence of

"quagmire" wars, such as Spain from 1808 to 1814 and Vietnam from 1965 to 1973. These conflicts have seemed to defy analysis in the past because even victorious operations have appeared to yield no resolution and because weak forces have appeared to defeat strong ones. Quagmire wars are wars that continue to be prosecuted after it has become obvious that the defending regular force is indestructible. The FCW conceptual framework facilitates examination of main force indestructibility and potential counter-strategies, something earlier writers have not done.[4] Because fortified compound warfare allows operators to fight and win, in almost every historical case, with conventional force ratios that would otherwise appear to be hopelessly inferior, it is likely to be encountered often in the future. Military planners thus need to understand the dynamics of this type of warfare before the event.

The Variety of Compound War

Although the model of compound warfare offered here has been kept simple in hopes that it will serve as a convenient framework for analysis, readers should remember that enormous variety exists in the historical cases of compound warfare. As in most other realms of military thought, the theory is simple but the reality is complex. The CW model assumes that one side in a CW conflict uses CW methods and the other does not. In reality, both sides may use CW methods. In most historical cases of compound warfare, one side uses CW methods predominantly; the other side deliberately uses them to the extent it is able. The model assumes two kinds of force, regular or conventional force, and irregular or guerrilla force. Several types of mobile regional militias may fall between these two poles and may contribute importantly to the leverage of the CW operator. In other words, various intermediate types of force are possible between the regular and irregular models promulgated here for simplicity.

The CW conceptual framework also assumes that all the CW operator's regular forces and irregular forces are coordinated. In the more complex reality, deliberate coordination may extend to all, some, one, or none of the military elements in play. If two powers or entities are operating independently against the same enemy and only one understands CW dynamics, he may shape his own operations so as to put CW pressure on the enemy even with no cooperation whatever from the other power or entity. This would be compound warfare done unilaterally; "coordination" is done by only one side. In other words, the advantages of the complementarity are achieved, but by the

deliberate action of only one participant. CW effects may even be achieved when two powers operate independently against the same enemy, with neither power grasping or intending to use CW dynamics. When each does what it does best, these separate powers may still end up putting CW pressures on that enemy, thus achieving compound warfare inadvertently.

One might think of this in terms of levels of coordination in compound warfare. The highest level of coordination is where one operator has both complete conceptual grasp of CW dynamics and complete command authority over all elements of the CW conflict, Mao Zedong being an example. At middle levels (unilateral compound war), at least one operator has conceptual understanding and effectively coordinates one or more of the elements. Wellington in Spain from 1808 to 1814 is an example of this. Wellington understood CW dynamics, but many of the Spanish guerrilla chiefs probably did not. Wellington partially overcame this problem by giving operational direction to some of the irregular units. At the lowest levels of coordination (inadvertent compound war), each military element may or may not have intellectual control and has operational control only of itself. An example may be the Indian tribes who attacked across the Texas frontier in the 1860s while Union and Confederate conventional forces contended elsewhere. Neither the Indians nor their inadvertent Union allies had any sense of waging compound warfare. Each belligerent fought its own war in its own way, without any coordination. Nevertheless, Texan defenders found themselves confronted with the classic CW dilemma.

The CW conceptual framework assumes that a conflict either is a compound war or is not. In reality, one finds degrees of compound warfare. There is compound warfare proper where all the elements of compound warfare are in place, and what one might call "quasi" compound warfare, where one or more elements of compound warfare are absent. For example, a conventionally organized regular force may be lacking, but functional equivalents of this apparently absent element may be in place, so that CW dynamics are still obtained. Some conventional conflicts, such as World War II, occasionally show large- or small-scale CW activities and CW effects—"concurrent" compound warfare. Hitler fought a conventional war in Europe, for example, but as part of that war had to counter CW methods as practiced by partisans in Russia, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere. Rather than attempt to account for every possible circumstance, the CW conceptual framework has been presented here in its most basic form so that it may serve to

facilitate analysis. The historical reality is, of course, extremely complex. The simple CW model, it is hoped, will give analysts a place to start in coping with these complexities.

Why Study Compound Warfare?

Why pursue a broader understanding of compound warfare? Why does the CW concept merit study? The compound warfare idea is especially useful as an intellectual framework for the analysis of quagmire wars, such as Napoleon in Spain or the U.S. in Vietnam, which yield outcomes that appear counterintuitive when simple force ratios are consulted. Moreover, a number of historical cases besides quagmire wars have shown the influence of CW dynamics, even though those dynamics were not always deducible from reports of discrete military operations. It is thus helpful for historians to have the CW conceptual framework at hand as a means of analyzing all these cases.

There are more pressing reasons than historiographical convenience for trying to master CW concepts, however. Planners of military operations in potential CW environments can better anticipate real consequences of military operations if they are alert to the usual dynamics and possibilities of compound warfare. It is especially important to be aware that compound warfare is usually decisive when fortified. It is far less costly to understand CW dynamics going in than to learn them in a harder school: failed operations. By grappling with a variety of theoretical issues here, readers will not only enhance their understanding of historical events but also develop insights that may lead to improved decision-making in the future.

Notes

1. Napoleon Bonaparte, *Memorial de Sainte-Helene, Vol 1* (Paris: 1961 [1823]), 609-10; quoted in John L. Tone, *The Fatal Knot: The Guerrilla War in Navarre and the Defeat of Napoleon in Spain* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 3.

2. For purely stylistic reasons the following three sets of terms are used interchangeably in this discussion to refer to the massed force and the dispersed force respectively: main force and guerrilla force, conventional force and unconventional force, and regular force and irregular force. Note that the "main force" used in this sense may not represent the "main effort," since in some cases the guerrillas may represent the main effort. Moreover, these terms refer to habitual tactical employment not organization, since a conventionally organized force may at times employ guerrilla tactics and vice versa.

3. "CW operator" refers here to several types of military commander or other authority (guerrilla leader, party official) controlling military forces in support of a CW struggle: a) anyone operating so as to contribute to a CW effort even if not aware of CW dynamics, b) anyone operating who is aware of and uses CW dynamics, and c) anyone who is operating and aware, but who also effectively controls all or most of the CW assets deployed, whether massed or dispersed. Thus the CW operator may be a guerrilla commander or a main force commander or both. He may be indigenous or expeditionary. There may be several or numerous CW operators fighting against the same adversary in a given environment. Usually by "CW operator," however, we mean the last of the above three types, namely the overall commander in a CW struggle who effectively directs it.

4. This analysis implies that if one wishes to win a quagmire war against a minor power conducting an FCW defense, then one must proceed by first attempting to defortify the adversary. In other words, one must attack his safe havens, his alliances, or whatever else provides him with effective fortification. Theoretically such efforts, if successful, may still allow an intervening power to prevail in a quagmire war. If these projects cannot be achieved, then the double pressures of fortified compound warfare will continue to bear.

The Wars of Colonial North America, 1690-1763

Michael D. Pearlman

Introduction

A recently published enquiry into the origins of war, approximately 5,000 years before the birth of Christ, differentiated the nature of armed conflict in two situations, those waged between like-minded agricultural settlements from those waged against the settlements by nomads grazing or hunting animals and gathering wild crops. Warfare of the first sort, pursued for land and sovereignty, tended to fall under a series of rituals and rules. Adult males monopolized combat exclusively conducted on an open battlefield. Stealth was considered cowardice and slaughter was averted, that is once one contestant surrendered autonomy by joining the victor's domain. These contours of conflict, for a series of reasons, went into abeyance when a nomadic tribe attacked a settled community. The contestants had nothing but contempt for each other's culture; it was a "clash of civilizations," to use a contemporary phrase. Emotions notwithstanding, practicality played a part. The nomadic bands on the attack lacked the means of transport to withdraw expeditiously the loot for which they fought. To discourage pursuit, they had to overrun their victim's community to prevent recovery and sow fear precluding plans for revenge. This would tend to dissolve the limits placed on warfare as well as modify the forms and style of war. Whatever manly contests nomads used to measure strength in their own ranks, they could not beat settlements of superior technology except by concealment, terror, and surprise.[1]

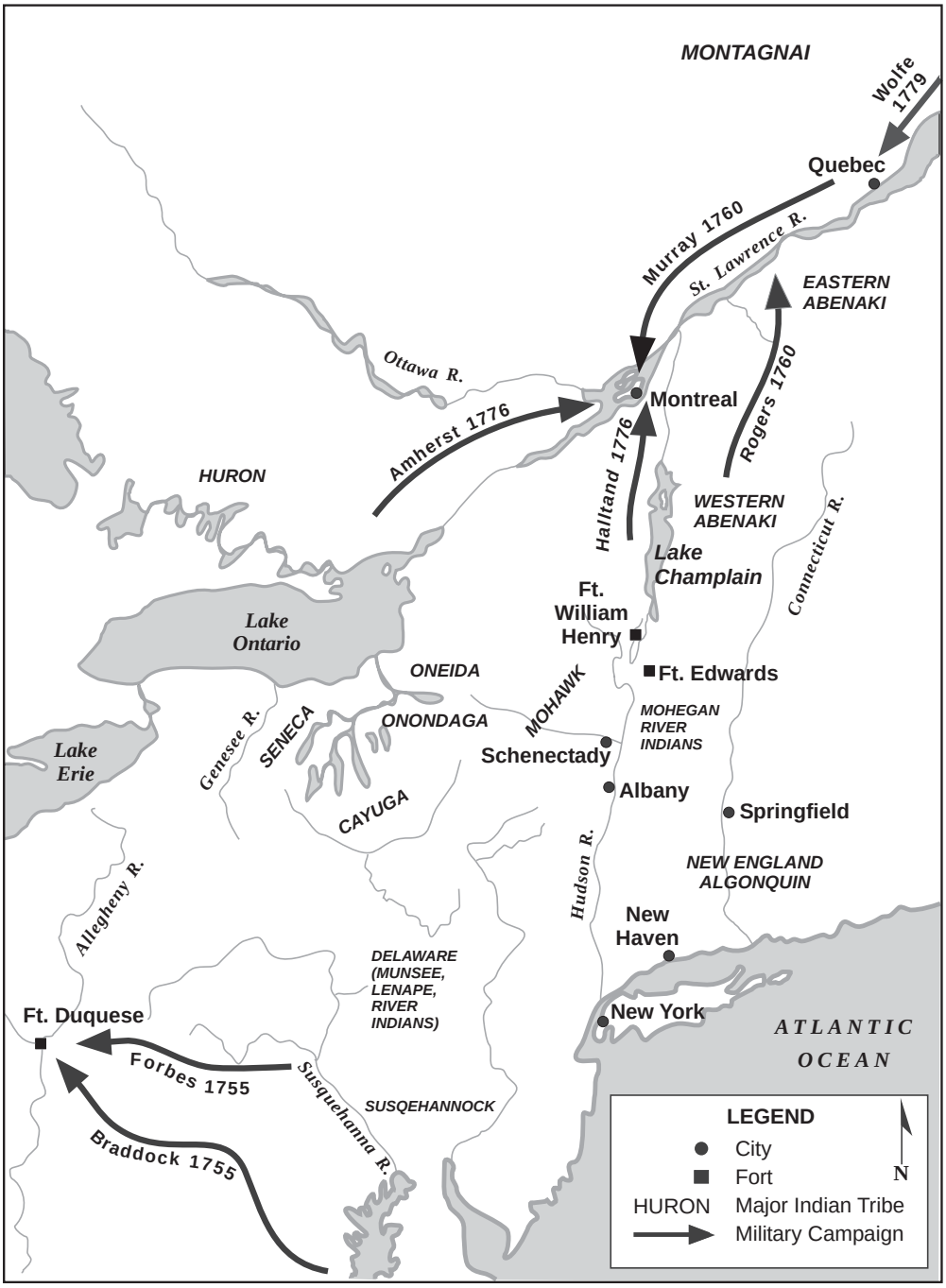
This general state of affairs, occurring long before the advent of extensive written records, must be pieced together through gravesites, artifacts, and other discoveries of archeology. The details of the story will never be known, but its main contours (as previously described) are not much different from events in the early period of modern European military history. From the 1500s, nation states were in the process of purging from their armies mercenary bands of irregular units conducting unconventional operations. This course of change was largely completed by the 1750s, the decisive decade in the century of struggle between Britain and France for rule in North America. The physical and political requirements of this particular theater (described

in the coming paragraphs) necessitated reintroducing force structures and tactics then fading from conflicts between nations on the Continent, except for special Hungarian auxiliaries originally used along and on the outskirts of Christendom in raiding party warfare against the Turkish Empire. In the New World, where irregulars were far more important, both sides sought allies among Native Americans, who held the balance of military power. Still, notwithstanding the skills Indians had in scouting and ambush, European-bred officers deemed them unreliable, much like earlier European mercenaries. Hence, Britain and France sought to incorporate Indian tactical capabilities by assigning unconventional missions, first to their colonists and then to special light infantry units in their regular armed forces. This practice was inspired by the belief that these particular units, manned by White Christians, could adopt Indian tactics without sharing undesirable Indian cultural liabilities. By 1759, the ground forces of the colonial rivals tended to mirror each other, a fact that doomed Canada to defeat. Once France lost its qualitative advantage through its unconventional operations, the 6,000 French military men serving in North America would be overwhelmed by 44,000 English soldiers and sailors.[2]

Indian Wars and Colonial Conflicts

> The Iroquois "hold the balance on the continent of North America. If the Five Nations should at any time in conjunction with the Eastern Indians . . . revolt from the English to the French, they would in a short time drive us out of this continent."
>
> —Colonial New York government officials, 1701[3]

The longest military conflict in American history, the so-called Indians Wars, were actually a series of conflicts beginning with the Roanoke tribe's attack on Jamestown in 1622 and ending with the U. S. 7th Cavalry's fight with the Sioux at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in 1890. Common images of this conflict, largely shaped by movies and mythology, portray it as white men (or Euro-Americans) versus Native Americans, a struggle that reached its dramatic climax on the Great Plains with George Armstrong Custer in 1876. (With the sole exception of Gettysburg, more books have been written about the Little Bighorn than any other battle in American history.) In point of fact, after 1813, with the death of Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames, Indian wars were rather unimportant, except to those few people directly involved. By then, erstwhile English, French, or Spanish allies stopped providing



Map 1

sanctuaries and supplies to the Indians. Thus, from that time, the Indians became a temporary obstacle, only slowing, not preventing, U.S. expansion. Earlier, during the colonial era, before the U.S. existed, Indians were a solid barrier to expansion, with the power to determine whether France or Britain would rule North America. Indians and

Indian wars were never so important to the fate of this continent as they were from 1690 to 1763.

Indian wars rarely, if ever, simply pitted Euro-Americans against Native Americans. Whether it was the Crow and Rhee with Custer in his war with the Sioux or the Mohawks and British colonists against the Huron and the French, these conflicts have always been a variant of compound warfare—friendly tribes conducting irregular operations allied with Euro-Americans against a common enemy, be it hostile tribes, enemy colonies, or a hostile alliance conducting compound warfare on its own.

Vis-à-vis other wars in this casebook, particularly Napoleon in Spain and the American Revolution, what stands out in the colonial wars of North America is the relative ineffectiveness of compound operations, probably because both sides eventually developed the same force structure using European professionals, Euro-American militia, and Native American tribes. Before the mid-1750s, the French had a clear advantage in the irregular warfare practiced by their Canadian settlers and native allies. Britain, after being beaten in woodland wars, followed suit by organizing Indian scouts, American rangers, and its own light infantry to supplement what would be its decisive strengths: the larger battalions of the English army and the power projection assets of the Royal Navy.

Military Policy and Force Structure, European and American Ways of War

> You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Do you want to be a highwayman, sulking in a ditch! Come out into the open and behave properly, like a Brandenburger and a real soldier!
>
> —Frederick the Great to a Prussian jaeger preparing an ambush, 1761[4]

> Accustomed as I am to think like a European . . . my soul has several times shuddered at spectacles my eyes have witnessed.
>
> —Captain Louis Antoine de Bougainville, 1757[5]

When Britain began its series of wars with France in 1690, it had no public debt. By 1753, the government owed its creditors 84 million pounds sterling. One has trouble getting precise figures for France; it never quite knew how much it owed. Suffice it to say that on the eve of the decisive conflict (called the Seven Years' War in Europe; the

French-Indian War in British America), London and Paris were haunted with fears of national bankruptcy. Both treasuries wanted peace, if only for deficit reduction—"our principal object" according to the Duke of Newcastle, the First Lord of the Treasury and head minister of the British government. [6]

North America proved a substantial problem for these plans of mutual accommodation. Indistinctly drawn on the maps of the time, the Ohio River Valley, upper New York, and Nova Scotia were sparsely populated and claimed by both sides, as well as by their respective tribal allies. The French based their title on exploration, the English on effective occupation. As the British stated it: "A few loose fellowes rambling amongst Indians to keep themselves from starving [does not] give the French a right to the Country." To protect disputed territory without precipitating a major conflict, both sides planned to roll back what they called "encroachments" by their rival. Then, according to Newcastle, diplomats could "come to a reasonable Agreement upon the Whole" issue of who owns what. Moreover, they could do it "as cheap and as inoffensive as we can." [7]

As part and parcel of this policy, the British and the French tried to minimize an expensive commitment of European professional soldiers and maximize the contribution of their respective colonies to their own defense. "The Business in *America*," said Newcastle, "must be done by *Americans*." Unfortunately, Euro-American irregulars and Native Americans were far less worried about the condition of the French or English treasury. They also practiced war in a manner fundamentally different from that of Europeans—being far less willing to conduct a protracted campaign but far more likely to plunder in any particular battle. [8]

Since the early 1600s, European nations had been in the process of replacing hired mercenaries with a standing army. The latter was uniformed, drilled, and heavily armed with muskets, bayonets, and grenades. It primarily deployed in close order, to maximize the efficiency of this weaponry best used in synchronized firing by linear groups at short range. The former, on the other hand, were lightly armed, free-wheeling individualists who skirmished in open formations and primarily joined military campaigns for the chance to pillage. Increasingly, their particular talents and specialty, that of long-distance raids behind enemy lines, was deemed suspect for direct and indirect reasons. Many officers felt that looting was counterproductive when it came to raising local resources. "It is true," said one 1744 publication, that it "may at first bring in a profusion of all

necessaries to the army [but] that will soon be wasted and consumed and then the army (which perhaps ought to have continued in that situation [i.e., location]) must be forced to quit it or starve. Whereas, had the people been protected and properly encouraged they might have constantly brought in provisions." Logistics aside, officers also thought pillage dangerous from the standpoint of combat command and control. "Nothing so effectually destroys their discipline and takes off those qualities which constitute the Soldier as does his own plunder." When that occurs, said one leading critic of mercenary units, soldiers become "more dangerous to the very state that maintains them, than even its declared enemies." [9]

However, at the same time as British and French armies were laboriously culling these military vagabonds and bandits from their ranks in Europe, they recruited in America what they considered their functional equivalents, Indian auxiliaries. The analogy to mercenaries might not be completely fair. The presents (or payments) Native Americans expected from their allies were also symbols of respect. The rhetoric, protocol, and status proffered at a gift-giving ceremony were often as rewarding as the gift. Thus, officials of England and France entitled tribes "nations," their envoys "ambassadors," their chiefs "kings," and agreements with them "treaties." Europeans may have done this with tongue in cheek since they were loath to grant Indians the operational autonomy true allies inherently have. However, the Indians failed to accept this subordinate relationship, neither the Hurons, Algonquins, Ottawa, and Abenaki who favored French Canada, nor the Stockbridge, Mohegans, and Mohawks who sided with Britain. The Indian tribes considered themselves independent entities, as Europeans presumably acknowledged in their treaties of alliance. Not being subordinate subjects, they fought for their own interests, as did England and Prussia or France, Austria, and Russia: the different coalition partners in the European theater of the Seven Years War. Royal armies, doing the king's business, battled to acquire territory, the spoils of war for the nation state. Indians often fought for the opportunity to "loot" property, to use a pejorative term elites gave to the immediate post-battle behavior of their own needy soldiers and European mercenaries, not to mention the political objectives of many Native American tribes. [10]

Politically, in point of fact, most Indians were never quite "allies" or "subordinates" because they lived beyond "command and control," at least as white men understood those terms. Europeans were raised in patriarchal families, served in hierarchal armies, and were subjects in

nations governed by hereditary aristocrats—none of these institutions dependent on popular consent. As for the Indians, their families were often matriarchies, wherein fathers served as mediators. Their governments, in turn, "never execute[d] their Resolutions by Compulsion or Force upon any of their People," so wrote the contemporary chronicler of the tribes of Upper New York. Primarily hunter-gatherers of food, they lived near subsistence, the fate of all people who do not domesticate crops or animals on farm or pastureland. Hence Indians were simply too poor to afford a division of labor; that is, they lacked a permanent group of men who specialized in governing others in war or in peace, as opposed to gathering protein (the common lot of common people around the world). "The great and fundamental principles of their policies are that every man is naturally freed and independent [and] no one or more [person or people] on earth has any right to deprive him of his freedom." Such was the informed opinion of Robert Rogers, commander of Anglo-American rangers, whose insights about what Indians would and would not do accounts for his tactical success, either with them as allies or against them as enemy. [11]

The absence in the Indian system of an authoritative government that created unity of political effort prevented them from ever becoming what French and English colonists thought they would be: the factor determining the fate of North America. The Indians could have decided which European nation would win a particular war, or they could have tried to maintain a stalemate and balance of power, as some sagacious Indians proposed. ("We are born Freemen, and have no dependence," one Iroquois told an English settler. "If your Allies are your Slaves or Children, [Europeans] may e'en treat 'em as such.") However, Indians could not establish a national policy because they were not a nation and had no national institutions. Even the so-called Iroquois nation was nothing but the recognition of a nonaggression pact enabling five disparate tribes—the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Mohawks—to pursue their separate policies without suffering an attack by a neighboring tribe on its immediate flank. The Senecas, situated near the Canadian fort at Niagara, tended to be pro-France, the European power in the best position to threaten its physical security or provide economic supplies. Mohawks, living near Albany and Fort Edward, favored the English, whose trade goods they used to dominate rival tribes in the Ohio River Valley. Never fighting as a body, the Iroquois, let alone Indians per se, never exercised their collective power.[12]

Whether favorable to the English or the French, Indian warriors fought by different rules than those applied in European warfare from 1670 to 1793. In that age of limited war on the Continent, those who won rarely slaughtered those who lost, except in regard to "treasonous" rebels or heathens on their geographic periphery—Irish Catholics, Acadians, Highland Scots, or Turks. At least in conflicts between fellow nation-states, officers might carefully preserve prisoners for trade and ransom, sometimes according to an exchange rate formally concluded before the onset of the war—so much for colonels, so much for captains, so much for common soldiers, etc. By the mid-seventeenth century, Spain, Holland, and France even agreed to a per diem charge they would pay each other for provisioning the men they captured before they were exchanged.[13]

Indian warriors, on the other hand, lived by a code that their chiefs could not control and Europeans could not comprehend: "No moderation [is known] at all in these barbarians, either [their conduct is marked by] unheard of cruelties or the best treatment that they can think of." Some prisoners were adopted into tribes in hopes of offsetting the substantial decline in their population due to exposure to European communicative disease. (Mohawk population, for example, declined 75 percent in the seventeenth century.) Other prisoners were devoured on the spot, as recorded by one French officer haunted by the "frightful spectacles that have befouled my eyes." According to one account, Indians were drawn "by the smell of fresh human flesh and the chance to teach their young men how one carves up a human being destined for the pot." There was probably a logic to this annihilate or assimilate policy. One way or the other, the enemy was to be eliminated, as one Onadaga explained: "We are not like you CHRISTIANS for when you have taken Prisoners of one another you send them home. By such means you can not rout one another."[14]

Combined military operations (often to acquire prisoners) suffered from similar cultural incompatibilities, particularly the Indian inclination to blur the white man's line between warfare and peacetime pursuits. European armies would drill recruits for two to five years, making them cogs in a military machine because their machinery—especially their weaponry—was so flawed and rudimentary. (The only way to make flintlock muskets effective was to lay down well-controlled waves of volley fire.) By contrast, Indians underwent no military training at all. Consistent with their general disinclination for specialization and a division of labor, they simply extended their behavior patterns for hunting and athletics into the

military arena. This helps explain why Indians rarely made distinctions between combatants and civilians, to the consternation of Europeans who dressed their own soldiers in unique uniforms and housed them in barracks. It also explains why, without formal schooling, Native Americans were adept warriors, at least as long as war meant scouting, raids, or ambush. Said the Royal Governor of New York in 1700:

> They lye sculking in the woods behind bushes and flat on their bellies. If those they shoot at drop, they run and scalp them; but if they perceive they have missed their shot, they run away without being so much as seen (for the most part) by those they shoot at, and 'tis as much purpose to pursue 'em in the thick woods, as to pursue birds that are on the wing . . . They laugh at the English and French for exposing their bodies in fight and call 'em fools.[15]

Indian tactics, training, and traditions being what they were, Native American allies were far less useful when a sustained campaign or siege had to be conducted. To a people living near subsistence and already suffering substantial population decline, raiding party warfare could be genocidal. Anything more intensive probably seemed impractical to them. However, to Europeans, raiding parties were pin-prick operations, hardly decisive in affairs of nation states. That unlimited warfare might be waged with limited means and brief engagements was a fact not fathomed by most white men who condemned "the cowardice of these Barbarians . . . . You have nothing to do, but to advance, & they will fly, they never stand an open fire, or an attack."[16]

The colonial powers, obsessed with their own problems, were not sympathetic to the plight or military practices of Native Americans. They thought themselves "slaves to Indians" out to "wage war on the poultry, sheep, and wine barrels." The last issue, that of drinking liquor, was a particularly serious problem for Indians, far worse than it was for European armies, where it was serious indeed. Inebriation induced dreams and visions that might be considered omens of disaster more reliable to Native Americans than reconnaissance reports were to their French or English allies. Whether due to premonitions or to casualties, "the hurried flight of these Indians," one officer complained, "shows a lack of discipline of which they have no idea in Europe."[17]

Like many generalizations, this chronic complaint of both contestants, Britain and France, that Indians were military anarchists was both true and false. Native field craft and battle drill was excellent. The ability to conduct a devastating ambush from thoroughly disguised positions is hardly possible for a force in chaos, something often true of

the white enemy they trapped. Expert testimony on this subject came from an English colonel, James Smith, after five years in captivity of a hostile tribe: "I have often hear the British officers call the Indians the undisciplined savages, which is a capital mistake. . . . They are under good command and punctual; they can act in concert, and when their officers lay a plan . . . they will chearfully [sic] unite in putting all their directions into immediate execution."[18]

Nonetheless, small unit tactics under the control of a tribe was not the only military activity of consequence in North America. Political and operational dependability were also important, especially from the perspective of European grand strategy. White men could not rely on Indians to conduct a long war or a protracted campaign, nor count on them not to fall out of a fighting formation in order to scalp and loot prisoners of war after an engagement. Ironically, Europeans promoted the behavior about which they complained. The establishment of their trading posts in North America created desires and dependencies for European goods: tools, weapons, utensils, liquor and cloth. This changed the objectives of Indian warfare, once a pastime largely conducted for intangible rewards like honor and prestige. It had become a commercial activity, at least in part. Europeans henceforth attracted Indian volunteers, allies, and auxiliaries by promising opportunities for them to plunder. Britain, a rich nation, could also pay 5 pounds sterling for a French scalp; France could only afford 3 pounds (or its equivalent) for that of the English. When Indians abandoned sustained campaigns, it was often to collect their pay, that is to consume the booty or cash the bounty held out for their original enlistment.[19]

Europeans still might protect—or try to protect—prisoners of war and their property. They generally thought pillage was barbaric and would undermine what little control they had over their Indian allies and auxiliaries. If so, then Europeans were not dependable; they did not keep their promise, at least from the Indian perspective. It would, however, be too superficial to cry simple hypocrisy. Many Europeans were genuinely anguished by their complicity in looting and scalping, among them Montcalm and Amherst, the French and English commanding generals in the decisive years of the war. Nonetheless, they had no prize to offer other than booty. Honor and prestige were still motivating factors, despite the influx of consumer goods. Yet not being a product of English commerce, they were rewards in sole possession of the local tribe. James Smith noted in his narrative of captivity: "There is no such thing as corporeal punishment used, in order to bring [other Indians] under good discipline; degrading is the only chastisement" an

Indian needs to ensure correct behavior. The friction in European-Indian combined operations was that each national component could have its own definition of correct behavior for a military campaign.[20]

As a summary comment, one could say of the Indians what was said of the mercenaries then being purged from armies on the Continent: they both were often tactically effective and efficient, especially in brief engagements, rather than protracted wars. Their greatest shortcoming came in action after, not during, a clash of arms. They both were very difficult for an outside force to control, especially when the outsider relied on property incentives that literally were there for taking on a littered battlefield as spoils of war. [21]

Falling between the stereotypical extremes of native individualism and European corporate control were Canadian and American militiamen. French officers complained about "Canadian manners and style," that is, behavior they considered only marginally more reliable than that of the Indians, whom Canadians were supposed to discipline but whom they indulged and often followed. English officers had similar things to say about the American militiamen, despite the Americans social separation from the baleful Indian lodges (settlements the Canadians tended to frequent). The "Provincials" (the English term for their own colonists) are "Naturally an Obstinate and Ungovernable People, Utterly Unaquainted with the Nature of Subordination." Like Indians, they were notoriously unreliable compared to English regulars who, enlisting for the duration of a war, were said by Americans to be "little better than slaves to their Officers." Indians dropped out of long campaigns to consume their booty. Provincials signed one-year contracts for a bonus and pay. When the year was over, they left camp to invest or spend their savings. If held back, they mutinied. No matter how aggravating to the British army, this situation was a fact beyond control. Jeffery Amherst, commanding general of British forces from late 1758 to 1763, reminded his subordinates: "We do require their services, ill performed though they be, and do must endure their indolence and insolence until this cursed war is over. Then good riddance to them all." [22]

Some fifty miles inside the seacoast, mid-eighteenth century America was a forested wilderness. "The hardships cannot be imagined," one Frenchman wrote in his journal; "it is impossible to give [Europeans] a fair idea of it." In this theater, physically resembling the Burma jungle in World War II, Canadians and Americans provided the bulk of the transport and logistics needed for operations above and

beyond small-unit raids. Still, an English colonel would make no more than begrudging concession to those on whom he came to depend: provincials are "sufficient to work our boats, drive our Waggons, to fell Trees, and do the Works that in inhabited Countrys are performed by Peasants."[23]

Canadians and Americans were also necessary to screen and scout for European formations. However, as the war moved into its decisive stage, these functions fell increasingly to conventional soldiers, a far more reliable lot. At first, they were performed by Indians, especially on the British side, creating a military dependency openly acknowledged in the Boston *Evening Post*:

> However insignificant the Remains of the Indian Natives might appear in Times of Peace and Security, every Man must now be convinced that they are the most important Allies and the most formidable enemies; and consequently no Pains or Expense should be spared to regain or secure their Friendship or at least their Neutrality.[24]

Nonetheless, senior British military officials, looking for useful and obedient subordinates, found Indians to be "a loose-made indolent sett of People" without "Faith or honesty." Still, needing scouts if they were to operate in the forests, they turned to American frontiersmen, such as Rogers's Rangers, "stout able Men, for a brush [fight] much better than [standard] Provincial Troops." Historically, most militiamen from settled communities had shunned Indian military methods lest they themselves descend to a state of savagery, that of "Ravenous howling Wolves." True, during times of emergency, such as King Philip's War in the 1670s, New England officials recruited special volunteers because the "despised & despicable Enemy" proved "able to rout and destroy our valiant and good Souldiers." Prototypical rangers (often seamen, indentured servants, allied Indians, frontiersmen, and pirates) turned the tide by beating the hostile tribes at their own game of ambush. However, being something of an embarrassment to those who paid their bounties for scalps and prisoners sold into captivity, they quickly vanished into postwar obscurity. The tactics of these irregulars having never entered standard militia doctrine, an anomaly like Captain Robert Rogers was virtually irreplaceable. This meant that American rangers could not provide a solid foundation for winning a long and protracted war. At any moment a man like Rogers operating deep behind enemy lines could become an instant casualty with few suitable replacements available to sustain ranger operations over time.[25]

Unlike standard Provincial volunteers, rangers enlisted for the duration of the war. Nonetheless, when Rogers fell ill or wounded, as anyone might conducting operations deep in enemy territory, his men were nearly as apt to leave their posts as the Indians they replaced. "If Rogers had been with us, we could not have failed," lamented Captain James Abercromby, after some rank and file rangers staged a drunken riot and were whipped for disobedience. "The rest of the Ranging Officers have no Subordination among them & not the least command of their men." Presumably, this member of a prominent military family changed his mind as he lay dying from wounds sustained at Bunker Hill in 1775. There, he led English grenadiers against a position whose flank was held by John Stark, once a junior officer in Roger's Rangers. On his death bed, (now) Colonel Abercromby would write Lord Loudoun, military commander (North America) from 1755 to late 1757: "A few such victories [as Bunker Hill] would Ruin the Army."[26]

True, Rogers was far more democratic than most officers, although he held his unit to a very high level of performance in contact with the enemy. He felt that in military matters "every man's reason and judgment must be his guide." He could lead his special unit because he held its admiration and did not adopt standard procedures; that is, he tended to tolerate his unit's proclivity to steal provisions and sleep when it should be preparing positions for a tactical defense.[27]

Rogers was unable or unwilling to reconcile the use of formal discipline in his fighting, which was usually done from tactically dispersed formations. Other subjects of the British Empire proposed their own answers to this military problem of securing discipline in irregular units. A young Virginia militia officer named George Washington, however, implied in 1754 that there might not be a solution to the problem. Washington had become upset after witnessing Iroquois behavior during a small engagement on the Ohio River. In that clash that triggered the global conflict known as the Seven Years' War, Washington saw some native allies, nominally under his command, wash their hands in the brains of a French captain after knocking "the poor unhappy wounded [man] on the head." But two years later, Washington still proposed reliance on "Indians [who] are [the] only match for Indians. . . . Without these [auxilaries], we shall ever fight upon unequal Terms" with France.[28]

Washington may have been relieved to dump irregular warfare missions on such "savages." He would spend this war and the next one waged against Britain trying to get Anglo-Americans to fight in disciplined, closed formations. English officers, on the other hand, had

instilled in their units the discipline that eluded Washington. Now, in 1756, they attempted to get some of their soldiers to fight in looser order, "as really in Effect we have no Indians"—and will not gain their true support until Britain begins winning the war on its own. John Campbell, Fourth Earl of Loudoun, North American theater commander-in-chief, proposed carefully selecting fifty-five English army officers to learn woodcraft tactics while on temporary assignment with Rogers' Rangers. Whereas, others flinched at sending "gentleman volunteers" to "this Riotous sort of people," Loudoun explained his innovation in terms of what is called today a force multiplier:

> Whoever is Superior in irregulars has an infinite advantage over the other side, and must greatly weaken, if not totally destroy them before [their regular formations] can get to the Point where they can make their Push. There is no carrying on the war Service here without Rangers for it is by them, we can have Intelligence of what motion the Enemy are making, and by them, that we can secure our Camps and Marches from Surprise.[29]

The Duke of Cumberland, the senior commander of the entire British army, replied affirmatively in favor of ranger skills, particularly if divorced, as Loudoun proposed, from its perceived association with American indiscipline: "Till Regular officers with men that they can trust learn to beat the woods and to act as Irregulars, you never will gain any certain intelligence of the enemy." Lord Loudoun, then implementing this concept, organized special units, to be designated light infantry, largely to hold the left flank of a conventional regiment drawn up in fighting line or marching column. It was not particularly unusual to give small, elite units special, auxiliary missions; Grenadiers held down the right wing. Loundon really pushed the military envelop of acceptability when he organized a light infantry regiment, the (60th) Royal Americans.[30]

The 60th Foot had an international flavor, from its origins in a Parliamentary bill granting special commissions to foreign Protestants. The fact that light infantry was not standard military fare may have helped it overcome legislative objections to recruiting aliens to fight Britain's wars. Several battalion and company commanders in the Royal Americans were Swiss mercenaries, such as Lieutenant Colonels Henri Bouquet and Frederick Haldimand. They were only eligible to hold English rank in North America, where their foreign ancestry and common social roots were thought to be of advantage. Such men might be specially qualified to enlist and command recruits

from non-English stock, particularly Swiss or German immigrants or Old World Scots familiar with irregular warfare from life on the Pennsylvania and Maryland frontier or their native Highlands. Defeated by the British army at Culloden, Scots joined the English ranks in the New World.[31]

With men like these augmenting Royal units, but now under proper command and control, a man like Henri Bouquet was willing and able to "employ regulars in the Woods." Otherwise he, much like Loudoun and Cumberland, felt that British soldiers "can not procure any Intelligence, are open to Continual Surprises," and might be completely "destroyed" if caught even "one day's March from a Fort." George Washington, a fellow veteran of the western Pennsylvania theater, would hold that only Indians could perform these functions. Bouquet wrote the Virginia militia commander in mid-1758, after Cherokee auxiliaries had "stolen our goods" and deserted his latest campaign in the Ohio River Valley: "It is a great humiliation for us to be obliged to Suffer the repeated insolence of Such rascals; I think it would be easier to make Indians of our White men [which he did in a tactical military sense] than to coax that damned tanny race."[32]

Other British light infantry regiments would fight less successfully in the North American theater, largely because their English nationality officers simply transferred into the regiment from standard units without the proper training to act as irregulars. Thomas Gage, the commander of the 80th Foot, kept "up Discipline Strictly," perhaps too strictly for effective irregular warfare. Many light infantry units had still not learned their business by the 1770s, when English regulars faced American rebels on broken terrain. At Lexington-Concord, Bunker Hill, and Saratoga, they ran into an ambush or fruitlessly tried to assault frontally a fortified position, reminiscent of Braddock in 1754 or Fort Ticonderoga in 1758, both described subsequently. [33]

Light infantry—like everything else in love, life, and war—was sometimes effective and sometimes a failure. The same attempt to domesticate irregular military operations also occurred within the French force structure. Even the fiercest critics of Canadian indiscipline (some called the Canadians "worse than savages") granted that "in the woods, behind trees, no troops are comparable" to this militia, of which there were some 15,000 men. To maximize their skills and minimize their liabilities, the French incorporated over 2,000 of these Canadians into regular battalions, the troupes de terre and the troupes de la marine, in which case, French regulars commanded the colonials—or colonials with specials talents for war commanded them.

Either way, the native-born were to be Europeanized, rather than the European soldiers allowed to go native, a situation of serious concern to senior officers: "Soldiers, corrupted by the example of Indians and Canadians breathing an air permeated with independence, work indolently . . . The country is dangerous for discipline. Pray God that it alone suffers from it;" that is, that it does not infect France itself.[34]

By the time the French had formed their own light infantry companies in 1760, the conflict for control of North America was in its final and largely conventional phase. Consequently, such units performed far fewer irregular missions, such as conducting small-unit raids. For each side, light infantry paved the way, screened, attacked, or protected the flanks of conventional regiments, and it gathered provisions (particularly cattle) during the decisive battles at politically decisive terrain, Quebec and Montreal, the capitol cities of French Canada.[35]

Campaign Strategy and Narrative History

> Everything is terrible in an American campaign . . . mutual destruction [is] the object and all is at stake.
>
> —Colonel Henri Bouquet, Royal Americans, 1764[36]

Most British senior officers and officials in the colonies were titled gentlemen for whom the war for North America was supposed to be a gentlemanly conflict conducted "on a European footing," what historian Julian Corbett called "limited war," when he coined the term in 1907 in his book on the Seven Years' War. Typically, government ministers only planned to protect disputed territory. Military action was equally fastidious, unless Americans, Canadians, or Indians (the "savages" and "vermin" on both sides) got out of hand. "To carry on the War in this Country with the same humanity and generosity it is [done] in Europe," French and English officers exchanged prisoners, wine, cheese, beer, and partridge—"a necessary and good example to set in this barbarous country, not only on account of humanity but because of politeness." Marquis de Montcalm, commander of French forces in North America, was one of several knights-errant to the theater who resolved to fight "like a gentleman." When "Cruelty and Devastation" nonetheless arose, George Townsend, a British brigade commander, still vowed to "seek the reverse," preserving civility in the changing nature of this "disagreeable campaign."[37]

Colonial Americans felt differently, especially those from New York and New England, the provinces on the proverbial front line. Their idea of reciprocity with their adversary was to dispatch scalping parties, "a barbarous Method of conducting War [but of course] introc'd by the French." Canada, by controlling Fort Louisbourg on the tip of Nova Scotia and the Montreal-Albany corridor, held the front and back doors to New England and the northern border of New York. Its 75,000 white settlers in 1754 could scarcely match the 1,200,000 British subjects to the south if it were not for certain cultural factors inherent to its economy, particularly built on fur trapping and the Indian trade.[38]

Canada was at a quantitative disadvantage, moreover, because it discouraged agricultural settlements and population growth that could kill beavers or alienate Indians. It held a qualitative advantage because a great many of its citizens practiced the fur trade, propagated the Catholic religion ("universal" for all people), learned native languages, and married Indian women—behavior shunned in British America, largely populated by Protestant Puritan sects not keenly interested in pagan converts nor in natives as prospective brides. Sir William Johnson, the Crown's agent to the Iroquois, was one of the few Anglo-Americans to "do [Indians] much honour," as had been done in Canada. Perhaps because he was an Irish immigrant and not completely at home in the colonial English cultural milieu, he entered into a common-law marriage with a native, a great asset when hosting ceremonial feasts that were far more than ceremony; that was where Indians made civil and military plans. Johnson also joined Iroquois government councils, helped convert Indians to his religious faith, dressed in war paint for battle, and thereby became an intermediary between native tribes and Anglo-American armies. "His knowledge of our affairs," said one chieftain, "made us think him one of us."[39]

Johnson, rather notorious for his manners in America, would have fit right into Canada, which commissioned an unusual body of officers by eighteenth-century standards. Officers began in the ranks and won promotion by aggressive action, not by birth, politics, or seniority, as was the norm in Europe. They used Indian allies and methods against Anglo-Americans, who spoke of French-Canadians as they often spoke about Indians, partly in contempt for those who fought employing the tactic of surprise and partly in awe of the best skirmishers in the world. "Our men are nothing but a set of farmers and planters," said one English observer in 1757, whereas Canadians "are used to arms from their infancy among the Indians and are reckoned equal, if not superior,

to veteran troops. . . . [Canadians] maintain themselves in the woods without charges—march without baggage—and support themselves without stores and magazines—[whereas] we are at immense charges for those purposes." [40]

"New England Men, by all Accounts, [may have been] frighten'd out of their Senses, at the name of a French Man," at least according to Lord Loudoun. On their part, the French lived in fear of their own Indian allies and in contempt of the Canadians, who appeared to have gone native. In the early eighteenth century, British forts planted on the frontier began to undermine French influence with Native Americans. The Indians certainly preferred French brandy to British rum. However, these short-term factors could not offset the long-term economic trend. England sold blankets, jewelry, tools, knives, steel, gunpowder, and muskets to the fierce Mohawks at less than half the price the French charged the Hurons, Algonquins, and other tribes from whom they got pelts and furs, as well as enemy scalps. At the same time, the Royal Navy blockaded Canada during the war, thereby preventing the imports that maintained that country's Indian trade. Hence, France was obsessed with the notion that the British would eventually pay the natives to throw us "entirely out of the continent of North America," as the Iroquois nearly did in the mid-1600s.[41]

Using its sole competitive advantage while it still had Indian allies, Canadian forces raided families along the American frontier. As in all wars, the means helped determine the methods and the methods the objectives. The French and the English both used Indians, Canadians, or American frontiersmen, to "do some good." None of the native-born were effective at siege craft or standard battles in open fields, both of which put a premium on corporate discipline. Their natural talents were as guerrilla raiders. Hence, to be truly useful in a war, these auxiliaries had to do things "their own way," a euphemism for torturing, scalping, and terrifying other Christians or the Indians their European enemy employed. (Naturally, no self-respecting Christian gentleman would ever do such things himself.) Admittedly, neither the French nor the British were particularly gallant, but both had an excuse to soothe their sensibilities: "What would be a violation [of propriety] in Europe cannot be regarded as such in America," a barbarous place to begin with. France, in particular, reasoned that the use of "savages" was the only way to chastise its greedy rival who had "violated the most sacred laws of civilized nations" by crossing any barrier to conquer any land it could. "Humanity shudders at being obliged to make use of such

monsters [the Indians]. But without them, the match [against Britain] would be too much against us."[42]

The Canadian "plan of containment"—an admitted policy of "consternation and terror"—was "calculated to disgust the people of those Colonies and to make them desire the return of peace." This, Paris hoped, would divert English military resources from the European theater to colonial protection. Quebec, for its part, calculated that it would "distress" and obsess Anglo-America with mere survival. Then its potential money and manpower would not be used to assault Quebec, the heart of New France built right on the spinal column of the Saint Lawrence River, all substantial settlements of the colony having been constructed on its banks. Before 1756, the French plan failed to panic London, which held its colonies could secure their own defense. However, within British North America, these raiding parties seemed part of a "detestable and wicked Conspiracy" by which Quebec and its Jesuits would mobilize their "frenchified Indians" and one day "drive [all] the English Settlements into the Sea."[43]

For years, Canada's strategy intimidated and confused Americans, every settlement (let alone colony) being forced to defend itself. However, raiding party warfare gradually caused the reaction it was supposed to prevent, that is, open complaints that "the most we do is to defend ourselves at Home; but they [the enemy] are for an offensive War." By the mid-eighteenth century, the royal governor of Massachusetts was telling London of "undoubted intelligence that the French design to make further encroachments on his Majesty's Territories," the only viable counter being his own (the governor's) plan "to march an army in a few days to the gates of Montreal and pour our troops into the very heart of their country." Whether grasped before the late 1750s or not, the political momentum gathering for taking the conflict to the enemy would be a major factor for the adoption of the irregular warfare component of compound war by the British. As further discussion will show, these unconventional tactics and force structure were effective on the offense but inappropriate when conducting an inactive (static positional) defense.[44]

Because France had major military commitments in Europe and lacked the naval lift to project a substantial force abroad, it could protect Canada only if the conflict remained limited in scope and spirit, as it was as late as 1755, when Britain dispatched General Edward Braddock with 1,400 regulars to dismantle French forts under construction in the disputed Ohio River Valley. The first of five British commanders-in-chief in the next three years (the turnover being

testimony to frustration and failure), Braddock recruited 450 additional Americans to build roads and to drive wagons. The English called these men "bobtails," "very indifferent men, this country affording no better." For deep reconnaissance, Braddock relied on Indians, whom he found drunk with liquor, stuffed on his provisions, and the cause of much disorder insofar as his soldiers fought over sexual favors from Cherokee women accompanying their men. This was no small problem for Braddock, who insisted that the regulars set "the most soldier-like example" in hopes of making American recruits "as useful as possible." He dismissed all but eight handpicked Indian scouts and largely ignored those whom he kept. Some of these, feeling slighted, went on what might be called a work stoppage. Others joined forces with the French. As Braddock proceeded towards the Ohio River, he could convince only two scouts to go out on patrol.[45]

Confident of success, Braddock did not grasp the force-multiplier effect irregulars could have on a conflict, rather typical of contemporary English army officers, who recently had no trouble crushing Scottish Highlanders but largely because the "Beggarly banditry" made a fatal mistake. The Scots had rejected guerrilla tactics, heretofore their strong suit, and adopted conventional formations at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. Now, nine years later, Braddock told a Pennsylvania contractor named Benjamin Franklin that "these [Red] savages may be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia but upon the King's regulars and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression"—famous last words.[46]

On 8 July, some 637 Indians, 146 Canadians, and 72 French regulars ("attachés aux Savages") met Braddock's 2,000-man task force on close terrain. (Then) Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Gage, in command of the advance party, failed to execute his mission of buying time for the main body by holding off the initial enemy onslaught. Bradddock, meanwhile impatient to thrash his unworthy opponents, led the main column forward, where it crashed into his vanguard in hasty retreat. Mired in confusion, the entire force was soon caught in a withering crossfire. One English soldier was heard to mutter: "We would fight if we could see anybody to fight." Others did as they were trained and fired at soldiers in closed formation, although this time the target happened to be their fellow Britons. Within three hours, the Anglo-American force had sustained 950 killed or wounded, approximately four times the casualties Custer would suffer at the Little Big Horn in 1876. While Canadians and Indians fell out to garner scalps and gather booty, Braddock's survivors fled back to Virginia. The

anti-British coalition had won using the tactics of compound war, as this book defines the term. An irregular force (Canadians and Indians) operating out of sanctuaries (north of the Great Lakes) had combined with a conventional power (France) to inflict defeat on a numerically larger enemy, the Anglo-American army. "Who would have thought it?" Braddock muttered the day before he died of his wounds.[47]

The defeat of Braddock's expedition increased substantial doubts among friendly Indians about alliances with the British, even among the Mohawks, the most friendly tribe to the British. Partly out of trust in William Johnson, appointed to military command for his influence with the Iroquois, the Mohawks still provided some 200 men to scout and screen for an expedition north of Albany up the corridor towards Montreal. In initial contacts with a much larger force of some 1,500 enemy in September 1755, they suffered twelve wounded and thirty dead (including their most pro-English chief), after which they abandoned the campaign, asking Johnson, "do you think that we should leave our Women and Children to be swallowed up with Sorrow?" Iroquois warriors would not rejoin the war effort until 1759, when English soldiers and supplies, finally tipping the balance of power, enabled the Confederation to reestablish economic and military domination of pro-French Indians in the Ohio River Valley, particularly the Delawares. In the meantime (1755), Johnson was in no condition to proceed north of Lake George, having lost his Indian auxiliaries, sustained 1,000 total casualties, and suffered a serious wound in the thigh. He remained at the area of the battle, where he built Fort William Henry, the site of a military turning point two years hence. To replace his so-called wards in the scouting ranks, Johnson recruited a New Hampshire militia unit that had just proved its ability to fight in the forest by mauling enemy Indians when they broke ranks to loot the dead. These Anglo-Americans would soon be known as Rogers' Rangers.[48]

Unfortunately for French Canada, its success in 1755 (in crushing Braddock and blocking Johnson) had enormous consequences at the political, strategic, and tactical levels. In London, the old Newcastle-led Cabinet, primarily concerned with fiscal balance, reconfigured itself to become a coalition government led by William Pitt, who was devoted to the conquest of French colonies in America irrespective of cost. Nonetheless, the enhancement of the size of Britain's military commitment might not insure victory in North America by itself. Braddock's force was substantially larger than the enemy it fought in Western Pennsylvania. He himself believed there

was no necessity to make major qualitative changes, on his deathbed murmuring "we shall know better how to deal with them another time." George Washington, who had led the Virginia militia element, also felt no need to change doctrine or force structure, other than enhance standard discipline: "We have been most scandalously beaten by a trifling body of men." On the other side of the issue stood those who thought qualitative change needed—but apparently impossible for British personnel. They simply "were unfit to fight in the woods," said an Indian ally present at the Braddock massacre.[49]

Other options aside from doing nothing—because fundamental change was unnecessary or impossible. An alternative was to train a relatively small body of troops in special skills for unusual missions in exceptional circumstances. Then one would not have to make a major reconstruction in the doctrine, training, and force structure for the army at large. Although it is never easy to field a special force, it was the easiest way to solve a special military problem. Moreover, it kept the bulk of one's forces focused on fighting the conventional opponent, the largest and presumably the most dangerous threat. America would subsequently resort to this type of solution time and time again: raising distinctive units to fight guerrillas in the Confederacy, the Indian territories, the Philippines, South America, and Vietnam. (By official directive of the Department of the Army, 13 October 1960, U.S. Special Forces traces its lineage to Rogers' Rangers.) Back in 1756, one North American colonist wrote William Pitt, "It is an unpardonable neglect of Duty to be surprised by the French when *a few brisk men* scattered for two hundred yards on each Side will prevent it. Keep them from surprising you and they are an Easy conquest." (Italics mine.)[50]

London would enhance its total troop commitment, which now included more specialty troops appropriate for New World terrain. As much by improvisation as by strategic design, it had acquired an array of forces for different responsibilities along the spectrum of unconventional war. The Iroquois, highly irregular, were best at independent operations. British infantry, being semi-conventional, were best at guarding the flank of a main column. American rangers, taking up the middle position on this combat continuum, were guerrilla warfare specialists but still subjects of the Crown. Nonetheless, the British army still lacked a necessary component: an emotional commitment to victory. Then, on 10 August 1757, the so-called "massacre" of a garrison holding 2,000 people (one-third of whom were British regulars) moved the English towards adopting the total war position of the New England colonies.[51]

American ranger patrolling being slack with Robert Rogers out of action from a recent wound, a French-Canadian-Abenaki Indian force surrounded Fort William Henry on Lake George in upper New York (see Map 1). Gallic victory was now inevitable; battle served no purpose but bloodshed. Hence European officers negotiated over a full-course meal, complete with wine and beer. The French asked for the outpost—situated on vital Montreal to Albany terrain and a base from which Rogers had been raiding enemy strongholds to the north. The British secured a withdrawal with full honor (all flags, small arms, and baggage) to Fort Edward, fifteen miles to the southeast. All in all, this was a highly civilized arrangement to those experienced in European siege craft. The terms were reminiscent of those France gave the Virginia militia it encircled in the Ohio River Valley in 1754. Certainly, they compared favorably with what Montcalm had called the "massacre" at Fort Oswego, where his Indian allies got drunk on pillaged rum and killed some fifty Anglo-Americans he had pledged to protect in 1756.[52]

Unfortunately, Montcalm's promises and France's limited war policy were incompatible with its military force structure—in particular its Canadians and Indians, who had been recruited by promises of plunder. The so-called chiefs were "consulted" about the settlement, but Indian individualism being what it was, the titular leaders could not control the outraged rank and file when the latter embodied the consensus opinion of the tribe. A thousand or so common warriors had gone to Fort William Henry expecting a romp, such as the one at Oswego. When their European allies now broke their word on promised looting, these Indians took matters, clothes, and possessions into their own hands. They also killed nearly 150 Anglo-Americans, not counting those taken captive. Finally, the French stopped "this abominable action" by buying back those still alive, including women and children.[53]

The Fort Henry incident was a decisive turning point in the war. Hereafter, Indians were far more reluctant to fight for France, whose promises were now suspect. Consequently, Anglo-American operations were far less likely to incur substantial raids on their bases. At the same time, Anglo-Americans were far more likely to conduct similar raids of their own. In 1759, James Wolfe pushed west toward Quebec and Jeffrey Amherst north toward Montreal, a policy of conquest sanctioned by the martyrs of Fort Henry. As exaggeration replaced fact, the incident was depicted in histories as a wholesale slaughter, during which the sadistic French "most perfidiously let loose

their Indian bloodhounds upon the people," a story later depicted in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757*. The cry "Remember William Henry" became for Anglo-American soldiers what the later catchwords concerning the Alamo and Bataan became for their American descendants. As Wolfe said, rather unfairly, to Amherst in 1758: "Montcalm has changed the very nature of war, and has forced on us, in some measure, to a deterring and dreadful vengeance."[54]

Wolfe was a better warrior than analyst of events. Historically, French Canada had been more indulgent towards Indian methods of war than had been the British, exactly what one would expect from a numerically inferior force likely to be crushed if it ever lost its ally. Then Montcalm arrived to lead the defense effort in 1756. Thereafter, France tried to have its cake and eat it, that is, recruit so-called "savages" but ask them to fight by the honor code of eighteenth-century European gentlemen. The French would have done better if they had chosen either limited war or unrestricted Indian assistance. They wound up with neither but were blamed for all things. One week after the Fort Henry incident, the British military commander in chief wrote that "in this country [the French] . . . have committed every Cruelty in their power." "Whatever Troops you bring into the Field, are to me French," he told the governor of Canada in response to an official statement of regret. "Therefore if any Part of them break through the Rules of War, [that act] will immediately lay me under the disagreeable necessity to Treat the whole of your People in the same manner."[55]

As the French ability to conduct irregular and compound warfare substantially diminished, due to the Indian tribes deserting their side, the British army increased its own capacity to conduct operations in unconventional settings. General John Forbes had declared we must "equip Numbers of our men like the Saveges" and "learn the Art of Warr from Ennemy Indians," a far cry from Edward Braddock. In 1758, while building a new road into western Pennsylvania, he roughly retraced Braddock's march to Fort Duquesne, which he renamed Fort Pitt. He then proceeded to expel France from the Ohio River Valley. Braddock's vanguard had been Thomas Gage, a tactical disaster. Forbes used a battalion from the Royal American light infantry. Henri Bouquet, far better than Gage at irregular war, was second to Forbes in overall command. [56]

The English not only formed the special infantry units to ward off ambushes and secure supplies, but also had their senior commanders now willing to take the war to noncombatants, a practice heretofore

largely effected by the enemy. As early as October 1756, Lord John Campbell Loudoun had discussed a "strike of Terror into the Enemy" by "break[ing] up all these Settlements" in Canada. However, he did not have the stomach to put this into practice, stopped paying bounties for enemy scalps, and finally was relieved by William Pitt in late 1757 for failure to win the war, specifically for the disaster at Fort William Henry. Pitt's new high command, particularly Amherst and Wolfe, were made of stronger stuff and were selected like Canadian officers were for their military achievements and ambition, irrespective of their youth and common social class. Amherst was forty when he became commander-in-chief in 1758. Amherst said later, he had "come to take Canada and did not intend to take anything less." Wolfe, on his part, was thirty-two in 1759, when he took six New England ranger and seven light infantry companies on his expedition up the St. Lawrence to Quebec. He had promised Pitt "an offensive daring kind of war [that] will awe the Indians and ruin the French." Now, when "the Canadian vermin" resisted by raiding British camps they were "sacked and pillaged," as Wolfe had warned, although he still held to civility by outlawing "the inhuman practice of scalping, except when the enemy are Indians, or Canads dressed like Indians," to Wolfe "the most contemptible *canaille* upon earth." Wolfe used rangers and light forces much the way mercenary units were once used on the Continent to force enemy subjects to desert their military posts in order to care for their families, now threatened with abuse and starvation. His destruction of farms and villages and much of Quebec was "war of the worst Shape," according to George Townsend, a subordinate brigadier upset by these innovations (or reincarnations) of the European way of war.[57]

Now that the war in America was being fought for permanent conquest (not for diplomatic bargaining advantage), so it could not be settled by raiding parties. Wolfe would have to capture the enemy capital and destroy the enemy army, an objective that would require him to use light infantry as an elite force with a special mission in a conventional operation, rather than doing unconventional or irregular war. In such a role, they led the assault up to the Plains of Abraham just west of Quebec, where they silenced French mortars and cannon at 0400 on 13 September 1759. Although now surrounded, Montcalm's situation was not hopeless. In his fortress, he held a distinct advantage in artillery—twenty-five cannon on his part to two light field guns held by Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham. Moreover, other French units nearby or in Montreal might still have mounted a relief expedition. Nonetheless, Montcalm met Wolfe's challenge to conduct the only

open-field battle in a conventional formation during the entire war. His exact motivation must remain a mystery, for he would not live to leave a record. One suspects that this Old World soldier, racked by his complicity in New World "terror" and "savagery," wanted to die like a European officer and gentleman, if he might.[58]

The British army held the tactical advantage. Montcalm's own regulars were already so depleted that he had to put Canadian militiamen into the French line, where they broke unit cohesion by advancing too quickly or by lying down to reload. British light infantry and American Rangers, used to better advantage, protected the flanks of six English regular battalions, who sustained only sixty killed the entire day, largely because the enemy lay down fire beyond the effective range of their weapons. The British stood firm until the enemy closed to forty meters, a textbook example of military discipline for linear formations of a standing army. Then, at this ideal range, the British delivered a devastating volley. The French immediately suffered nearly 450 casualties; 1,000 more were soon inflicted by the British follow-up bayonet charge. Five days later, the English occupied Quebec, where 3,000 British soldiers would soon be afflicted by starvation. Advocates of limited war, quick to condemn pillage, could have warned Wolfe about this danger arising from his scorched-earth policy.[59]

The battle outside the capital city of Canada was the most important event of the war in North America, but other significant actions followed. As long as the enemy held Montreal, the English position at Quebec was in danger, hence the need for General Amherst to conquer the second city of French Canada, which he did in 1760. That campaign had three prongs: both up and down the St. Lawrence and north from Lake Champlain. American militia provided logistics, although Amherst had little faith in these ax men and drivers: if "left to themselves they would eat fryed Pork and lay in their tents all day." On the other hand, Amherst was an active proponent of American rangers, although suspected of anarchy by most other British officers. Perhaps he was tolerant of these particular colonials—if they were under Rogers' firm hand—because he had few alternatives. British light infantry regiments had reasonable reliability but were still learning the intricacies of scouting and screening in heavily forested terrain. As for the Native Americans recruited by Sir William Johnson, they were "lazy rum drinking Scoundrels," in Amherst's eyes. Out of dire necessity, as in the case of the American militia, he armed, paid, and supplied the Iroquois, at the cost of 17,000 pounds sterling. He still

professed "how averse [he was] to purchasing the good behavior of Indians." Amherst sent the Iroquois agent of the Crown "everything he has asked of me," if only to prevent their obstruction, rather than gain their assistance. He recorded in his journal, after meeting with Johnson, that "if the Indians know [about my operation], the French will have it; though ever so much an Indian Friend, it is their business to give intelligence on both sides."[60]

Despite the Braddock debacle of 1755, Amherst could talk like his late, lamented predecessor. The latest British commander in chief still held no "Apprehension" that English soldiers could not smite any and all Indians "with a Powerful and Heavy Hand." Notwithstanding these boasts on behalf of military convention, Amherst adhered to practicality by resorting to American rangers, not British regular infantry. Indeed, Rogers and company probably enabled this officer to retain his intolerance. Because sufficient white men had experience in the fertile woodlands of New England and New York, the commanding general would not face the necessity that later confronted the U.S. Army in the depopulated deserts. In the southwest after the Civil War, it simply had to use Native American scouts. Nobody else was available or had the ability to find hostile Indians out in the frontier. In turn, enlightened officers, such as George Crook, treated this essential component of his force structure with commensurate respect—a far cry from the disdain so pronounced in Jeffrey Amherst.[61]

In 1759, before the fall of Quebec, Amherst ordered Robert Rogers, recently promoted to major, to strike the Indian village of St. Francis, a community of converts to Catholicism from various tribes across the northeast. This military operation served several functions aside from rescuing two English officers taken prisoner under a flag of truce and five New England female settlers held captive. The operation, taking place 100 miles west of Quebec and 50 miles east of Montreal, would divert French attention from the major British invasions launched from the opposite directions: down Lake Ontario to Montreal and up the Saint Lawrence to Quebec. The raid was also supposed to intimidate the Indian allies France still had. Amherst told Rogers: "Take your revenge in such a manner as you shall judge most effectual to disgrace the enemy." However, "don't forget that tho' those villains have dastardly and promiscuously murdered women and children of all ages, it is my orders that no women or children are killed or hurt." This may have been a pro forma order issued by the English to assuage their own conscience. John Campbell (Loudoun), the theater commander who raised the first rangers in 1756, did so on the premise that they "will be

able to deal with Indians in their own way." Whether or not Amherst knew what they would probably do in 1759, he drew a line too subtle for an American like Rogers, whose initiation into warfare at age fourteen was a flight with his family after French-led Indian atrocities drove them from the New Hampshire frontier in 1746.[62]

The Indians who were now about to be raided were masters of surprise, much like the rangers they fought. However, on defense, they were easy to surprise, not so the rangers, when under Rogers' direct command. In areas of military operations, he took care to post nighttime sentries and avoid camp fires, the advantage of his unit having irregular skills but a semi-regular chain of command. So-called Indian chiefs, on the other hand, lacked the institutional authority to assign warriors the boring and tedious duty of security detail, especially because war was thought to be an activity conducted in brief intervals, like any other recreation. At St. Francis, 300-odd men were sleeping off their liquor when utterly surprised by 141 rangers and Stockbridge Indian auxiliaries at 0300 on 6 October 1759. A few may have managed to escape, but most were killed in their sleep. Rogers, enraged at finding 600 scalps ("mostly English") hanging on poles in the town, then burned the entire settlement to the ground. Some twenty women and children survived; most of them were cut loose to fend for themselves, and three were relocated to British headquarters at Fort Edward. If Rogers exceeded the spirit of Amherst's orders, he was certainly not notified. Amherst remained Rogers' greatest military benefactor, a supporter of no small note—that is, provided Amherst retained his theater command by capturing Montreal.[63]

In July 1760, Rogers made his last significant contributions to that effort by clearing some of the final obstacles for the final conquest of French Canada. Fort William Henry was on the southern tip of the Lake Champlain corridor that led straight to Albany and points south. Saint Therese, a fortified village barely twenty-five miles southeast of Montreal, was at the lake's northern tail that led into the vital heartland of Canada. Rogers, in this case, may have thought himself a gentleman, at least compared to his opponents. This time he slaughtered no one in their sleep, possibly because Saint Therese was a Canadian, not an Indian, settlement, and he found no English scalps decorating the village. Nonetheless, he destroyed or confiscated "every thing which we thought could ever be of service to the enemy": shelter, cattle, wagons, boats, and farm and fishing equipment. One way to prevent enemy irregulars from disrupting British supply lines was to preoccupy them with concern for their immediate survival.[64]

Rogers, after returning to the British base at Crown Point, set out with an advance guard of 600 rangers and seventy friendly Indians to clear the last enemy rear guard elements from the Albany-Montreal corridor. Amherst, unimpeded on this avenue of advance, was able to mass 15,000 men outside Montreal on 6 September 1760. Prepared to capitulate, the enemy asked to retain his arms, flags, and honor, reminiscent of terms the British received at Fort William Henry in 1757. Amherst, with memories of what had subsequently happened, insisted on due humiliation for "the infamous part taken by the troops of France in exciting savages to perpetrate the most horrid and unheard of barbarities in the whole course of the war." On the 8th, the French surrendered without the honors of war, thereby concluding what Robert Rogers called the most "glorious" year in the history of the British Empire. At the time, he could not foresee that many of his own rangers—at Lexington-Concord, Bunker Hill, and Saratoga—would soon use his tactics and compound warfare against the Crown in the cause of American independence.[65]

Summary

In the wars for European control of eighteenth-century North America, both the French and the British used elements of compound warfare. Neither side was particularly effective in this, however, because both had fundamental cultural and military conflicts with their irregular allies whether Indians, Canadians, or Americans. A contestant in a war need not execute perfectly, only better than his opponent. Because Canadian militiamen were better woodland warriors than most Americans, the French had the advantage over English soldiers as late as 1757, a time when the latter stood "fully convinced they were by no means a match for the rabble in the woods." Ultimately, however, France lost its North American empire because the British overcame defeatism and used compound war methods of their own. The British, like many another combatant, discovered that the best way to overcome an effective form of warfare is to adopt it oneself.[66]

The British did more than slavishly copy the French, however. They domesticated irregular operations, otherwise having too many overtones of anarchy for European-trained officers. They did this by substituting rangers for Indian auxiliaries, and then more reliable light infantry regulars for American rangers. When this happened, English forces enjoyed march and base security on dangerous terrain ill-suited for more conventional military units. (Said one officer on the fated

Braddock task force, "there has not been ground to form a battalion since we left the settlements.") Once it had gained its new potency in irregular warfare, Britain then terrorized Canadians and Indians in the same way the latter had once terrorized Anglo-Americans. By so doing, they encouraged enemy desertions, to which Indians and Canadians were prone once long-range penetrations by Anglo-American irregulars erased their family sanctuaries. This enhanced the decisive quantitative advantage of British-American forces in North America once England committed 44,000 soldiers and sailors to the conquest of Quebec and Montreal.[67]

Postscript: The Travail of Unconventional Warriors After Fighting Their Compound Wars

The conquest of its major cities marked the end of French Canada. It also marked the end of the glory years of Robert Rogers, colonial America's greatest contribution to the successful execution of compound warfare. He would command the Queen's American Ranger [Tory] battalion in the American Revolution, a conflict during which his new military opponents used the very compound war he practiced to win independence from the Empire he loyally served. Jeffrey Amherst, his institutional benefactor and protector, had retired to the English countryside after 1763, failing to defeat Indians during the Pontiac Uprising despite (or because of) his feelings that "their Total Extirpation is scarce sufficient Attonement for the Bloody and Inhuman deeds they have Committed." Henry Bouquet, for his part, had loyally suggested that the most effective method to "extirpate or remove that Vermine" would be to "hunt them [down] with English Dogs, Supported by Rangers, and some Light Horse." The English hardly had these assets in their standard military units. Amherst floundered; Bouquet needed all his skills merely to survive an Indian ambush inflicting over 100 casualties on the detachment that he led to relieve Ft. Pitt. Amherst was not on station in 1779 to save Robert Rogers from relief for shortcomings important to the British officer corps, such as having commissioned in his Tory unit "men of mean extraction,"—mechanics, petty constables, saloon keepers, and one or two proprietors of "Bawdy Houses in the City of New York." The English military establishment lost the Revolutionary War but, led by Thomas Gage, Amherst's replacement as commander in chief, dismissed Robert Rogers, known as "the famous Cap't" back in 1756. In 1795, the heroic ranger died in England a drunken debtor.[68]

Rangers, being American provincials, were an easy target. Old-guard English colonels went on to attack light infantry. “Instead of being considered as an accessory to the battalion, they have become the principal feature of our army, and have almost put grenadiers out of fashion. The showy exercise, the airy dress, the independent modes they have adopted, have caught the minds of young officers, and made them imagine that these ought to be general.” For military necessity, the Duke of Wellington would have to resurrect light forces in the Peninsula campaign, 1806-1813. One may assume that he treated his partners in compound warfare better than did the eighteenth and twentieth century command, if only because his combined force included Spanish guerrillas. No one could expect them to act like subjects of the British Crown. Robert Rogers, on the other hand, was a subject, received an English commission from Amherst, and (always a self-promoter) claimed credit for “the most material Circumstance of every Campaign upon that [North American] Continent.” Hence his reputation and methods were a threat to the position, doctrine, and reputation of the conventional English officer corps that disposed of him after the American Revolution.[69]

Much the same thing would happen to what would be the functional reincarnation of Rogers and his rangers in World War II, that is, Orde Wingate and his Chindits, the special name given to 10,000 Englishmen who sustained 50 percent casualties operating deep behind Japanese lines in Burma. One junior officer in the command would say of Wingate: “There was something awe-inspiring in his certainty and his dogmatism which inspired the fullest confidence, so that one went away saying, ‘with him in command we cannot fail’.” Those in Britain’s military establishment, less mesmerized by Wingate’s charisma, felt this oddly dressed figure in pith helmet and walking staff was “a sort of a circus comedian” mixed with elements of Oliver Cromwell and Lawrence of Arabia. “It was possible to laugh at him,” wrote one officer who crossed his path, “but not when he was there,” a reference to his intensity, his combative personality, and his connections with Winston Churchill, who thought Wingate “a man of genius, who might well have become a man of destiny,” if not for his death in 1944 conducting operations in the field. His reputation would be smeared in official histories and memoirs of the high command—or so maintained his loyalists pointing to passages where Wingate is described as “obsessed” by naive “dreams” that irregular operations should be the main effort and as “a man who fanatically pursued his own purposes without regard to any other consideration.” As for

post-war personnel and promotion, as opposed to reputation, Wingate's greatest disciple, Brigadier General Michael Calvert, survived the conflict to suffer in his place. Decorated seven times for heroism under fire, including personally leading a bayonet charge against Japanese infantry, Calvert would end up much like Robert Rogers: drummed out of the army on trumped up charges of turpitude, thereafter spending most of his life as an alcoholic and a drifter.[70]

A pattern seems to emerge when a single army or empire conducts compound warfare, as opposed to when it is done by a coalition of sovereign political entities, each with clearly separate military forces. Rogers and Calvert, after their military involvement, received rather backhand treatment, as did T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia) after World War I, and mutual opponents, U.S. Special Forces and Viet Cong insurgents, after the Vietnam War. Military establishments—be they British, American, or North Vietnamese—may use compound warfare in an emergency but seem to do so reluctantly and retain hostility for their irregular components. One of the benefits of ending a war—whether winning or losing it—is that the regulars can then purge the unconventional elements from their ranks, men whom they never really trusted. It did not save Rogers, Lawrence, the Green Berets, or the Chindits that they were idols of the public. That fact only seemed to make them more threatening to the reputations of their rivals.[71]

In defense of the more conventional components, one must acknowledge that many irregulars did not preach the compound warfare they practiced, perhaps because they may not have understood exactly how they accomplished their feats. Compound warfare strategy was effective because it combined regular and irregular operations, either one being relatively unproductive by itself. However, by paying little attention to the contributions of standard operations, men like Rogers and Wingate gave themselves too much credit for ultimately winning their wars. Egotism is hardly unusual in combat—or in any other human endeavor for that matter. However, because irregulars often survive through the forbearance of conventional components, a bit more emphasis on the mutual necessity of compound operations would have been advisable on their part.[72]

Notes

1. Robert L. O'Connell, *Ride of the Second Horseman: The Birth and Death of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), esp. 18, 36-37, 47-48, 75-79, 82-83, 110.

2. For general surveys on these issues, see Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, 1675-1815 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 46-56; Michael Howard, *War in European History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 26-27, 37, 77-78; and John B. Wolf, *The Emergence of the Great Powers, 1685-1715* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), 130, 170-72, 180, 203.

3. Indian commissions and governor of [colonial] New York, Ca. 1701, quoted in William Christie MacLeod, *The American Indian Frontier* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928), 556.

4. Christopher Duffy, *The Military Life of Frederick the Great* (New York: Atheneum, 1986), 320.

5. Edward P. Hamilton, ed., *Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville, 1756-1760* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 175. Bougainville was aide-de-camp to the commander of forces in North America, Marquis de Montcalm.

6. Reed Browning, *Duke of Newcastle* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 241-43.

7. Newcastle quoted in *ibid*, 182-83, 210.

8. *Ibid.*, 193.

9. J. F. C. Fuller, *British Light Infantry in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Hutchinson, 1925), 41-49; anonymous author, "A Short Course of Standing Rules for the Government and Conduct of an Army" (London, 1744), quoted in King Lawrence Parker, "Anglo-American Wilderness Campaigning 1754-1764: Logistical and Tactical Developments," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1970), 37; unidentified officer, quoted in John A. Lynn, "Soldiers on the Rampage," *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 3 (Winter 1991): 95. Raimondo Montecuccoli, eighteenth-century general and critic of mercenaries, discussed in Gunther E. Rothenberg, "Maurice of Nassau, Gustavus Aldophus, Raimondo Montecuccoli, and the 'Military Revolution' of the Seventeenth Century," in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy, from*

Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 58-59.

10. Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians: The Meeting of English and Indian Cultures in America, 1580-1640* (Towa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1980), 48-51; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Expansion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 177, 216, 220, 231.

11. Cadwallader Colden (1727) and Rogers (1765), quoted in Edmund S. Morgan, "The American Indian: Incorrigible Individualist," in *The Mirror of the Indian* (Associates of the John Carter Brown Library, 1958), 13, 18-19. For family structure, see Fred Anderson*, Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 15, 196, 748; for the economic base of a governing class, see Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: Norton, 1998), 30, 55-56, 271-75.

12. Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 154-55, 212, 248; George S. Snyderman, "Behind the Tree of Peace: A Sociological Analysis of Iroquois Warfare," *Pennsylvania Archaeologist* 18 (1948): 28-29, 49.

13. Geoffey Parker, "The Etiquette of Atrocity," *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 5 (Summer 1993): 18.

14. Bouganville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 144, 331-32; Richter*, The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 37, 59, 68-72.

15. Harry Holbert Turney-High, *Primitive War: Its Practice and Concepts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1949), 31, 77; Diamond*, Guns, Germs, and Steel*, 62, 195; Starkey*, European and Native American Warfare*, 22, 82, 100; governor quoted in Stanley C. Smoyer, "Indians as Allies in the Intercolonial Wars," *New York History* 17 (October 1936): 418.

16. Lawrence H. Keeley, *War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 63-66, 91-93, 107, 175; Captain William Amherst, 18 June 1758, quoted in Steven Brumwell, "A Service Truly Critical: The British Army and Warfare with the North American Indians, 1755-1764," *War in History* 5 (April 1998): 158.

17. Snyderman, "Behind the Tree of Peace," 56, 64-65; Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 116, 132-33, 288.

18. Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, 17, 22, 123-28, 146; James Smith, *An Account. . . [of] his Captivity with the Indians, in the Years 1755, '56, '57, '58 & '59* (1812) cited in John David Waghelstein, "*Preparing for the wrong war: The United States Army and low-intensity conflict, 1755-1890*," (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 1990), 30.

19. Francis Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe* (New York: Collier Books, 1962 [Orig. 1884]), 72, 75-79. 298, 305, 358.

20. Quoted in Waghelstein, "Preparing for the wrong war," 30.

21. Rothenberg, "Maurice, Aldophus, Montecuccoli, and the 'Military Revolution'," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 33, 41, 45, notes that many mercenary forces had tactical, but not political, discipline.

22. Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 42; Lieutenant Alexander Johnson and Amherst, quoted in Douglas Edward Leach, *Roots of Conflict: British Armed Forces and Colonial Americans, 1677-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 130-32; Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War* (New York: Norton, 1984), 35-39, 187-95; quote, 189.

23. Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 94, 155, 174; Lieutenant Colonel James Robertson (1760), quoted in Leach, *Roots of Conflict*, 132.

24. Boston *Evening Post*, 18 April 1757.

25. John Campbell (Loudoun), British army commander in chief in North America (November 1756), in Stanley Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765* (n.p.: Archon Books, 1969), 269; and Loudoun to Pitt, 3 May 1757, in *Correspondence of William Pitt when Secretary of State with Colonial Governors and Military and Naval Commissioners in America*, ed., Gertrude Selwyn Kimball (New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969), 1: 55; John Ferling, "The New England Soldier: A Study in Changing Perceptions," *American Quarterly* 33 (January 1981): 30-39; Uria Oakes (1682), quoted in Gary Huxford, "Origins of the American Military Tradition Reconsidered," *R.M.S.S. Journal* 8 (October 1971): 121; Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York: Norton, 1966), 46, 217, 228-34. Benjamin Church, the leader of Massachusetts's irregulars in King Philip's War, wrote a memoir of the conflict, but it was not published until forty years after the event. The seaside puritan minister dominated interpretations of the war in the intervening period, attributing success to the righteous hand of God, not to tactical innovations by Church and company, see Richard Slotkin,

Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860 (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 156-80.

26. James Abercomby aide-de-camp and nephew to Major General James Ambercromby, 29 November 1757, in John R. Cuneo, *Robert Rogers of the Rangers* (New York: Richardson & Steirman, 1987), 61-62; Richard M. Ketchum, *Decisive Day: The Battle for Bunker Hill* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1974), 144, 162, 206, 209.

27. *The Journals of Major Robert Rogers* (London: printed for the author, 1765), 70; Stanley Pargellis, *Lord Loudoun In North America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1933), 301-04.

28. Washington, indicating his shame at not being able to stop this incident, only reported the scalping of the dead already killed in combat, see Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 53-59; Washington (1754), quoted in James Thomas Flexner, *George Washington: The Forge of Experience* (Boston: Little Brown, 1965), 89; the Indian who committed the atrocity claimed that the French had "killed, boiled, and even eaten his father," ibid., 88; Washington (7 April 1756), in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-41), 1: 305.

29. Pargellis, *Loudoun in America*, 305-6; Loudoun quoted in Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America*, 255; Brigadier General William Haviland, 16 December 1757, and Loudoun to Henry Fox, secretary of war, 3 October and 22 November 1756, quoted in John Edward Grenier, "The Other American Way of War: Unlimited and Irregular Warfare in the Colonial Military Tradition," Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 1999, 206-7, 217.

30. Cumberland reprinted and issues discussed in Pargellis, ed*., Military Affairs in North America*, 227, 264, 269, 290-91; Lewis Butler, *The Annals of the King's Royal Rifle Corps* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1913), 1: 25-32.

31. J. W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army* (London: Macmillan, 1899), 2: 289; Matthew G. Hatvany, "Overcoming Ethic and Social Barriers in Colonial British America: The 'Meritorious' Career of Frederick Haldimand," *Historian* 58 (Spring 1996): 593-97; Eric Richards, "Scotland and the Uses of the Atlantic Empire," in Bernard Bailyn and Philip Morgan, ed., *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 96-97.

32. Bouquet (July 1763), quoted in Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, 11; Bouquet to Washington, 14 July 1758, quoted in Waghelstein, "*Preparing for the wrong war,*" 38.

33. Gage and the 80th Foot described in Loudoun to Cumberland, 2 October 1757, in Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America*, 235, and Grenier, "*The Other American Way of War,*" 224-25; Arthur B. Tourtellot, *Lexington and Concord: The Beginning of the War of the American Revolution* (New York: Norton, 1959), 90, 131-33, 197-98 and Ketchum, *Decisive Day,* 121, 159-64, 191-92.

34. Martin L. Nicolai, "A Different Kind of Courage: The French Military and the Canadian Irregular Soldier During the Seven Years' War," *Canadian Historical Review* 80 (January 1989): 53-75; Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 51, 55, 332-33.

35. Eric Robson, "British Light Infantry in the Mid-Eighteenth Century: The Effect of American Conditions," *Army Quarterly* 63 (January 1952): 209-14.

36. Bouquet quoted in Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 60.

37. Julian Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War* (London: Longmans, Green, 1907), 1: 28-29; English generals Loudoun and Abercromby (July and November 1957), both quoted in Armstrong Starkey, "War and Culture, a Case Study: The Enlightenment and the Conduct of the British Army in America, 1755-1781," *War and Society* 8 (May 1990): 9; Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 251-52; Marquis de Montcalm, ca. August 1757, in Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1936-70), 7: 83; Townsend, ca. August 1759, in Christopher Hibbert, *Wolfe at Quebec: The Man Who Won the French and Indian War* (New York: World Pub. Co., 1959), 119.

38. Royal Governor Robert Dinwiddie to British army commander in chief, 2 May 1757, in Gipson, *British Empire Before the American Revolution*, 7: 41, fn. 50.

39. Howard Peckham and Charles Gibson, eds., *Attitudes of Colonial Powers Toward the American Indian* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1969), 64-65, 87, 91; Milton W. Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1976), 24, 53-54, 64, 242. Most trading post merchants and frontier government officials for the Indians were Scots or Irish, not English or American, as was the Johnson selected deputy crown commissioner for northern Indian affairs and George Croghan, his fellow Irish immigrant, known as "the king of the Pennsylvania traders." The ethnic makeup of these men is somewhat reminiscent of another special component of the Empire, the Royal Americans, 60th Regiment, whose officers (much like Johnson) frequently took female Indian consorts, see, ibid., 126;

Kevin Phillips, *The Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, and the Triumph of Anglo-America* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 208, 210, 643, and Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, 3: 13.

40. W. J. Eccles, "The Military Establishment in New France," in Eccles, *Essays on New France* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987), 112-16; Ian K. Steele, *Warpaths: Invasions of North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 134-35, 197-98.

41. Loudoun to Cumberland, 29 August 1756, in Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America*, 232; Catherine M. Desbarats, "The Cost of Early Canada's Native Alliances: Reality and Scarcity's Rhetoric," *William and Mary Quarterly* 52 (October 1995): 626; memorandum of France's Council of Regency (1716), quoted in Max Savelle, *The Origins of American Diplomacy: The International History of Angloamerica, 1492-1763* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 364.

42. Commanding general Jeffery Amherst and other British generals discussed and quoted, 20 February 1759, in Daniel J. Beattie, "The Adaptation of the British Army to Wilderness Warfare, 1755-1763," in Maarten Ultee, ed., *Adapting to Conditions: War and Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1986), 74, 76, 80-81, French strategy discussed and Marquis de Montcalm, ca. June 1758, quoted in Gipson, *British Empire Before American Revolution*, 7: 171, 221; Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 331.

43. French officials in Quebec and Paris, quoted in Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe,* 22, 267, 358, and in Patrice Louis-René Higonnet, "The Origins of the Seven Years' War," *Journal of Modern History* 40 (March 1968): 75; Anglo-American colonists quoted in Daniel Timothy Miller, "*Fire from the Hearth: Connecticut, Irregular Warfare and National Identity, 1754-1783*," Ph.D. diss., University of Indiana, 1992, 55, 56, 111.

44. Massachusetts citizen (1750), quoted in Grenier, "The Other American Way of War," 99; Governor William Shirley (1754 and 1755), quoted in Higonnet, "Origins 7 Years' War," 87, and in John A. Schutz, "Imperialism in Massachusetts During the Governorship of William Shirley, 1741-1756," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 23 (Summer 1960): 231.

45. Lee McCardell, *Ill-Starred General, Braddock of the Coldstream Guards* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958), 155, 61, 189-90, 216.

46. Effects of Culloden discussed and Lord John Ligonier quoted in Grenier, "*The Other American Way of War,*" 175-80; Franklin quoted in McCardell,

Ill-Starred General, 175, 252. For definitions of compound warfare, see the introductory and concluding essays in this casebook.

47. McCardell, *Ill-Starred General*, 247-253, quotes on 252, 260; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 102-103. One English military historian has no doubt that Gage is the person most responsible for the debacle, see Robert L. Yaple, "Braddock's Defeat: The Theories and a Reconsideration," *Army Historical Research* 46 (Winter 1968):198.

48. Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, chapters 13 through 17; Iroquois messengers, 26 October 1755, in *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1922), 2: 127; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 17-18, 99-100, 275-84, 331-38; Cuneo, *Rogers of the Rangers*, 11.

49. Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War*, 1: 180-83; quotes from Braddock and Indian in McCardell, *Ill-Starred General*, 261, 264; Fitzpatrick, ed., *Writings of Washington*, 1:149-153.

50. Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941 (Washington: Center of Military History, 1998),* 38, 40-44, 74, 132-135, 248; William Corey to Pitt, ca. March 1756, printed in Peter Paret, "Colonial Experience and European Military Reform at the End of the Eighteenth Century," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Records* 37 (1964): 47.

51. Ian K. Steele, *Betrayals: Fort William Henry and the "Massacre,"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 80-121.

52. *Ibid*; Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness*, 170, 333; for terms in the early 1750s and influence of the Oswego incident on French dread and Indian expectations, see Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 49, 64, 154, 187-88.

53. Steele, *Betrayals*, 127-33.

54. For Indian tribes deserting the French military effort, see Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies and Tribes in the Seven Years' War in America* (New York: Norton, 1988), 351, 397-98, 402-4; English magazine's description of the "massacre" quoted in Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 229; Wolfe quoted in Hibbert, *Wolfe at Quebec*, 27.

55. Lord Loudoun (17 August 1757), quoted in Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare*, 102. Few parties to a conflict are as righteous as they claim. At the Battle of Lake George in 1755, at virtually the same location as the Fort Henry "massacre," William Johnson protected the captured French commander but allowed his Mohawk warriors to return home with some prisoners,

presumably to be tortured or adopted to replace the dead. His concession to military necessity did not prevent London from granting him a knighthood later that year, see Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 172, 194.

56. Forbes quoted in Douglas Edward Leach, *Arms for America: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 440.

57. Loudoun to Cumberland, 2 October 1756, in Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America*, 237; Wolfe and Brigadier General George Townsend, quoted or described in Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, 524, 536, Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 254, 789, and Peter E. Russell, "Redcoats in the Wilderness: British Officers and Irregular Warfare in Europe and America, 1740 to 1760," *William and Mary Quarterly* 35 (October 1978): 650-51; Fuller, *British Light Infantry*, 49, 94.

58. Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 357-59; John Keegan, *Fields of Battle: The Wars for North America* (New York: Knopf, 1996), 126-28.

59. Hibbert, *Wolfe at Quebec*, 73-74, 139-40, 153-54; Major Samuel C. Endicott and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Sickinger, "IPB During the Siege of Quebec," *Military Review* 72 (May 1992): 63-71.

60. J. Clarence Webster, ed., *The Journal of Jeffrey Amherst,* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1931), 109, 111, 132, 154, 166-67, 210; Hamilton, *Sir William John*son, 241-44; Amherst on Indians quoted in Cuneo, *Rogers of the Rangers*, 95, and Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 470. Amherst told Rogers: I have "a very despicable" opinion of rangers in general but "I have a very good opinion of you, and shall readily employ you when the service will permit me," ibid., 157. The Royal Americans, now deployed in the Ohio River Valley, were effective. In Amherst's own area of operations, the Albany-Montreal corridor, the 80th Foot light infantry regiment, under Thomas Gage, was militarily ineffective. Its tactical errors contributing to the failure to capture Fort Ticonderoga in July 1758 caused William Pitt to dismiss James Abercromby, Amherst's predecessor, as commander-in-chief. Like most English officers, Abercromby had believed that the average regular could learn and dispatch "all the functions of Rangers in a short time," quoted in Grenier, "The Other American Way of War," 223. For more on the 80th Foot, see note 68.

61. Amherst, 24 June 1761, in *William Johnson Papers*, 3: 421; Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine*, 69-70, 83-84.

62. *Journals of Major Robert Rogers*, 144-45. Loudon to Cumberland, 22 Nov. 1756, in Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America*, 269; Cuneo, *Rogers of the Rangers*, 7-8, 62.

63. Turney-High, *Primitive War*, 112, 117; *Journals of Major Robert Rogers*, 146-48; based on Loudoun's Papers, Parker, *"Anglo-American Wilderness Campaigning,"* 221-27, describes Rogers' attention to warding off surprise.

64. *Journals of Major Robert Rogers*, 154, 184-85.

65. Amherst quoted in Butler, *The Annals of the King's Royal Rifle Corps*, 1: 113; *Journals of Major Robert Rogers*, 192-96. Adding insult to Tory injury, Rogers' friend and foremost subordinate officer, John Stark, would lead rebel militia at Bunker Hill and Saratoga, its greatest tactical victories over British regulars. Several former rangers, including Edmund Moore, the regimental adjutant, were minutemen at Lexington, where the militia was led by Captain John Parker, another veteran of Rogers' Rangers, see Richard M. Ketchum, *Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), 286-91, 327; Ketchum, *Decisive Day*, 143-48, 206, and Tourtellot, *Lexington and Concord*, 19, 22, 34, 47, 268.

66. Captain John Knox, ca. December 1757, quoted in Brummel, "Service Truly Critical," 153.

67. English officer quoted in McCardell, *Ill-Starred General*, 180.

68. Amherst (7 Aug. 1763) and Bouquet to Amherst, 13 July 1763: both quoted in Elizabeth A. Fenn, "Biological Warfare in Eighteenth-Century North America: Beyond Jeffrey Amherst," *Journal of American History* 86 (March 2000):1574-1575; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 547-553; Cuneo, *Rogers of the Rangers*, 92-93, 182, 194, 267, 275-78; Rogers, described (1756) in Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America*, 177. Rogers' worst enemies were Sir William Johnson, Indian Commissioner, and General Gage. The former had once called Johnson "the most active Man in our Army" when Johnson recruited the original ranger company after his Iroquois recruits left the battlefield at Lake George. After the war, when Rogers became the toast of English society and seemed about to receive a baronet like that of Johnson himself, his erstwhile admirer recalled how he "raised him [in 1755 from the low]est Station on accot [account] of his Abilities as a [ranger] but [was astonished] how people [now] could think him fit for any other" activity, military or political. Gage, a rather miserable failure in the Braddock expedition, later commanded the 80th Foot light infantry. In this capacity, he had fought beside the rangers at Ticonderoga in 1758, where according to the semi-official history of the British army, Rogers' unit performed far better than

that of Gage. Bruised egos were certainly a factor. Rogers' Rangers were more immediate competition to Johnson's Indians and Gage's light infantry than they were to heavier, more standard, arms. Nonetheless, neither man could have purged Rogers if it were not for the long-standing criticism of him within the British military establishment, dating back to at least the 175Os, when Rogers already had a "good share of Nonsense. . . in his head" for thinking of promotion to (a mere) colonel of provincials, let alone a knighthood, see *Papers of Johnson*, 2: 189-90, 5: 788, 12: 877; Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, 2: 325-26; Abercromby (2 January 1758), quoted in Grenier, "*The Other American Way of War*," 215.

69. Colonel Davie Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements Chiefly Applied to Infantry* (1788) quoted in Parker, *Anglo-American Wilderness Campaigning*, 352; Rogers quoted in Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence*, 187, 235.

70. Quotes about Wingate are from, in sequence, Lt. N. Durant (ca. April 1944) in Shelford Bidwell, *The Chindit War:Stilwell, Wingate and the Campaign in Burma: 1944* (New York: Macmillan, 1979), 62-63 and from General John Hackett, Winston Churchill, and Field Marshal William Slim, in John Bierman and Colin Smith, *Fire in the Night: Wingate of Burma, Ethiopia, and Zion* (New York: Random House, 1999), 109, 379, 381; Peter Meade, "Orde Wingate and the Official Historians," *Journal of Contemporary History* 14 (January 1979): 65-66; David Rooney, *Mad Mike: A Life of Brigadier Michael Calvert* (London: Leo Cooper, 1997), 127, 148-70. Calvert was charged with pedophilia, Rodgers with treason.

71. Since winning the Vietnam War with an invasion of fourteen conventional army divisions in 1975, the North Vietnamese have been loath to give any credit for victory to the Southern-based insurgency. "They behave," said one former Viet Cong, "as if they had conquered us, " see Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 534. The U.S. Army began to treat Special Forces much better in the 1980s than it did in the immediate postwar 1970s. Two factors were instrumental: (1) renewed insurgencies, this time in Latin America and (2) the threat that pro-Special Forces elements in Congress would create a distinct special operations agency outside the Department of Defense. Nothing creates appreciation of any asset faster than fear that it will be lost.

72. T. E. Lawrence was hardly typical of irregular warfare soldiers when, in a moment of humility, he wrote that the Arab components he led against the Turks were "just a sideshow in a sideshow," World War I being determined by large, conventional units on the Western Front.

Washington as Strategist: Compound Warfare in the American Revolution, 1775-1783

Jerry D. Morelock

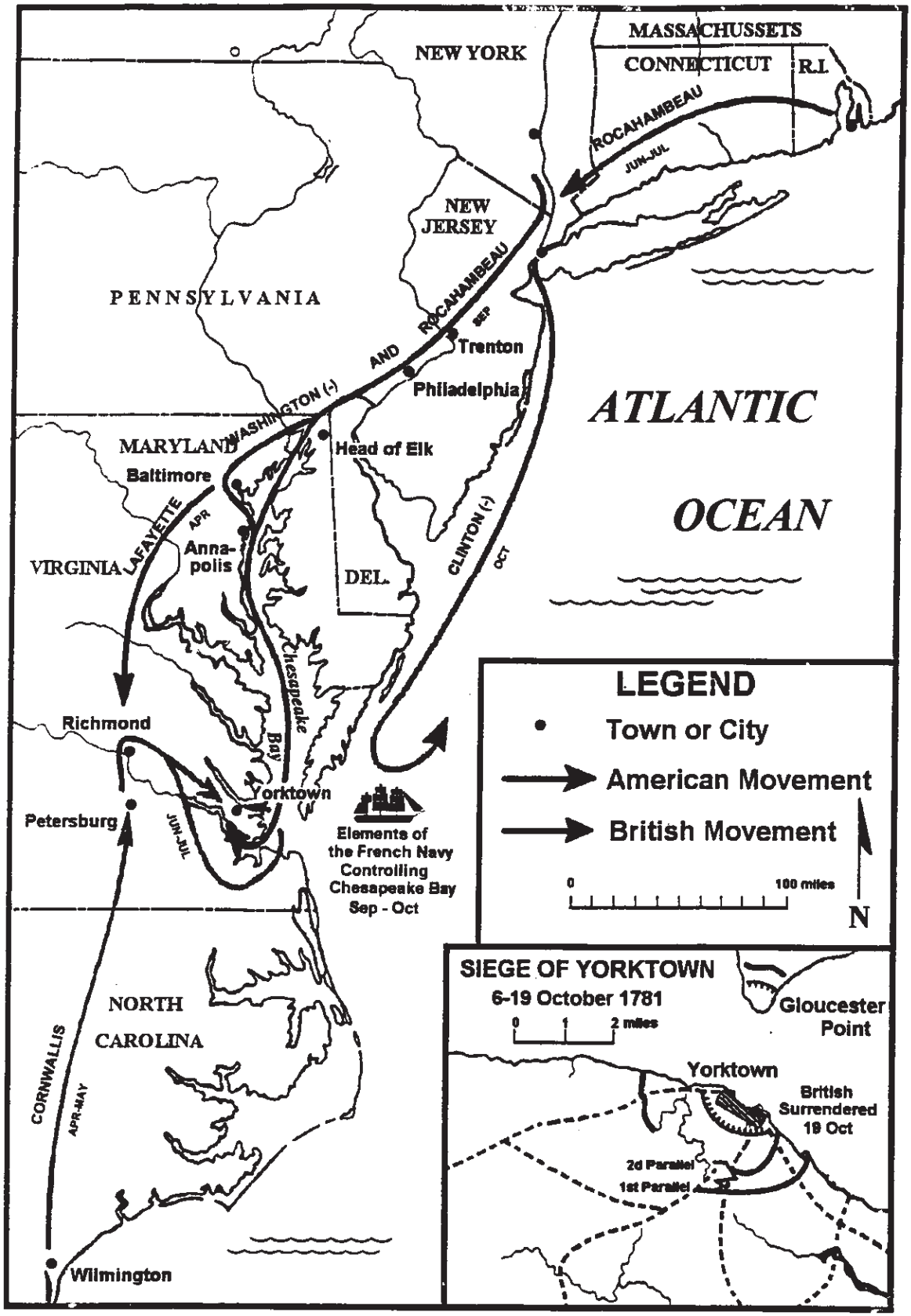
The American Revolution A Victory for Compound Warfare

As the American Revolutionary War played out across the various areas of operations and widely separated battlefields of North America from 1775 to 1783, it was clearly characterized by military actions "combining regular and irregular forces," or as Dr. Tom Huber has termed this phenomenon, *compound warfare*.[1] Both sides in the conflict combined regular troops with irregular forces to prosecute a war that not only featured conventional battle lines, where armies faced each other in imitation of the tactics of Europe's most successful practitioner of that style of war—Frederick II the Great of Prussia—but also, much more frequently, saw unconventional operations and often brutal actions by militia, partisan rangers, and other irregular forces. Indeed, the ultimate victory of the infant United States in achieving its independence from Great Britain, the premier military power of the last half of the eighteenth century, owed much to the actions of the American militia. Operating locally as armed revolutionary constabularies,[2] they prevented the unrestricted use of vast areas of the colonial countryside by the regular forces of the British Empire. The militia kept the British from exerting control and influence over any territory not physically occupied by their troops (or the much less-numerous Tory militia). Yet as important to final victory as the colonial militia were, they could not have won and held independence by the force of their own arms alone, and the key to victory remained the conventional military operations of the United States' regular force, the Continental Line. The American Revolution was, as Huber wrote, "the simultaneous application of a main force and of a widely spread militia force [that] produce[d] a powerful complementary effect that seemed greater even than the sum of its substantial parts . . . to inflict strategic defeat on what otherwise appeared to be an overwhelmingly superior adversary."[3]

One particularly illustrative example of the advantageous effect produced by the combination of regular and irregular military operations in producing a decisive victory (in this case because of its impact on Great Britain's political leadership) is the final pitched battle

of the Revolutionary War—the campaign, siege, and capture of Cornwallis' forces at Yorktown in 1781 (see Map 1). Although the final siege and capture of this tobacco port on Virginia's York River was as conventional an operation as any of Frederick the Great's in Europe, the nearly total control of the Virginia and Carolina countryside exercised by the local patriot militia was a major factor in the trapping of Cornwallis and his army. Despite Cornwallis' high hopes at the beginning of his southern campaign that thousands of presumed Loyalists would rally to the king's colors and provide manpower and sustenance to support his army, he found himself operating in a hostile environment. The countryside beyond his immediate occupation was in the firm grip of the patriot militia; his supplies were arriving at the only secure enclaves he could consistently maintain by force of arms—the ports.[4] As long as the Royal Navy ruled supreme, this was not a fatal handicap, nor was it a particularly debilitating hindrance to Cornwallis' conventional operations against the forces arrayed opposite him. Actually, British conventional forces consistently defeated (but, significantly, could not *destroy*) the Continental troops and militia serving under the command of Nathanael Greene, and Cornwallis eventually chased Greene out of the Carolinas and through Virginia. Once in Virginia, however, the British commander lost his ability to control the countryside beyond his picket lines and was forced to seek supply and support from the sea. When his all-important seaborne lifeline was cut (albeit temporarily) by the French Navy in October 1781, Cornwallis became marooned in a hostile landscape at the mercy of the multinational American-French conventional forces under Washington and Rochambeau that had moved, unmolested, through a friendly American countryside from New England to Virginia.[5] Barring the timely reestablishment of secure sea lines of communication, Cornwallis' subsequent defeat by conventional siege craft was inevitable.[6]

Each component of the military forces of the United States, the regular units of the Continental Line and the irregular forces of the militia, were thus necessary (although individually insufficient) elements of the total force required to prosecute and win the compound warfare of the American Revolutionary War. The issue addressed here, therefore, is not so much whether the American Revolution was an example of compound warfare but, rather, to analyze George Washington's role, as commander of United States forces, in devising and prosecuting this type of warfare. More specifically, this essay will consider the following questions: did Washington deliberately and


NEW YORK
MASSACHUSSETS
CONNECTICUT
R.I.
ROCAHAMBEAU
JUN-JUL
NEW JERSEY
PENNSYLVANIA
ROCAHAMBEAU
SEP
AND
WASHINGTON (-)
Trenton
Philadelphia
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
MARYLAND
Head of Elk
Baltimore
LAFAYETTE
APR
Anna-polis
VIRGINIA
DEL.
CLINTON (-)
OCT
Chesapeake Bay
Richmond
Yorktown
Petersburg
JUN-JUL
Elements of the French Navy Controlling Chesapeake Bay Sep - Oct
LEGEND
Town or City
American Movement
British Movement
0
100 miles
N
SIEGE OF YORKTOWN
6-19 October 1781
0 1 2 miles
Gloucester Point
Yorktown
British Surrendered 19 Oct
2d Parallel
1st Parallel
NORTH CAROLINA
CORNWALLIS
APR-MAY
Wilmington

Map 1

systematically create his war-winning strategy of mobilizing the synergistic effects of conventional and irregular operations as executed by his Continental Line units and the ubiquitous militia? Or was the successful battlefield outcome merely the serendipitous result of the primarily uncoordinated but complementary actions of these very different forces?

Washington—The Indispensable Man

George Washington was undeniably the central, preeminent military figure in the American Revolutionary War. Despite contradictory views among historians regarding his ability as a military strategist,[7] his longevity in command, alone, was noteworthy; his uninterrupted service from June 1775 until December 1783 as commander in chief of the standing military force of the rebellious colonies, the Continental Army, is sufficient to establish his claim as the conflict's principal, longstanding soldier. Furthermore, even the harshest critics of Washington's strategic leadership of the army admit that "Washington was a great leader . . . a great military commander," although many more seem apt to ascribe his success as a commander to what they perceive as his seemingly incredible luck. Fewer critics point to his mental acuity or strategic judgment.[8] This latter group, including those who have generally praised Washington's leadership as commander in chief, has tended to emphasize the often fortuitous circumstances presented to him by the incompetence of his enemies and the generosity of his French ally. For example, Washington's best-known biographer, Douglas Southall Freeman, praises the Revolutionary commander's personal leadership qualities as well as his ability as a tactician, administrator, and disciplinarian. Nevertheless, he devotes few pages of his seven-volume biography to Washington's success or failure as a strategist, concluding finally that, "he usually was lucky and in nothing so fortunate, strategically, as in his adversary's lack of enterprise."[9] This theme was continued even more recently when John Ferling, in an otherwise laudatory assessment of Washington's contribution to American victory, wrote, "In short, luck, daring, and foreign assistance won the war."[10]

The many works that have been written focus mainly on Washington's personal leadership[11] and attempt to grasp the essence of his remarkable character. But these works largely have failed to interpret or assess his strategic performance within the context of the times and the circumstances he faced. While they contribute to the generally accepted view that Washington was the *indispensable man* of

the Revolution, they have not succeeded in providing a well-researched body of knowledge to determine if Washington was the conflict's *indispensable strategist*. Nor have these books determined whether his prosecution of the military portion of the American Revolution included the reasoned application of a strategy of compound warfare—specifically, a strategy deliberate as well as systematic. That assessment ultimately requires an examination of important factors that affected Washington as commander in chief and influenced his role as a strategist. These influences were his relations with Congress, public attitudes regarding the military, the nature of the Continental Army, Washington's leadership of that army, the capabilities of his fellow generals, and his interactions with his generals.

Washington and Congress

Washington's military strategy throughout the war, particularly his ability to implement whatever strategy he decided to adopt, was influenced by his relationship to the political leadership of the Revolution—the Continental Congress. George Washington was appointed by his colleagues in the Continental Congress to be commander in chief of the new Continental Army primarily for political reasons. He was, of course, widely recognized as one of the most experienced of the colonial militia leaders, having participated in numerous campaigns and several engagements as part of Virginia militia regiments. Most notably, Washington had survived Braddock's disastrous defeat in 1755 during the Seven Years' War by keeping his head during that rout and by exhibiting exceptional leadership under fire.[12] The tall, muscular Virginian considered himself a well-qualified military commander. Earlier in his career, he had thought he lacked "nothing but [a] commission from His Majesty" to certify his professional military competence.[13] Thus, Congressional delegate Washington rather shamelessly promoted his own case for command of the army in 1775 by appearing in Congress wearing his full military uniform. This self-advertisement undoubtedly helped plant his martial image in the minds of his fellow delegates who were about to choose the new Revolutionary Army's commander in chief. Yet Washington's military qualifications were substantially more than posturing. Don Higginbotham, among other historians of this era, points out that "by any yardstick of [his] generation, Washington . . . made strenuous efforts to become professional," and from his earliest days in the Virginia militia, he "thought and acted like a military professional . . . study[ing] closely the procedures of a regular army." Washington's

Virginia regiment in the colonial wars stressed strict discipline and formal training based on the latest European military literature, and the regiment elicited rare praise from the usually condescending **a**nd always highly critical senior British officers.[14]

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that New Englanders like John Adams proposed Washington for the position of commander in chief because Washington's native Virginia was being courted by a Congress desperate to maintain support for a rebellion confined, in mid-1775, to the Northeast. What Adams wanted and got was a southerner to lead the principally northern army. This politically astute move by the New England faction did, indeed, broaden support for the widening rebellion, regardless of the impressiveness of Washington's military qualifications.[15]

Upon his appointment as Continental Army commander in chief, Washington began collaboration with Congress that would significantly influence his ability to develop and implement military strategy throughout the course of the war. Congressional control of the means of waging war created a virtual partnership between the commander in chief and the senior legislative body of the rebellious colonies in their administration and direction of the army and its operations. Congress appointed all of Washington's senior subordinate officers; retained responsibility for the administration, supply, and manning of the army; and frequently directed Washington to conduct specific military operations for overriding political reasons. Washington's continuous cooperation with Congress ("his constant collaboration with civil authority") meant that

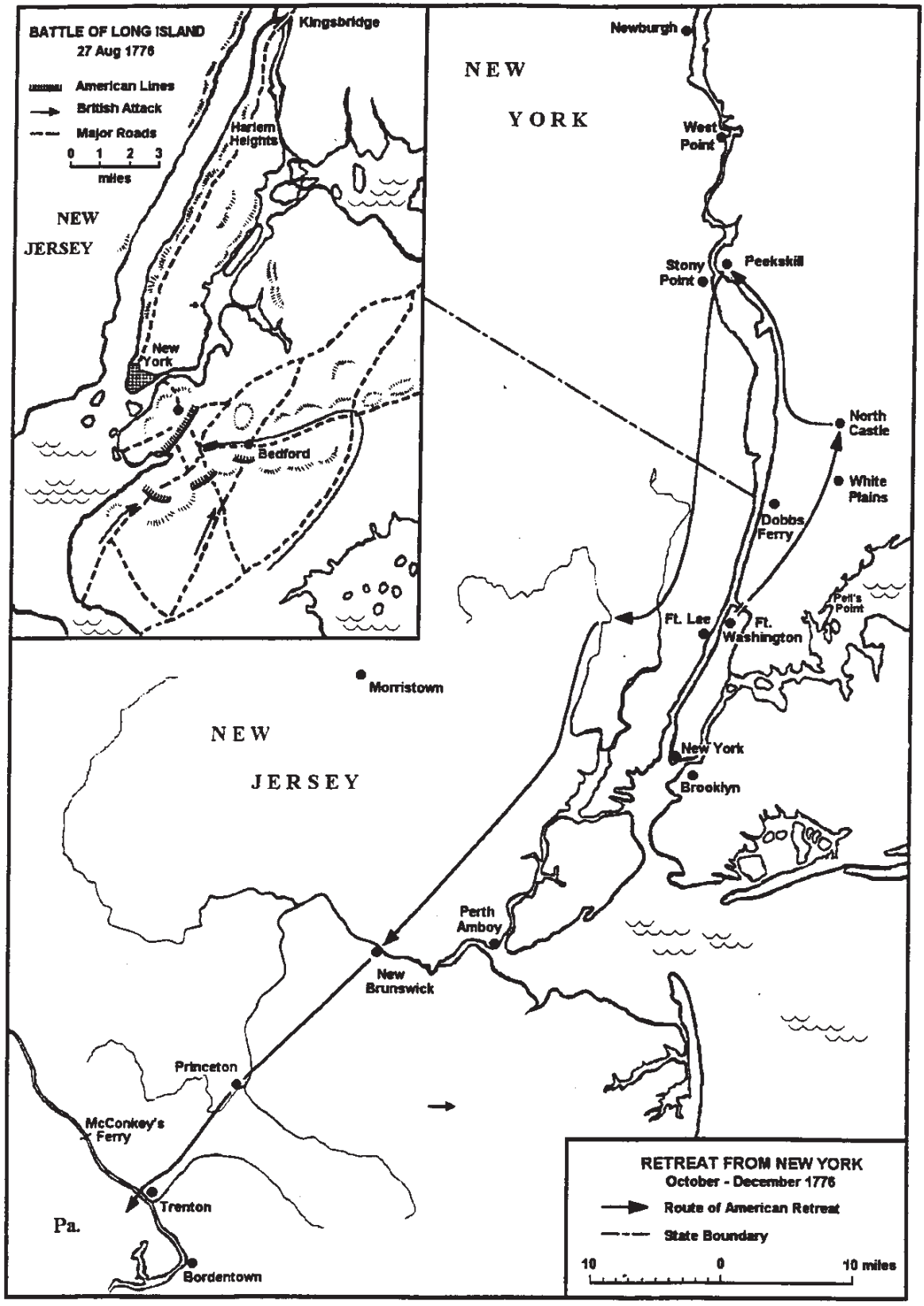
> [b]oth the Continental Congress and George Washington were necessary. Washington's steady stream of official letters to the president of the Congress and his large flow of private explanations to friendly and influential delegates made him an active participant in the congressional debates on domestic affairs, and probably the most respected [one]. . . [Congress] certainly checked his power, in the sense that he could never suggest policy without preparing the ground by a good deal of political cultivation; [and] only an idolater of Washington could insist that things would have been uniformly better [for the military conduct of the war] without the need for him to make careful political calculations of what would be acceptable to the ruling public of the new nation.[16]

The commander in chief, therefore, was never able to develop his military strategy within a political vacuum. It remained the privilege

and responsibility of the Congress to appoint the senior subordinate commanders who would carry out Washington's plans; to determine the actual size of the forces under his command by dealing directly with the several states to recruit and provide soldiers for the Continental Line; and, probably of greatest impact on the daily operation of the army, to supply the Continental Army with rations, arms, equipment, and pay. Frequently, in times of exceptionally grave crisis—such as the British assault on New York City in 1776 and British marches and countermarches to and from Philadelphia in 1777 and 1778—Congress pressured Washington to conduct full-scale, conventional battles for what were essentially political reasons. These battles included most of the large-scale, conventional engagements Washington personally commanded: Long Island, Harlem Heights, and White Plains around New York City in 1776 (see Map 2); Brandywine and Germantown on Howe's route to Philadelphia in 1777; and Monmouth, during Howe's retreat from the capital in 1778.[17]

Each of these key political responsibilities of Congress had an enormous influence on any military strategy that Washington might devise and, along with the terrain and British enemy forces, set the basic parameters of his strategy. Yet despite the frustrating restrictions, Washington not only accepted his subordination to civilian authority, he actively defended it against factions within the army that sought, from time to time, to challenge that ultimate authority. The most notable example of this was the so-called "Newburgh Conspiracy" in March 1783 in an incident that occurred while the Continental Army was quartered at Newburgh, New York (just above West Point). In behavior bordering on mutiny, a faction of officers pressured Congress to pass legislation guaranteeing the "commutation" of their promised half-pay for life to a full salary for several years. Washington's dramatic, personal intervention is credited with having stopped this early threat to civilian authority.[18]

There were, indeed, positive attributes to this Congress-commander in chief arrangement. On the positive side of the equation, and not of inconsequential value to the much-harried Washington, was Congress' responsibility for dealing directly with the often-fractious states. This relieved the commander in chief of a burden he would otherwise have had to shoulder alone. Despite the fact that this arrangement complicated his military interaction with the state-controlled militia, the insulating effect that this provided Washington probably outweighed the negative aspects of the


BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND
27 Aug 1776
American Lines
British Attack
Major Roads
0 1 2 3
miles
NEW
JERSEY
Kingsbridge
Harlem Heights
New York
Bedford
NEW
YORK
Newburgh
West Point
Stony Point
Peekskill
North Castle
White Plains
Dobbs Ferry
Ft. Lee
Ft. Washington
Pell's Point
Morristown
NEW
JERSEY
New York
Brooklyn
Perth Amboy
New Brunswick
Princeton
McConkey's Ferry
Trenton
Pa.
Bordentown
RETREAT FROM NEW YORK
October - December 1776
Route of American Retreat
State Boundary
10 0 10 miles

Map 2

relationship. Additionally, it is doubtful that any one general, even a commander in chief who generated as much respect as Washington, could have gotten more out of the loose alliance of states than Congress did; nor could Washington have single-handedly raised, equipped, and supported the armed forces across the incredibly wide scope of the North American theater of war. The Congressional system of standing committees (later amalgamated into a Board of War) that oversaw the administration of the army and the conduct of the war was far from perfect and often inefficient, yet it accomplished a vital function that Washington likely would have found beyond his capacity while he executed the rebellion's military operations.[19]

Perhaps Washington's greatest achievement in regard to civil-military relations during the Revolution was, as Smelser notes, that largely through the commander in chief's efforts, "the civilians of Congress and the military, as personified by Washington, worked as one."[20]

Washington and the Army

Of hardly less importance to Washington's ability to develop and implement a military strategy was his relationship with the instrument he was expected to wield in order to gain victory on the battlefield—the Continental Army. Despite the early outpouring of revolutionary zeal in 1775-1776, which provided the largest advantage in number of troops (relative to British strength) that he would have during the entire conflict, this military instrument of war proved, for the most part of the Revolution, an exceptionally blunt one. Washington's army—in contrast to the traditionalist images created by the filiopietistic historians of the nineteenth century, the image of sturdy yeoman farmers ("minutemen") dropping their plows and picking up their muskets—was a much more complex organization whose very composition tended to change over time.[21] By the end of the war, most scholars agree, "the Continental Army . . . was composed of young, poor men" with few economic prospects at home, who tended to "enlist under the influence of economic need and ambition."[22] One study of the pension records of veterans of the Continental Army showed that "basically they were young white males between the ages of 16 and 25 (but most were teenagers under 19), the sons of poor farmers and farm laborers." Whether they also enlisted out of a belief in revolutionary ideals remains a matter of disagreement among historians since the presence of poverty does not automatically mean the absence of patriotism.[23] Unarguably, the Continental soldiers had an incredible

"willingness to endure hardships almost continuously and still persevere."[24]

The independent spirit of these men, whether created by a genuine desire to preserve their freedom or by more mundane personal motives of economics and ambition, "made them [according to Paul David Nelson] poor fighters . . . impatient of restraint and discipline . . . although personally courageous."[25] Facing Washington throughout the war was the problem of using the eighteenth-century tactics he preferred while subduing the independent spirit of these men and subordinating it to the military discipline so vital to the prosecution of the war. The best the commander in chief could expect, and what he achieved from time to time, was, according to Robert Middlekauf, an army of "free men broken of some of the worst habits freedom engendered."[26] Despite these leadership challenges, Washington, nevertheless, used these young recruits to create and—of the utmost importance—*maintain* the army necessary to execute his military strategy. A militia free to melt away into the landscape when confronted by British regulars was incapable of serving as the standing symbol of the Revolution, whose very presence as an army-in-being was more important than its ability to win pitched battles. Only a well-disciplined, conventionally trained force could serve that all-important function and lend *legitimacy* to the patriot cause without fear of a fatal interruption. The local militia, whose irregular actions could be dismissed as organized banditry by Great Britain and, most importantly, the international community from which the Continental Congress sought recognition, was incapable of providing that legitimacy. One of Washington's greatest strengths as a soldier and strategist was his realization of the fundamental need to acquire legitimacy for his army, coupled with his unmatched ability to keep that legitimate force together throughout eight years of terrible hardship.

But even the term used to describe Washington's force—the Continental Army—"is shrouded in ambiguities" and, according to Charles Lesser, in *Sinews of Independence*,

> [t]here were, in fact, three categories of soldiers who fought for the colonial cause: the Continental soldier, the militiaman, and the state soldier. The most regular of these was the Continental soldier, the man who had enlisted for a lengthy term of service (or for the duration of the war), who was paid by the Continental Congress, and who served in a clearly defined Continental unit. If Washington's desires had come to fruition, his army would have consisted entirely of such men, and the calling out of militia would have been limited to extraordinary

> events. For most of the war, however, these Continental soldiers did not materialize in sufficient numbers; the colonies were often unable to meet their quotas of recruits. The result was that, at many times during the war, Continental troops were inadequate for carrying on what Washington regarded as a proper campaign. Driven by necessity, the general frequently had to fill out his forces with the other two categories of warriors, the militiamen and the state soldiers.[27]

Beset by constant problems with recruiting and training adequate numbers of "regular" troops, the Continental Army seldom numbered as many as 20,000 men (present and fit for duty). Often, Washington had only a few thousand "Continentals" under his direct command with which to conduct the military operations necessary to implement his strategy. Especially after 1779, the numbers steadily shrank, when early war recruits went home and many others, who were otherwise supportive of the Revolutionary cause, found that service in the local militia provided a much more attractive way of participating. After 1776, only six monthly Continental Army strength reports show the troops under Washington's direct command surpassing the 20,000 figure (September through December of 1778 and July and October 1779); on only eight other reports out of eighty-nine monthly returns did the figures even reach the 19,000 mark (see Table 1). From December 1780 until the army disbanded in July 1783, the highest reported strength of troops with Washington was barely 10,000 and frequently only 6,000 or less. His greatest numerical strength relative to British troop strength was probably in 1775, before the British buildup, when his numbers ranged from 15,000 to 18,400.[28]

Washington's personal inclination, derived through his early training and befitting his temperament, was to seek conventional-style battles against his conventional-style opponent, and he actively sought to train his Continentals in the regular military tactics of the age throughout the war. His strategic focus remained his opponent's military center of gravity, hence his nearly obsessive fixation on defeating the British in New York City, which was manifested most dramatically in his initial extreme anger at the French for "tricking" him into marching to the Chesapeake and Yorktown in 1781.[29] However, the realities presented to him by his army's chronic problems of insufficient numbers and inadequately trained troops frequently prevented him from achieving his goal of fighting conventional battles. One alternative was to fill out his Continental Army ranks with the other categories of troops available—the militia and state units—who

TABLE 1 – *Total of Washington's Army: Monthly Strength Reports*

Year	Month	Total
1775	JAN	—
	FEB	—
	MAR	—
	APR	—
	MAY	—
	JUN	—
	JUL	17,371
	AUG	18,485
	SEP	18,095
	OCT	17,099*
	NOV	15,495
	DEC	15,105
1776	JAN	11,843*
	FEB	17,441
	MAR	Missing
	APR	10,021
	MAY	8,411
	JUN	10,369
	AUG	Missing
	SEP	20,435
	OCT	20,022
	NOV	16,807
	DEC	6,104*
1777	JAN	Missing
	FEB	Missing
	MAR	Missing
	APR	Missing
	MAY	7,363*
	JUN	Missing
	JUL	Missing
	AUG	Missing
	SEP	Missing
	OCT	10,332*
	NOV	19,415*
	DEC	14,122
1778	JAN	8,095
	FEB	7,556
	MAR	7,316
	APR	15,313
	May	15,061
	JUN	15,336
	JUL	19,460
	AUG	19,673
	SEP	23,552
	OCT	22,291
	NOV	21,476
	DEC	23,066
1779	JAN	19,224
	FEB	17,148
	MAR	16,100
	APR	17,309
	MAY	17,961
	JUN	16,943
	JUL	20,853
	AUG	18,728
	SEP	19,912
	OCT	23,563
	NOV	19,864
	DEC	14,327

TABLE 1 – *Total of Washington's Army: Monthly Strength Reports (cont)*

1780	JAN	12,356
	FEB	13,049
	MAR	12,159
	APR	8,638
	MAY	9,462
	JUN	8,870
	JUL	11,660
	AUG	19,634
	SEP	19,617
	OCT	13,837
	NOV	12,143
	DEC	5,982
1781	JAN	3,088
	FEB	2,272
	MAR	2,955
	APR	3,826
	MAY	4,487
	JUN	6,097
	JUL	6,425
	AUG	Missing
	SEP	4,955
	OCT	4,731*
	NOV	Missing
	DEC	Missing
1782	JAN	6,494
	FEB	6,228
	MAR	6,437
	APR	8,046
	MAY	8,512
	JUN	8,930
	JUL	10,108
	AUG	9,690
	SEP	8,987
	OCT	9,003
	NOV	10,130
	DEC	9,730
1783	JAN	9,502
	FEB	9,107
	MAR	9,470
	APR	10,021
	MAY	10,155
	JUN	1,753
	JUL	1,707

*Indicates that monthly total is available for Infantry only (i.e. excludes Artillery, Engineer, and Cavalry troops)

Note 1: All reports indicate "Present Fit for Duty and On Duty" (i.e. excludes sick, absent, and detached duty)

Note 2: Totals do not include Continental Army troops serving in major subordinate commands (eg. excludes Continental Army troops serving with Greene in the Southern Department in 1780-81)

Note: 3 Totals include militia when serving as part of the Continental Army

Source: Charles H. Lesser (ed.), *The Sinews of Independence: Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army*, passim.

would operate as conventional troops. This alternative, however, presented Washington with a challenge he never fully overcame.

A major criticism of Washington's ability to effectively employ all categories of troops available to the army was his habitual failure to devise a military strategy that would most effectively utilize militia to achieve positive results in conventional operations. As Higginbotham notes, Washington and his senior subordinate commanders in the Continental Army "labored strenuously and for the most part futilely to secure a long-term professional army modeled in important respects after contemporary European systems."[30] Despite the fact that militia control of the American countryside continued throughout the war and was a significant factor in Washington's ability to maintain the existence of his conventional army and restrict British occupation to a few selected major seaports, he remained frustrated by what he saw as the militia's inability to help him engage British forces in a conventional manner. In other words, Washington's strategy, in effect, *presumed* compound warfare by *assuming* that the patriot militia would complement his conventional operations and, through irregular actions, ensure control of the hinterland. What frustrated the commander in chief, however, was his failure to effectively incorporate the militia into what he also assumed would be the key to ultimate victory—conventional military operations in support of the Continental Line. As a staunch proponent of conventional tactics who actively sought to defeat British forces using the standard linear tactics of the day, Washington considered the ill-disciplined, unruly militia units as worse than useless.

Conventional battles between regular forces in the eighteenth century were generally characterized by parallel lines of troops (hence the term *linear* tactics). These troops faced each other with muskets and bayonets across a distance that was often only a few hundred (or even a few dozen) yards. Constrained by the technology of the era—epitomized by the use of inaccurate, smoothbore muskets—an army seeking victory depended upon troops drilled to stand in massed ranks and deliver volley after volley of massed fire into its opponent's lines until one side or the other could advance as an unbroken battle line with fixed bayonets to finish off the enemy. Generally, it took about two years of intensive training and constant drilling to produce a soldier capable of executing the intricate maneuvers required for this automaton-like fighting (to underscore this fact, Frederick II the Great, King of Prussia, and the master of linear tactics, referred to his soldiers as "walking muskets"). The difficulty, even impossibility, of

irregularly trained and indifferently drilled militia troops executing these tactics is obvious.

"In [Washington's] eyes," wrote John Shy, "the militia was the absolute worst: an undisciplined rabble, unwilling to obey or to fight, but quite willing to eat all the rations and to walk away with the precious muskets and other equipment issued to them . . . he detested them."[31] Washington was incapable, by temperament and training, of completely capitalizing on the practical uses of an armed citizenry as embodied in the militia because he "was unwilling to modify his concept of a 'good' army in order to exploit the inherent strengths of American society."[32] Several of Washington's subordinates achieved successes in conventional campaigns against British regulars through the effective integration of militia units into their battle plans, maximizing the units' strengths and minimizing their many weaknesses. Despite this, Washington was never able to see the militia as anything more than useless appendages to his regular troops that he was obliged to feed, clothe, and arm but who ran away at the first opportunity.[33] Through his refusal to adjust his conventional tactics to accommodate the abilities of the militia, he continually failed to seize the chance to add significant numbers to his always meager troop strength and severely limited his strategic options.

Yet the control by militia of the countryside, as well as their employment in conventional operations where possible, meant that America clearly waged compound warfare against the British—despite Washington's martial preferences for conventional confrontations. The myriad tasks performed by the militia included confounding enemy forces through small-scale warfare, maintaining internal security through patrolling against slave insurrections, fighting Indians, repelling seaborne raiding parties, garrisoning forts, guarding prisoners, collecting intelligence, transporting supplies, maintaining enthusiasm for the patriot cause, and battling British foragers.[34] This armed revolutionary constabulary, therefore, provided an incalculable advantage that promoted the success of the American cause in many ways. Recent research suggests that it may even be possible to calculate and quantify some of this vital, yet unseen, assistance:

> Because militia ('the damned scouting parties') ruled the hinterlands and forced 'market men [to] sneak through at the risk of their lives,' royal regiments controlled no territory producing goods or materials which they could not [physically] occupy—no small problem since they had nearly 30,000 soldiers. Consequently, the British had to be supplied from across the Atlantic Ocean, an unprecedented logistics

> effort not again attempted [on a similar scale] until late in World War II. This meant that the English army could not move 15 miles beyond navigable water [for any extended period]. It also meant that the British navy, despite chronic problems of manpower, could not transfer sailors from cargo packets and convoys which had to deliver 120,000 tons per annum [to support the army in America]: everything from weapons to oats, flour, and pork, not to mention 500,000 gallons of rum. By 1778, twelve capital ships (men of war) remained at Spithead for lack of the 1,400 sailors [who were busy transporting supplies to America].[35]

Washington's strategy was significantly influenced by the military poverty of the Continental Army.[36] Washington was never able, after 1775-76, to consistently achieve a decisive advantage in troop strength relative to his British foes. Meanwhile, he remained incapable of devising a means to effectively utilize the large number of militia potentially available to him in conventional operations. Thus, Washington, in implementing his strategy, was forced by circumstances and his own temperament to focus on minimizing the many weaknesses of his forces rather than maximizing their few strengths. Unable to comprehend or appreciate a military strategy that did not depend on conventionally trained regular forces, Washington's strategic vision remained fixed firmly on the possibilities presented by the use of the Continental Army.[37] While the militia was fulfilling the essential mission of denying the countryside to the British, Washington was looking beyond the advantages inherent in compound warfare—to "winning the war and making a new nation . . . upon the actions of the Continental Army."[38] And while this may establish Washington's apparent *presumption* of compound warfare, it exposes the largely subconscious nature of the commander in chief's incorporation of compound warfare into his overall strategy and throws into question the alleged "systematic and deliberate" nature of Washington's employment of compound warfare[39] in marshaling the forces available to him to prosecute the Revolutionary War.

How this ought to factor into any assessment of Washington as a strategist must also take into consideration another important and essential factor affecting his execution of the military strategy of the Revolution—Washington's subordinate generals.

Washington and His Generals

The final major influence on Washington's ability to devise and execute an effective military strategy concerns the capabilities of his

fellow generals and his relations with them. In contrast to the traditionalist view of "Washington and his lieutenants as a pantheon of noble, unruffled, self-sacrificing heroes," the twenty-eight general officers appointed by Congress to help Washington lead the Continental Army represented, for the most part, a decidedly contentious, inexperienced group of amateurs.[40] "The higher command throughout the war," wrote Freeman, "had been most uneven in ability and in willingness to subordinate personal interest to the common cause," and the commander in chief "often had to ameliorate, arbitrate or solve countless conflicts involving his lieutenants."[41] The distraction that this continual struggle with bruised egos, imagined slights, and affronted sensibilities had on Washington's ability to concentrate on more important issues, such as the development and implementation of military strategy, is probably immeasurable but could not have been slight.

"Of the generals appointed to the Continental Army in 1775," notes George Billias in *Washington's Generals*, "only three could properly be regarded as professional soldiers—Charles Lee, Horatio Gates, and Richard Montgomery. All had been officers in the British Army, had seen service in the French War, and had remained with the regulars in the postwar period."[42] Even these men had limited experience at higher-level command positions, however. Lee reached the rank of lieutenant colonel long after his previous service in America, Gates attained the rank of major but spent most of his time in administrative duties and never commanded a large body of troops, and Montgomery was only a captain when he left active service. Nor was the advice of these professionals available to Washington for long, since "of the three, only Gates was still with the Continental Army at the close of the conflict."[43] Despite the fact that as the war dragged on more European professionals joined the American cause, Washington was unable to take full advantage of their expert military knowledge because of the jealousy of their American colleagues (and the widespread resentment engendered by perceptions of interference when Congress exercised its privilege to appoint them).[44] But even useful subordinates like Lafayette and von Steuben proved troublesome at times. Scheer notes that on one occasion, Washington had to "dissuade the hot-headed young Lafayette from challenging to a duel the Earl of Carlisle, chief of the British Peace Commissioners, for supposedly insulting the French," and von Steuben's rapid rise caused such an outpouring of jealousy among Washington's "American" generals that several threatened to resign.[45] With some notable exceptions, Billias concludes that,

"although certain foreign generals had much to offer in the way of expert military knowledge, their contributions to final victory on the whole were rather limited," and such officers "frequently proved to be more trouble than they were worth."[46]

Yet Washington's handling of his subordinate generals eventually succeeded in bringing out the best in amateur soldiers such as Henry Knox, Lafayette, Daniel Morgan, Anthony Wayne, and especially Nathanael Greene, while he deftly secured the removal of those he discovered could not be counted upon to consistently produce good results—like the overly belligerent John Sullivan and the brilliant but irascible and erratic Charles Lee.[47] Although most officers seemed to genuinely despise Congress and felt that they were unfairly being made to bear the brunt of the war, the question remains, as Richard Kohn asks, "why they never moved, either in unison or singly against Congress or [the] civilian government." The answer seems to lie largely with the esteem in which they held Washington. They were, Kohn concludes, "united in their resentment of Congress and their devotion to Washington, the army, and the Revolution."[48] No commander in chief can effectively implement strategy in the absence of subordinates who are capable of carrying out that strategy. In that regard, Rankin's assessment of Washington's lieutenants and his interaction with them seems particularly apt. He writes, "had General Washington not been served—well served, in fact—by each of these officers, the War of Independence might have been fought to a very different conclusion."[49]

Significantly, Washington's subordinates—Greene, Morgan, Horatio Gates, and Charles Lee—proved on the battlefield that they understood what we now refer to as the conduct of compound warfare at the tactical and operational levels better than Washington did. This is especially evident when reviewing their integration of militia into their overall battle plans and the resultant combining of their conventional and irregular operations. Two excellent examples of the use of militia in the prosecution of compound warfare—beyond their function in that genre as war fighters in the role of a revolutionary constabulary controlling the local countryside—are found at Bennington in the Saratoga campaign of 1777 and at the Cowpens in 1781.

"The Enthusiasm of the Moment"[50] Regular and Irregular Forces in Conventional Battle

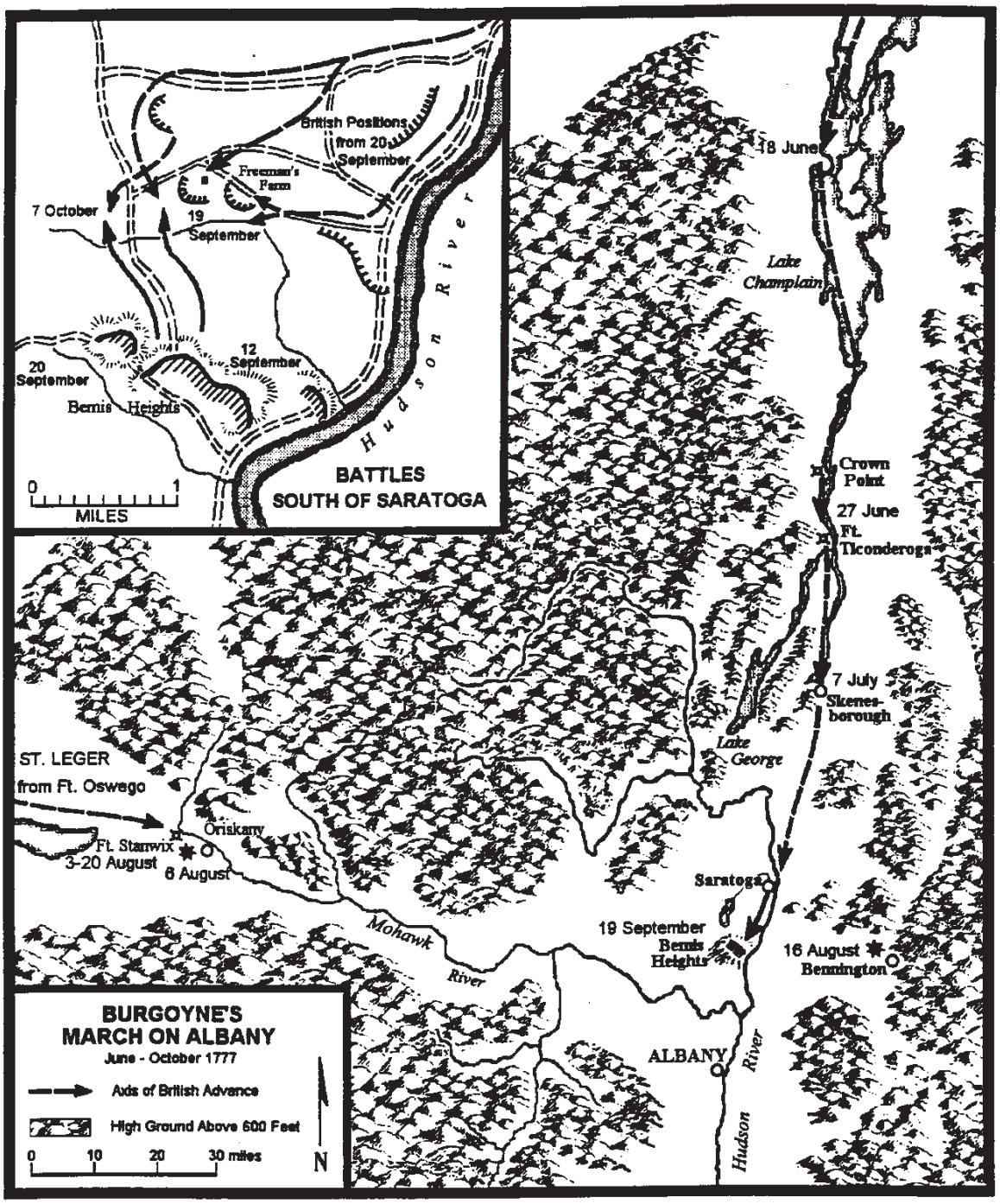
Washington viewed the militia as worse than useless in a conventional battle and was reluctant to employ them to increase his

troop strength—where they might have provided him with sufficient troops to successfully and decisively engage his British enemy. However, other Continental Army generals, like Brigadier General Daniel Morgan of Virginia, "realized that militiamen behaved in battle not as a reaction to years of discipline and drill but based on the enthusiasm of the moment"[51] Morgan saw this characteristic from a positive viewpoint, and this realization permitted commanders like Morgan to add another dimension to compound warfare by incorporating irregular forces into their conventional battle plans to supplement their meager regular troops. Such tactics influenced the outcome of two important patriot victories. The first of these occurred during the Saratoga campaign of 1777.

British General John Burgoyne's campaign to cut the colonies in half by moving down Lake Champlain to the Hudson River valley was falling apart even before he dispatched Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Baum's 1,200 Braunschweig-Hesse-Hanau troops in August 1777 on a raid into nearby Vermont to gather badly needed horses, oxen, fodder, and food (see Map 3).[52] Representing, roughly, one-seventh of the regular troops in Burgoyne's column, the German mercenaries that marched on Bennington blundered their way into a virtual hornet's nest of militiamen, stirred up by reports of atrocities committed by the British force's Native American allies as well as by the provocative presence of Burgoyne's invading army so near their homes.

Meant to be the major effort in a three-pronged attack culminating at Albany, by the end of August 1777, Burgoyne's column would be the only British force left facing the American Continentals and militia. Howe, whose army was to have moved up the Hudson River from New York to support Burgoyne, had advanced instead on the American capital at Philadelphia. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger, with a mixed force of British regulars, Tories, and Native Americans found his advance eastward along the Mohawk valley stalled by exaggerated reports of large numbers of militia opposing him. At about the time Baum's Germans neared Bennington, therefore, Burgoyne's troops had become the center of attention for the patriot forces in the region.[53]

At the battle of Bennington on 16 August 1777, Baum's force was completely annihilated, and a relief column of several hundred Braunschweiger grenadiers under Lieutenant Colonel Heinrich Breymann was thoroughly routed. This proved a signal victory for patriot militia fighting a largely conventional battle. Aroused and indignant, the militia from the region answered the call to arms and


British Positions from 20 September
Freeman's Farm
7 October
19 September
12 September
20 September
Bemis Heights
Hudson River
0
1
MILES
BATTLES SOUTH OF SARATOGA
18 June
Lake Champlain
Crown Point
27 June
Ft. Ticonderoga
7 July
Skenesborough
Lake George
ST. LEGER
from Ft. Oswego
Oriskany
Ft. Stanwix
3-20 August
6 August
Saratoga
19 September
Bemis Heights
16 August
Bennington
Mohawk River
ALBANY
Hudson River
BURGOYNE'S MARCH ON ALBANY
June - October 1777
Axis of British Advance
High Ground Above 600 Feet
0
10
20
30 miles
N

Map 3

swarmed around the advancing enemy forces. Tapping into "the enthusiasm of the moment," the American commander, Brigadier General John Stark of New Hampshire, was able to assemble a force of over 2,000 troops to confront the German invaders. Although the Germans were aided by several hundred Tory (or Loyalist) militiamen, Stark's rebel militiamen far outnumbered the British sympathizers. Storming and capturing redoubts hastily built and manned by the German troops and Loyalist militia, Stark's militiamen (bolstered by about 150 Continentals under Colonel Seth Warner)—perhaps uncharacteristically for militiamen—stood up to a disciplined, regular force and annihilated it. Baum was mortally wounded and his command killed or captured nearly to a man. When Breymann's relief column arrived too late to save Baum, it, too, was smashed and sent into "headlong retreat" back to the momentary safety of Burgoyne's column.[54] Stark and his militiamen had demonstrated, with chilling effect, how "the enthusiasm of the moment" could be a combat multiplier, even for irregular forces.

The patriot militia also came out ahead in the accompanying fratricidal struggle in the farms and meadows surrounding the conventional battlefield, as neighbors ambushed each other or summarily shot captured rival militiamen in the wake of Stark's victory:

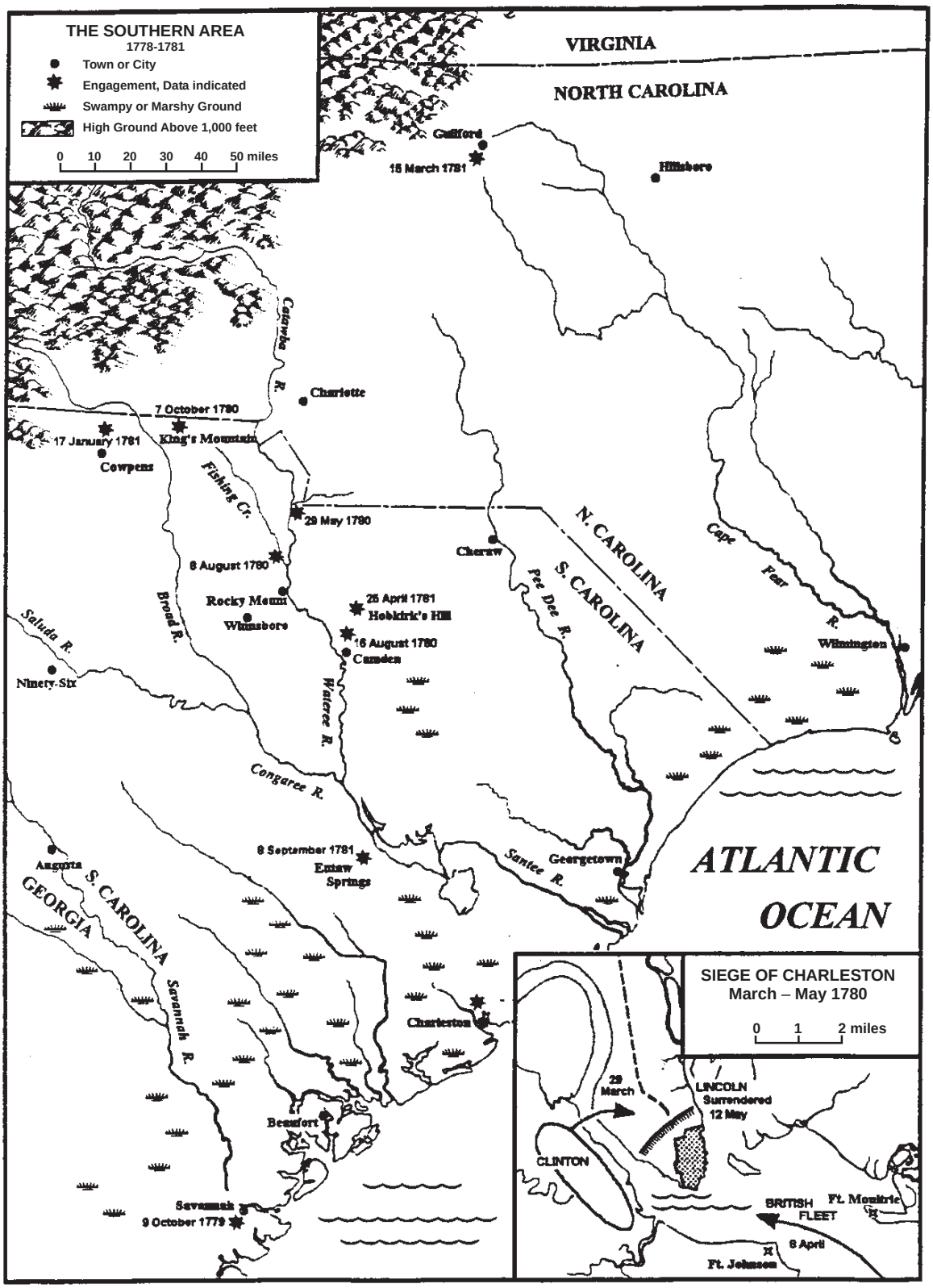
> According to one of Stark's men, the savage contest between neighbors did not end with Breymann's retreat: ten men were found dead in a nearby meadow, victims of the loyalists; and a party sent to drive cattle to the Hudson was returning home when they were fired on by eighty Tories, who killed two and wounded one of the rebels . . . Thomas Mellen [a participant in the battle] in a single mass grave . . . found thirteen Tories, most of them shot in the head.[55]

The Saratoga campaign, and notably the militia victory over the German columns at Bennington, epitomizes successful compound warfare at the operational and tactical levels of warfare. Philip Schuyler, initially the commander of American forces in northern New York, skillfully played on the emotions of the area's inhabitants by raising the countryside against Burgoyne's advancing columns. Blocking the few primitive roads in that wilderness by felling trees and creating obstacles, Schuyler's militiamen also combed the countryside and removed anything usable from the path of the British advance. Stalled at Saratoga by such tactics, deserted through the failure of the other two columns to reach him, and surrounded in a hostile

environment, Burgoyne's column was perfectly vulnerable to the savage attacks of a mixed patriot force of Continental regulars and militia, by then under the command of Horatio Gates. Weakened by the loss of one-seventh of his regular troops at Bennington, Burgoyne was stymied at the battles of Freeman's Farm and Bemis Heights. Then, in the aftermath, "Burgoyne retreated to Saratoga, where militiamen and Continentals hovered about his dying army like vultures. On 17 October [1777] he surrendered,"[56] a victim of successful American compound warfare and British incompetence.

After the British defeat at Saratoga, the major military activity of the Revolution shifted to the southern theater of the war. Here, throughout the campaign of 1780-81, but particularly at the battle of the Cowpens in 1781, a combination of conventional and irregular forces was used to engage British troops and, more important to the ultimate outcome, to deny them the unrestricted use of the countryside. Therefore, during this phase of the Revolution, compound warfare—a potent mixture of conventional and partisan operations—was the struggle's principal characteristic. Irregular forces and militia, circumstances dictated, proved to be an especially important, ultimately essential, element of the American military effort.

The irregular forces of the patriot militia became extremely important to the American cause in the south after the disastrous beginning to Cornwallis' campaign of 1780-81. In the spring of 1780, Cornwallis, with about 10,000 British troops (supported by Loyalist conventional units and Tory militia), trapped General Benjamin Lincoln and 5,000 Continental Army troops in Charleston, South Carolina (see Map 4). In May, after a month-long siege, "Lincoln surrendered his force—including the entire Continental establishment of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia."[57] This loss put tremendous pressure on the local militia to provide adequate troops to oppose Cornwallis while simultaneously protecting their homes against Loyalist units and Tory militia. Encouraged by British successes, southern Loyalists turned out to oppose the patriot militia, and the ensuing irregular warfare was bitter and intense. "Reprisal and retaliation followed as passions became enflamed," notes one historian, "and the conflict in the south resembled more a civil war than fighting according to the rules of organized warfare."[58] However, the severity of British retaliation and the brutality of their actions against the region helped swell the ranks of patriot militia, and, as happened numerous times during the Revolution, Americans fled to the rebel militia as much for self-preservation and protection as out of ideology. Many

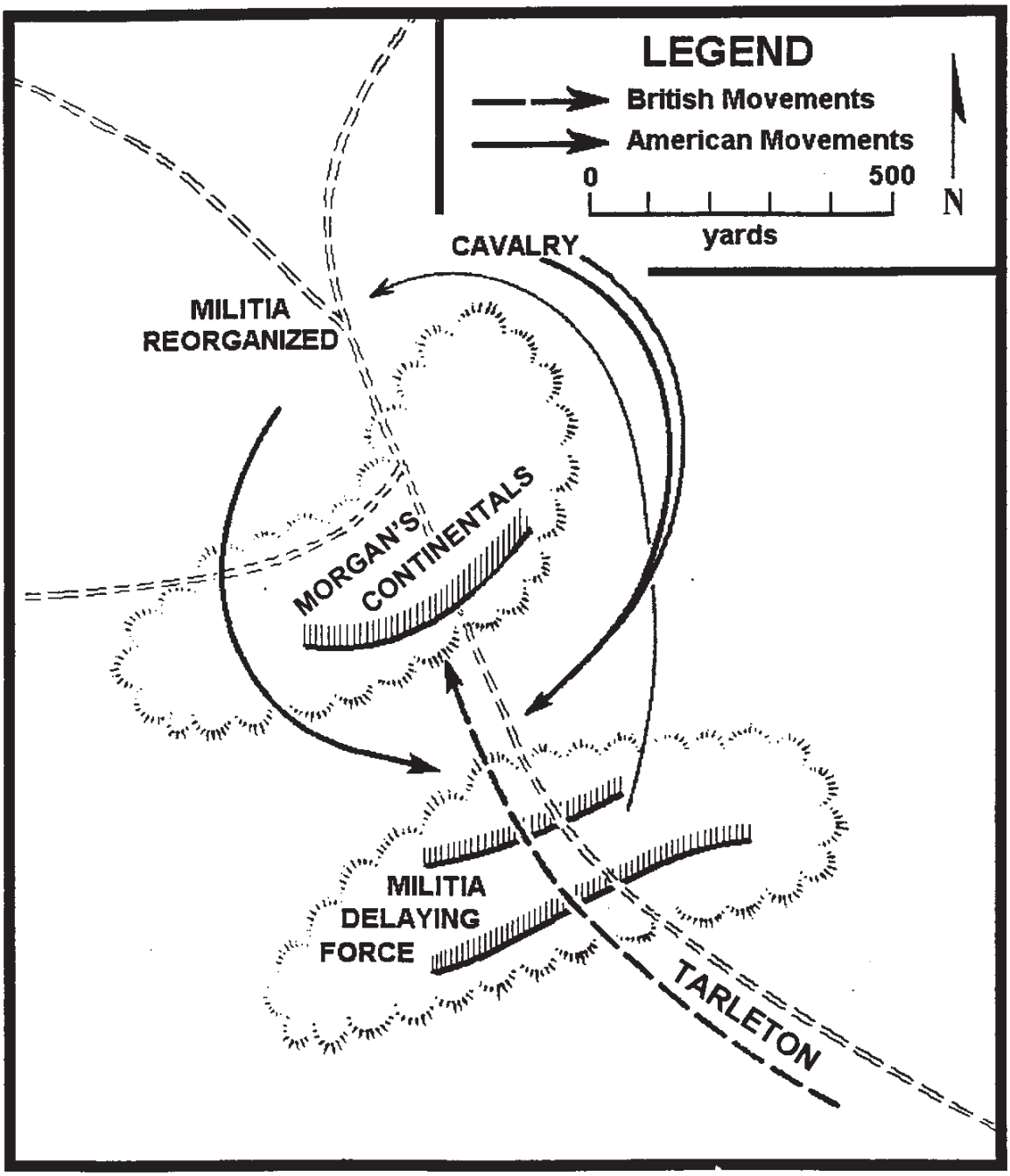

THE SOUTHERN AREA
1778-1781
Town or City
Engagement, Data indicated
Swampy or Marshy Ground
High Ground Above 1,000 feet
0 10 20 30 40 50 miles
VIRGINIA
NORTH CAROLINA
Guilford
15 March 1781
Hillsboro
Catawba R.
Charlotte
7 October 1780
17 January 1781
King's Mountain
Cowpens
Fishing Cr.
29 May 1780
Cheraw
N. CAROLINA
S. CAROLINA
Cape Fear R.
Pee Dee R.
8 August 1780
Rocky Mount
Broad R.
Whitsboro
25 April 1781
Hobkirk's Hill
16 August 1780
Camden
Wilmington
Saluda R.
Ninety-Six
Wateree R.
Congaree R.
8 September 1781
Eutaw Springs
Santee R.
Georgetown
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Augusta
GEORGIA
S. CAROLINA
Savannah R.
Charleston
Beaufort
Savannah
9 October 1779
SIEGE OF CHARLESTON
March – May 1780
0 1 2 miles
29 March
LINCOLN
Surrendered
12 May
CLINTON
BRITISH FLEET
Ft. Moultrie
8 April
Ft. Johnson

Americans who, if left alone and not subjected to the merciless ravages of British firebrands like Banastre Tarleton might have remained neutral, rallied to the patriot cause out of anger, revenge, outrage, or fear. Greene and subordinates such as Morgan used such "enthusiasm of the moment" to channel support to the Revolution and to raise the troops they needed to oppose Cornwallis' campaign:

> [Throughout 1780] the revolutionary spirit revived in the South. British troops and Loyalists plundered and raped, and angered the neutral Scotch-Irish by persecuting the Presbyterian Church. The British decreed that anyone who failed to take an oath of allegiance would be considered in rebellion. Men who had adopted a passive stance had to choose collaboration or resistance, and many chose the latter. The dying embers of revolution ignited in guerrilla warfare under men like Thomas Sumter, Francis Marion, and Andrew Pickens.[59]

Washington, meanwhile, convinced Congress to replace the inept Gates with Nathanael Greene as the new commander in the South.[60] Greene, in turn, "skillfully coordinated patriot maraudings with the activities of his army" and engaged Cornwallis' ostensibly superior British force using a combination of regular and partisan actions.[61] While usually evading contact with Cornwallis, Greene led British troops on a deadly fox hunt through the Carolinas and into Virginia that ultimately ended in Cornwallis' force being trapped and captured at Yorktown by Washington's Continentals and the United States' French allies in October 1781.

During Greene's tour de force in his partisan warfare campaign of 1780-81, his subordinate, Daniel Morgan, gained a stunning victory over the British in a conventional fight that rested, in large measure, on Morgan's savvy employment of militia troops. On 17 January 1781, Morgan, with just over a thousand Continentals and militiamen, lured Tarleton's eleven hundred British regulars onto favorable ground of hi900s own choosing near Hannah's Cowpens, "a typical landmark in western South Carolina used for grazing herds by local farmers and frontiersmen (see Map 5)."[62] Instead of cursing and condemning his militiamen for their tendency to "fire a volley and flee," Morgan wisely incorporated this fairly predictable behavior into his tactical battle plan. He deployed the irregular troops in such a manner that when they did, inevitably, fire their volleys and withdraw, Tarleton's regulars were drawn into


LEGEND
British Movements
American Movements
0
500
yards
N
CAVALRY
MILITIA
REORGANIZED
MORGAN'S
CONTINENTALS
MILITIA
DELAYING
FORCE
TARLETON

Map 5

an encompassing killing ground from which few escaped. Thus, 850 British troops were killed, wounded, or captured in what turned out to be a double envelopment—this against a loss of perhaps 60 or 70 American casualties.[63]

Morgan's tactical use of conventional and irregular troops at Cowpens and Greene's strategic employment of a similar mix of forces throughout the broader theater of war clearly demonstrates the potential value of prosecuting compound warfare "systematically and deliberately." Although Washington genuinely appreciated Greene's success with militia and congratulated him "on the glorious end [Greene] put to hostilities in the Southern States,"[64] the commander in chief never attempted similar operations of his own on the same scale.[65]

Conclusion: Washington as a Strategist of Compound Warfare

Despite the severe restrictions placed upon him by the Congress, the army, his subordinates, and his own ability and temperament, Washington adopted a military strategy that proved appropriate to his reduced means and limited options. Practical restrictions prevented him from waging the conventional war he so earnestly sought, while his own temperament and realization that the United States could not support an indefinite, partisan conflict effectively denied him the totally guerrilla war his meager resources allowed. The result was a hybrid mixture of conventional and irregular operations that continued throughout the eight years of hostilities. The practical effect of this turned out to be, in fact, compound warfare, despite the lack of an overall controlling hand by the commander in chief. Ultimately, Washington and the military forces of the United States waged compound warfare without deliberately or systematically planning its execution—beyond taking common sense advantage of every military means that presented itself to them as occasions arose.

The militia allowed Washington to control the countryside, thus enabling him to obstruct British war aims while, at the same time, maintaining a conventional army in being—the legitimizing force for the new nation. Washington, nonetheless, consistently despised the militia for their failure to act like trained regulars—something they could never hope to become. Meanwhile, Washington continually fretted over the inability of the militia to help him prosecute the conventional warfare he desired. His military strategy presumed compound warfare by his assumption that the militia would continue to complement his conventional operations through their irregular actions that ensured his control of the hinterland. Yet while these partisan

actions undeniably complemented the Continental Army's conventional operations, Washington neither directly planned nor controlled them, nor did the compound warfare they surely represented constitute a deliberate component of his military strategy. Unlike Greene, he never demonstrated that he could effectively combine regular and irregular forces in a systematic and deliberate manner at the tactical and operational level. In short, although Washington undoubtedly appreciated that the irregular actions of the militia were essential to the overall success of the Revolution, he continued to fix his strategic gaze beyond his presumption of compound warfare and placed his faith in ultimate victory upon the actions of the Continental Army.

Yet Washington, clearly the indispensable man of the Revolutionary War, probably did the best he could given the limited means at his disposal. Perhaps this military strategy by default was the only way the United States could win its independence. Offensive-minded by training and temperament, Washington, in his strategy, has been criticized, nonetheless, for his "fixating on set-piece battles . . . [and his being] drawn to the ideas of assaulting fortified, well-defended port towns."[66] The negative examples these critics propose as demonstrations of his fixation on ports—principally New York after Boston was evacuated—could also be interpreted as demonstrating Washington's strategic insight that New York and its huge British garrison represented the true military center of gravity in the war. His fixation on capturing New York shows how Washington realized that, barring a major British strategic error in some other part of the American theater of war, offensive action against New York seemed the key to winning the war. That meant to Washington the use of conventional operations by disciplined, regular troops—not the employment of ill-trained militia in partisan actions. The serendipitous American victory at Yorktown made an assault on the main British army in New York unnecessary only because it eventually destroyed London's will to continue the war. The British army remained in New York for two years after Cornwallis surrendered a small portion of that army at Yorktown. Criticizing Washington for maintaining his strategic focus on the principal enemy force confronting him seems a harsh and overly simplistic judgment considering the information available to him at the time. And although Washington was clearly offensive-minded in his approach to strategy, the circumstances created by his military poverty caused him to most often react *defensively* to British *offensive* initiatives.[67] The ultimate outcome of

that strategy—American independence—proved the practicality of such a common sense approach. Whether its success also proved that Washington was the Revolution's indispensable strategist remains a subject for further investigation and debate.

Notes

1. Thomas M. Huber, "Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare," *C610: The Evolution of Modern Warfare, Term I Syllabus/Book of Readings* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1997), 155.

2. John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (New York: Oxford Press, 1976); James Kirby Martin, "The Continental Army and the American Victory," in *World Turned Upside Down: The American Victory in the War of Independence*, John Ferling, ed. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 21. Martin described the militia as "acting like a regional constabulary" to help enforce revolutionary zeal and commitment to the cause.

3. Huber, "Fortified Compound Warfare," 155.

4. Paul David Nelson, "British Conduct of the American Revolutionary War: A Review of Interpretations," *Journal of American History* 65, no. 3 (December 1978): 637. Nelson notes that "In the southern campaign, loyalists became central to British political and strategic thinking and were to be liberated as well as protected in their home territory. By that late stage of the war, however, Loyalists had been left so many times by British military withdrawals to the tender mercies of patriot neighbors that they became cynical about promises of assistance and refused to turn out in support of regular armies. Hence, British policy toward the king's friends contributed to a British defeat by putting too much reliance upon the loyalists' political potential and too little on their military potential, that is, until it was too late to emphasize the latter."

5. To say that the Franco-American force moved "unmolested" from New England to Virginia is an understatement. So secure had the various colonial militia made the countryside for the patriot cause that Washington's and Rochambeau's movement to Yorktown at times resembled a triumphal march, including parades in cities like Philadelphia. Cornwallis' army's inability to subsist in the patriot-controlled country in Virginia and in the Carolinas dramatically demonstrates the profound advantage the chiefly irregular operations of the militia provided to the total military effort of the patriot cause.

6. Burke Davis, *The Campaign That Won America: The Story of Yorktown* (New York: Dial Press, 1970); Comte de Rochambeau, *Memoirs of the Marshal Count de Rochambeau Relative to the War of Independence of the United States*, M. W. E. Wright, trans. (New York: New York Times and Arno Press, 1971 [1838]); Don Cook, "The Yorktown Stratagem," *Military History*

Quarterly 8 (Autumn 1995). About 7,000 French troops combined with Washington's 6,500 to overpower Cornwallis' army in a joint, multinational campaign profoundly influenced by French participation. The last major conventional military operation of the Revolutionary War, the siege of Yorktown, helped convince Great Britain's political leadership to end the war two years later.

7. Military strategist and *strategist* are used interchangeably and are interpreted to mean one who is responsible for the planning, direction, and execution of military operations to achieve the goals of national policy. The term *strategy* is often incorrectly used interchangeably with the term *tactics*. These terms refer to two different, albeit related, concepts involving the use of military forces. While *strategy* generally pertains to how military forces are created, directed, moved, deployed, and utilized at the highest levels in order to accomplish the commander's ultimate purpose of using these forces to support the goals of national policy, *tactics* normally refers to how particular forces are formed and maneuvered against the enemy once they arrive on the battlefield.

8. John Shy, "George Washington Reconsidered," *The John Biggs Cincinnati Lectures in Military Leadership and Command, 1986*, Harry S. Bausum, ed. (Lexington, VA: The VMI Foundation, 1986), 51. Typically divergent views of Washington as strategist include Shy (who doubts Washington had any particularly good insight for either strategy or tactics) and Dave Richard Palmer, whose *The Way of the Fox: American Strategy in the War for America, 1775-1783* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), 204, asserts, "One cannot ignore . . . Washington the strategist. And that he possessed unusual strategic grasp can hardly be doubted. Indeed, even before the word strategy was coined, George Washington had become this nation's first strategist and perhaps one of its best."

9. Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington*, 7 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948-57), 5: 480-81.

10. John Ferling, "George Washington and the American Victory," *The World Turned Upside Down: The American Victory in the War of Independence*, Jon Ferling, ed. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 70.

11. Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The National Experience* (New York: Random House, 1965), 337-56; Marcus Cunliffe, *George Washington: Man and Monument* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1958); Barry Schwartz, *George Washington: The Making of an American Symbol* (New York: Free Press, 1987). Exacerbating the problem and clouding the issue of assessing Washington's strategic ability has been the flaw of viewing the Revolution

through the distorted lens of American exceptionalism and the often filiopietistic images of this nation's first president such a view engenders. In other words, critical studies of "Washington as Strategist" frequently fall victim to the worship of "Washington as Monument." In a chapter titled, "The Mythologizing of George Washington," Daniel Boorstin's *The Americans* describes "the desperate need Americans felt for a dignified and worshipful national hero" in the early years of the republic that resulted "in elevating Washington to sainthood." Boorstin points out that America had no "Romulus and Remus, Aeneas, Charlemagne, Boadicea, St. Joan" or other legendary figures to draw upon from its relatively short past. Creating the "cultic character of the Washington legend," chroniclers like "the notorious [Parson] Mason Locke Weems" mixed religion and salesmanship to provide early citizens of the American republic with a hero as monumental and noble as were the republican ideals upon which the new nation had been founded. What America got, Boorstin concludes, is a national hero who was "calculatedly concocted to satisfy the demand" of a new, unique nation searching for symbols in the absence of an appropriately mythological past. Even the ultimate symbol of Washington, the monument that bears his name on the Mall in the capital, "appropriately enough," celebrates the hero "in a geometric obelisk of abstract perfection," not in the form of a real, possibly flawed, human being.

12. Stanley M. Pargellis, "Braddock's Defeat," *American Historical Review* 41 (1936); James Thomas Flexner, *Washington: The Indispensable Man* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969); and Freeman, *George Washington*.

13. Don Higginbotham, "The Early American Way of War: Reconnaissance and Appraisal," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 44 (April 1987): 236.

14. Ibid., 236, 256.

15. Jonathan G. Rossie, "Politics and the American Victory," in Ferling's *World Turned Upside Down*, 136; and Rossie's *The Politics of Command in the American Revolution* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1975). Shy's observation ("Washington Reconsidered," 41) that Washington was "cleverly nominated in June 1775 by John Adams as the most available Southerner to lead what was then still only a New England army" seems a nearly unanimous assessment.

16. Marshall Smelser, *The Winning of Independence* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1972), 375; E. Wayne Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure: Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); and Charles Royster, *A*

Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979).

17. Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, 1994 [1984]), 65-83. "For political and psychological reasons," wrote the authors, "Washington had to defend the capital." These reasons also applied to the most important city in America at the time, New York.

18. Richard Kohn, "The Inside Story of the Newburgh Conspiracy: America and the Coup d'Etat," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 3d ser. (1970); and Paul David Nelson, "Horatio Gates at Newburgh, 1783: A Misunderstood Role," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. (1972).

19. Rossie, *Politics of Command*; and Smelser, *Winning of Independence*.

20. Smelser, *Winning of Independence*, 375.

21. James K. Martin and Mark Lender, *A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763-1788* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1982); Martin's essay, "The Continental Army and the American Victory," in *World Turned Upside Down*; Paul David Nelson's essay, "The American Soldier and American Victory," also in *World Turned Upside Down*; John R. Sellers, "The Common Soldier in the American Revolution," in *Military History of the Revolution*; Jack C. Lane, "Ideology and the American Military Experience: A Reexamination of Early American Attitudes Toward the Military," in *Soldiers and Civilians: The U.S. Army and the American People* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1987); Richard Kohn, "The Social History of the American Soldier: A Review and Prospectus for Research," *American Historical Review* 86 (June 1981); and Royster's *Revolutionary People at War*.

22. Nelson, "American Soldier," 40. He also states that the Revolutionary soldier was not exclusively white, estimating that 5,000 African-Americans served during the war.

23. Sellers, "Common Soldier," 153-55; Royster, *Revolutionary People at War*, 268, 373-78, while not challenging the poverty of recruits pointed out that, "none of the studies establish any correlation between a person's poverty and his adherence to or lack of revolutionary ideals," and Sellers reminds readers that there were, in fact, much more attractive economic opportunities available than military service.

24. Nelson, "American Soldier," 40.

25. Ibid.

26. Robert Middlekauf, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 335-36.

27. Charles H. Lesser, ed., *Sinews of Independence: Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976), is Lesser's meticulously researched accounting of the official returns of Continental Army strength, provided by Washington on a regular basis to Congress. It tracks the ebb and flow of troops into and out of military service during the Revolution.

28. Ibid., 3-255. These figures do not include the few thousand Continental troops serving under his subordinates in, more or less, independent operations, such as Gates' troops at Saratoga in 1777 or Greene's in the southern campaign of 1780-81.

29. Davis, *Campaign That Won America*; Rochambeau, *Memoirs*; and Cook, "Yorktown Stratagem."

30. Don Higginbotham, "The American Militia: A Traditional Institution with Revolutionary Responsibilities," in *Reconsiderations on the Revolutionary War: Selected Essays*, Don Higginbotham, ed. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), 84; John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 35-45. Other historians noting this and writing about it include Martin, "Continental Army"; Nelson, "Citizen Soldiers or Regulars"; Royster, *Revolutionary People at War*; and Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed*.

31. Shy, "Washington Reconsidered," 48-49.

32. Ibid.

33. These successes included Gates at Saratoga (1777), Daniel Morgan at Cowpens (1781), and several of Greene's engagements during his southern campaign (1780-81).

34. Maslowski and Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 58. "One thing the militia usually could not do," the authors admit, "was stand *alone* against large numbers of enemy regulars. But in most battles militiamen did fight *alongside* Continental troops."

35. Michael D. Pearlman, "The American Revolutionary War: A Complex 'Little Conflict' on the Edge of 'the Civilized World,'" *C610: The Evolution of Modern Warfare, Term I Syllabus/Book of Readings* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Combat Studies Institute, 1997), 98.

36. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 3. "Washington's [generalship]," wrote Weigley, "was a generalship shaped by military poverty."

37. For a dissenting opinion of Washington's view of militia, see Mark V. Kwasny, *Washington's Partisan War, 1775-1783* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1996), 338. Kwasny supports his position that Washington fully appreciated the value of militia by offering this quote from a letter Washington wrote to state governors at the end of the war: "The militia of this country must be considered as the Palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility." Yet this is taken out of context and is, therefore, misleading. Washington was writing of the absolute necessity for Congress to create a "Peace Establishment" (i.e., regular forces), but he correctly realized that the independent-minded states would insist on relying upon their state-controlled militia to a great degree. The point Washington was trying to make was that the militia of the several states should be made as much like *regular forces* as possible. The actual quote continues, "It is essential therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole; that the formation and discipline of the militia of the Continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of Arms, Accoutrements, and Military Apparatus, should be introduced in every part of the United States; No one, who has not learned it from experience, can conceive the difficulty, expence [sic], and confusion which result from a contrary system, or the vague Arrangements which have hitherto prevailed." In fact, as the complete quote clearly shows, Washington was, in effect, *condemning* the militia, not complimenting it, and the full quote correctly presents Washington's opinion of the militia as, essentially, the opposite of what Kwasny was trying to portray. George Washington, "Circular to State Governments, June 8, 1783," *George Washington: Writings* (New York: The Library of America, 1997), 524.

38. Martin, "Continental Army," 20.

39. Huber, "Fortified Compound Warfare," 155. Huber's definition of compound warfare is that it consists of "the systematic and deliberate combining of regular and irregular forces."

40. George F. Scheer, "Washington and His Lieutenants: Some Problems in Command," *Military History of the American Revolution: The Proceedings of the 6th Military History Symposium, United States Air Force Academy*, Stanley J. Underdahl, ed. (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1976), 139.

41. Freeman, *George Washington*, v: 478; and Scheer, "Some Problems in Command," 139.

42. Billias, *Washington's Generals*, ix.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., 148, quotes John Adams writing to wife Abigail in exasperation at being "wearied to death with the wrangles between military officers, high and low. They quarrell like cats and dogs. They worry one another like mastiffs scrambling for rank and pay like apes for nuts."

45. Ibid.

46. Billias, *Washington's Generals*, ix-x.

47. Freeman, *Washington*, v: 479. "Nathanael Greene, Lafayette, and Henry Knox," wrote Freeman, "had been all that a commander could ask . . . Anthony Wayne probably had been rated next to these three, particularly as a combat officer, but he had an element of rashness."

48. Kohn, "American Generals," 117-18.

49. Hugh F. Rankin, "Washington's Lieutenants and the American Victory," in Ferling's *World Turned Upside Down*, 90.

50. John Moncure, *The Cowpens Staff Ride and Battlefield Tour* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U. S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, 1996), 47.

51. Ibid.

52. Richard M. Ketchum, "Bennington," *Military History Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (Autumn 1997): 98.

53. Vincent J. Esposito, ed., *The West Point Atlas of American Wars, Volume I, 1689-1900* (New York: Praeger, 1959), map 6-6a.

54. Ketchum, "Bennington," 100. "On the surface," Ketchum notes, "Baum's corps appeared to have an edge in experience and training, yet although Stark's men were militia, a good many were veterans of some rough combat duty in the French wars, around Boston in '75, and at Trenton and Princeton. On the other hand, both forces also included a number of men who had probably never before heard a shot fired in anger, and some of their officers who were in the same boat."

55. Ketchum, "Bennington."

56. Maslowski and Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 71.

57. Moncure, *Cowpens Staff Ride*, 20. "This," Moncure assesses, "may have been the greatest blow to the American cause in the war."

58. Ibid., 19. Moncure quotes one diary, "it was now almost Fire & Faggot between Whig & Tory, who were contending for ascendancy[.] continued so till the 15th or 20th of May [1781]."

59. Maslowski and Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 75. Greene noted, upon taking command of the Continental Army in the South, that the bonds of society had disintegrated as rebels and Tories committed "dreadful, wanton Mischiefs, Murders, and Violences of every kind, unheard of before."

60. Ferling, "George Washington," 67. Throughout the war, Washington championed a group of younger officers who had two things in common—a commitment to American victory above personal concerns and total loyalty to Washington as commander in chief. This group included Lafayette, Henry Knox, Alexander Hamilton, and Nathanael Greene. Of this group, probably only Nathanael Greene was capable of rising in stature as a military commander and strategist to rival Washington. However, Greene had antagonized Congress when he threatened to resign over the commissioning of French officers early in the war, and he therefore lacked the necessary political base to challenge the commander in chief, even if he had wanted to. Such an eventuality seems unlikely, however, since, as Ferling , 66, reports, "Greene was inclined to be respectful, almost obsequious, to those in authority . . . [and] . . . his behavior towards Washington was nothing if not approbatory." Washington's staunch support of Greene when battlefield calamities in the southern campaign of 1780-81 threatened to discredit him in Congress shows that he recognized Greene's loyalty and rewarded it with unconditional support. The officers Washington supported may have been "his men," but they all produced positive results on the battlefield, thereby justifying Washington's confidence and support.

61. Maslowski and Millett, *For the Common Defense,* 75.

62. Moncure, *Cowpens Staff Ride*, 45.

63. Esposito, *West Point Atlas*, Map 8c. Morgan's final, devastating maneuver at Cowpens, a double envelopment often compared to Hannibal's classic victory at Cannae, was lethal but probably serendipitous. Nevertheless, the Virginian's tactical dispositions were cleverly made to take maximum advantage of the terrain and the capabilities of his troops and made the double envelopment possible.

64. Washington, *Writings*, 484, Letter to Nathanael Greene, 6 February 1783, Washington, D.C., continues, "If historiographers should be hardy enough to fill the pages of History with the advantages that have been gained with unequal numbers (on the part of America) in the course of this contest, and attempt to relate the distressing circumstances under which they have been obtained, it is more than probable that Posterity will bestow on their labors the epithet and marks of fiction; for it will not be believed that such a force as Great Britain has employed for eight years in this Country could be baffled in their plan of Subjugating it by numbers infinitely less, composed of Men oftentimes half starved; always in Rags, without pay, and experiencing, at times, every species of distress which human nature is capable of undergoing."

65. Kwasny, *Washington's Partisan War*, rightly points out the significant role of militia in New York and New Jersey, where they "performed vital duties and participated in all levels of the fighting" over the duration of the war. Indeed, their control of the countryside around the principal British garrison at New York City was essential to the prosecution of compound warfare in this region by preventing the enemy from mounting, after 1778, any significant offensive against Washington's Continental Army in the middle states. However, as Kwasny also notes, "militiamen remained under the authority of their state governments and served with the army only on a temporary basis." This, combined with his well-documented disdain for their fighting qualities, effectively limited Washington's ability to incorporate them into the conventional operations against the British center of gravity that he assumed would be the culminating battle of the Revolution. Unlike his subordinate, Greene, he remained unable to integrate militia into his conventional military strategy beyond their obvious value as local revolutionary constabulary.

66. Shy, "Washington Reconsidered," 45-47.

67. For opposing opinions on whether Washington's military strategy was fundamentally offensive or defensive in nature, see Palmer's *Way of the Fox*, Shy's *A People Numerous and Armed*, and "Washington Reconsidered."

Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare

Thomas M. Huber

Napoleon said of Spain, "That unfortunate war destroyed me . . . All . . . my disasters are bound up in that fatal knot."[1] The "fatal knot" that surprised Napoleon in Spain was a particularly powerful form of compound warfare. Modern compound warfare is the systematic, deliberate combining of regular and irregular forces. In the "fortified" form of modern compound warfare that Napoleon faced in Spain, the compound operator shields his main force from destruction by means of a safe haven and a major power alliance. Once the main force becomes indestructible, it can in turn protect the local militias, making them indestructible. Once these elements of "fortified" compound warfare are in place, it is nearly impossible for a conventional operator to succeed because he must perpetually endure the exhausting, simultaneous confrontation with both conventional and unconventional forces.

Guerrilla warfare is as old as human society. Guerrilla warfare used deliberately in support of the main battle had already become commonplace by 1750, when 20 percent of the French army was already organized as light infantry for "small war" missions. At the end of the eighteenth century, however, guerrilla warfare would be used in a new and decisively powerful way. The simultaneous application of a main force and of a widely spread militia force would produce a powerful complementary effect that seemed greater even than the sum of its substantial parts and so inflict strategic defeat on what otherwise appeared to be an overwhelmingly superior adversary. As Clausewitz put it in his discussion of contemporary warfare, "The stubborn resistance of the Spaniards. . . . showed what can be accomplished by arming a people . . ."[2] Conventional force and unconventional force used prudently together provide a mutual accommodation that an adversary employing a conventional force alone can hardly hope to match. A strong operator can defeat this pattern, however, by the simple expedient of annihilating the minor compound operator's main force first, then proceeding to annihilate each respective region's militia force. Conversely, for a minor compound operator to prevail against a larger more developed adversary, the minor operator's main force must be perpetually shielded.

Let us consider these dynamics as they emerged in Napoleon's adventure in Spain from 1808 to 1814. This experience has given us the modern word "guerrilla," as well as a new dimension of military practice. The numbers are telling. France had 320,000 troops in Spain at the height of its presence in 1810 and a low of 200,000 troops in 1813.[3] During their six-year campaign, French forces lost 240,000 men. Of these, 45,000 were killed in action against conventional forces, 50,000 died of illness and accident, and 145,000 were killed in action against guerrilla forces.[4] French losses in Iberia approached 1 percent of the entire French population. Indeed, Napoleon lost more French troops in Spain than in Russia. These were large numbers that France could not afford, numbers that might have turned the strategic tide at Leipzig or at Waterloo.

Meanwhile, Wellington's army in Spain at its height had only about 40,000 troops, with some 25,000 Portuguese forces attached.[5] In other words, the French enjoyed a conventional force advantage of four to one or better through most of their six-year campaign. Analysts calculate membership in Spanish guerrilla bands to have been about 50,000. Even if these are added to Wellington's conventional force, the French still enjoyed a favorable force ratio of almost 2.2 to 1.[6] In spite of their numerical force advantage, however, the French were defeated badly. Obviously, the Anglo-Iberian allies were somehow getting more out of their numbers than the French were. Let us explore some of the other features of the Spanish campaign to determine what those advantageous allied methods were.

Both the physical and social environments in Spain seemed favorable to guerrilla action. The terrain was in many areas mountainous, barren, or both. The road net was sparse. This made it easier for guerrillas to conceal themselves and harder for a regular force to live off the land or to move supplies if not living off the land. Besides this, the local agricultural communities in the Iberian countryside were largely self-sufficient economically and so were always in supply. For us in the early twenty-first century, the physical and social environments in Iberia may suggest some approximate analogies to the conditions of the recent Soviet-Russian campaign in Afghanistan (1979-88).[7]

The initial uprisings in May 1808 against the French were spontaneous actions by the population, not guerrilla actions. Guerrilla bands began emerging only later in 1808, evidently because of the power vacuum that developed when the French dissolved the authority of the Spanish crown but failed to establish effective authority of their

own. Leadership of the guerrilla bands varied, some chiefs being former soldiers or peasants but others being educated persons with local influence. There was variety also in the numbers of guerrillas each chief led, the largest bands mustering several thousand. The bands were organized in different ways, and there was some variety in their tactics, though in general their treatment of collaborators and prisoners was by modern standards harsh. Although local bands were not centrally linked either by organizational structure or by philosophy, almost all of them shared an enthusiastic devotion to Catholicism and an enthusiastic rejection of the revolutionary French—two ideas that were closely related in their minds. Still, the complete absence of structure unifying the guerrillas made it a challenge to coordinate them on a large scale, the more so since local bands sometimes viewed each other as enemies and commonly feuded among themselves.[8]

The political environment offered other features that may interest us. Spanish liberals in the towns tended to accept French rule because they associated it with liberal reform. Peasants in the countryside rejected French rule for the same reason and, indeed, had traditionally harbored an antagonism toward the predominant influence of the liberal towns, which seemed to exact large taxes from the countryside without giving much back. There were two social classes in Spain: urban liberals and rural traditionalists. The traditions of the latter may not have changed much since medieval times.[9] French power allied itself with Spanish urban liberals, and British power allied itself with Spanish rural traditionalists.

For the British, especially, this must have been almost entirely an alliance of political convenience. The thing to note here, however, is that a conflict between indigenous social classes became linked to an international conflict between great powers. Each power allied itself with an indigenous social class. A local class struggle thus became enmeshed with a global rivalry between great powers. This experience was especially perplexing for the French, who tried to reorganize Spanish society according to their own cherished liberal ideals and were astonished to discover that this only made the indigenous population—at least the major part that dwelled in the countryside—more resistant.

The struggle between the French regulars and the Spanish rural guerrillas was characterized by dueling propaganda activities. French officers publicly declared and personally believed that the French presence in Spain represented superior enlightened views and superior enlightened rule. They saw the Spanish peasant guerrillas as

superstitious and therefore backward persons who could only be controlled by force and who therefore deserved to be. Meanwhile, the French public was told that Spain as a whole welcomed French rule and that only a few misguided bandits opposed the occupation.[10] On the Spanish peasant side, philosophical leadership was exercised by the local clergy. Local priests encouraged the peasants to believe that besides being alien, the French troops threatened the peasants' religion—beliefs and practices that were at the very core of their way of life. The priests portrayed the French as unholy and unwholesome and as therefore deserving any unhappy fate that might befall them. In other words, the priests stirred up fanatical religious beliefs and brought those to bear in the struggle against the French. Priests in some cases led the guerrilla bands.[11] In fact, this was a propaganda duel between two utterly unlike philosophical systems: revolutionary rationality and religious fanaticism. Neither side enjoyed any success whatever in persuading the other to accept its views. This wide philosophical gap may have contributed to the widespread practice in Spain of harsh reprisals, what French public opinion at the time and most observers today would perceive as atrocities. The Spanish peasantry probably had harsher traditions of public violence than the French army, which prided itself on being an enlightened institution in an enlightened postrevolutionary society. At home, the French government had recently discarded cruel and unusual punishments as part of the revolutionary settlement. However, once in theater and widely exposed to atrocities, French troops, unfortunately, came to reciprocate them. French commanders may have believed that, in the circumstances, it was the only way to influence the conduct of their adversary.[12]

Having briefly explored the physical, social, and political environments, let us consider the Spanish guerrillas' tactics. The Spanish guerrillas had a reputation for attacking only when they had local superiority; otherwise they dispersed and vanished. As St. Cyr put it, the guerrillas "attacked anywhere that . . . conditions favored them, fled . . . whenever they were not the strongest, and disappeared." Such a system, according to St. Cyr, "must . . . destroy the most numerous . . . of armies, obliged as they were to fritter their strength away in mobile columns and convoy escorts."[13] It was the guerrilla custom to attack supply convoys, foraging parties, and armed columns that patrolled the countryside to collect taxes.[14] The guerrilla bands functioned as a police force in that they inflicted harsh reprisals whenever they could on collaborators in their own locales. This reduced the population somewhat but also greatly reduced all forms of collaboration.

Guerrillas also made a point of capturing French couriers.[15] In a word, the guerrillas, relying on mobility and local superiority, denied the French supplies, funds, services, and intelligence in their districts.

The effect of these guerrilla tactics on the French force was pronounced. Everything the French tried to do became expensive in manpower. Their friction ratio in all things was dramatically increased. This is why the French lost eighty men a day for six and a half years just to maintain their garrisons and communications. Total French casualties, 240,000, eventually were about equal to the size of the force France originally sent to Spain. French troops came to regard assignment to Spain as a one-way trip. Constant exposure to harsh reprisals and death was in itself dismaying to the French forces. General Mathieu Dumas wrote that, "I used to travel over that assassin's countryside as warily as if it were a volcano."[16]

Besides persistent casualties, French troops suffered from diminished pay, hunger, and disease. Napoleon declined to recognize that the struggle in the Spanish countryside was a police and policy struggle and not just a military and operational struggle. He therefore required that his major forces in Spain support themselves in theater. This meant French armies had to take what they needed, funds and foodstuffs, from the countryside in the form of taxes and requisitions. This policy, operationally sound but politically catastrophic, served to increase the antagonism of the rural population, making the French forces' task even harder. Moreover, given the resolute resistance to this by guerrillas, French troops gathering in taxes and grains suffered frequent losses of their comrades yet still could not collect funds and foods sufficient to their needs. They could not collect the grain in the countryside, and even if they collected it in one place, they could not move it to another. French troops were therefore underpaid and undernourished. Being undernourished, they also had a high rate of illness, 20 percent higher than in their central European operations. By the end of the campaign, French commanders experienced a high rate of desertion. The French force, exposed to the guerrilla environment, was attrited, poor, hungry, sick, and AWOL. By the end of the campaign, many French troops were reluctant to engage. By that point, the tactical theory of the sadder and wiser veterans amounted to staying inside their isolated forts and hoping for better days.[17]

French commanders attempted to overcome guerrilla resistance with the only asset available to them, more force. Moving a convoy safely across Spain required a cavalry escort of 200 men in 1808. By 1813, French commanders used 1,000. Because couriers were intercepted,

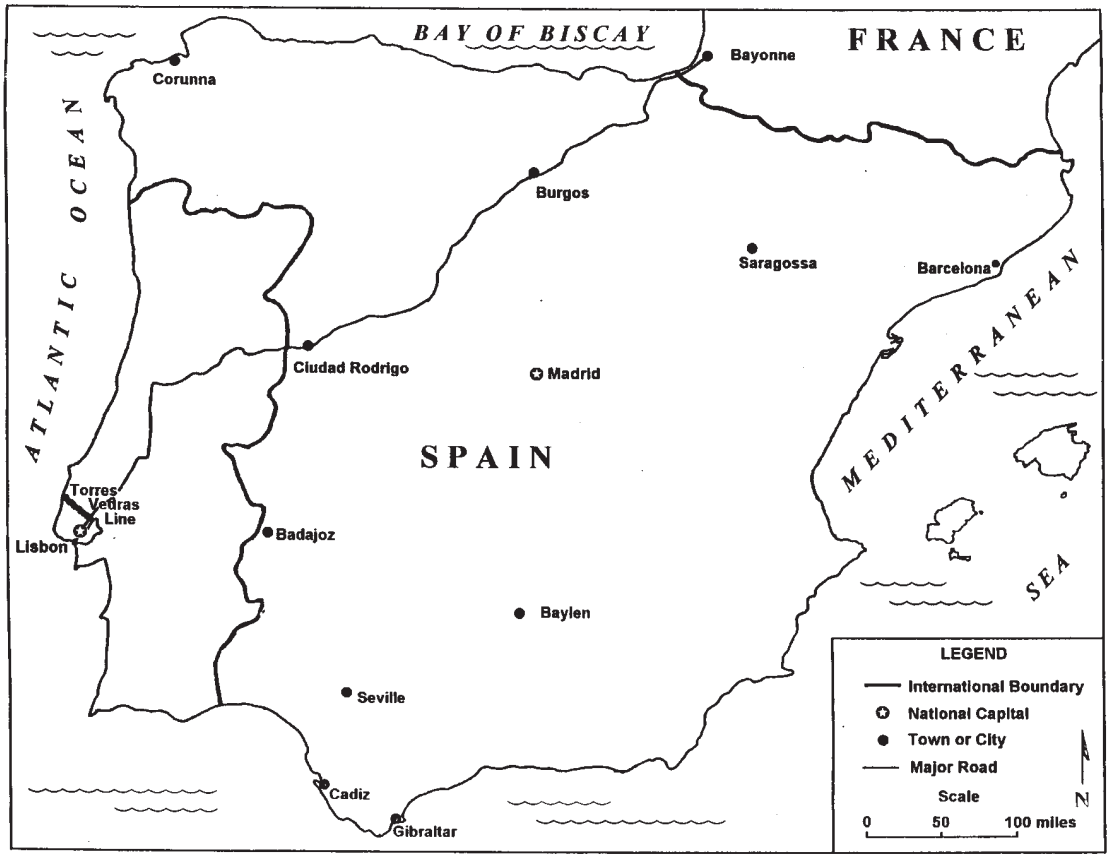
French commanders sent three couriers hoping one would get through. This, though, greatly increased the likelihood that the guerrillas and the British would get at least one copy of each message. The French responded with codes, to which the British answer was code breaking.[18]

Guerrilla tactical methods and their consequent stress on the French force had an operational effect on the conventional-force battle. The effect was that the French could never concentrate much force for the main battle because so much force was required for absolutely essential rear area support functions, starting with the movement of food, armament, and funds. Because of the small war for survival going on everywhere, the French had little force left to fight in the main battle. In other words, the French did not have the enormous force that would have been needed to fight the ubiquitous small war and the great war simultaneously.

The dilemma posed by these two dimensions of the conflict constantly perplexed the French strategic commanders. If they withdrew forces from in front of Wellington to consolidate local control, Wellington would advance. If they withdrew forces from local garrisons to face Wellington, local guerrillas could move into the vacuum and reestablish local control.

The challenges posed to French commanders by the guerrilla threat are, of course, well known. However, what made the Iberian campaign unique for the day and what made it a major new departure in the history of modern warfare were not the methods used by the guerrillas, which though formidable had a very long history, but the methods used by Wellington. Wellington, with a force of under 40,000, defeated forces of over 200,000, which means that he was not only doing something right but also doing many things right. The story is often told of his efficient prosecution of the main force war on the Lisbon—Cuidad Rodrigo—Burgos—Bayonne axis (see map). Lisbon was the British supply point, and Bayonne was the French supply point. British or French forces surged back and forth on this axis from 1808 to 1814, much as Montgomery and Rommel later would in North Africa, according to who was rich in resources at the moment.

Effective command in the main battle was just the beginning of Wellington's achievement, however. Wellington understood and used the guerrilla movement effectively. Most of the guerrilla chiefs' military awareness did not go beyond the boundaries of their local districts. Wellington, however, had intellectual control over the whole Spanish theater and indeed theaters beyond. He therefore was keen to


BAY OF BISCAY
FRANCE
Bayonne
Corunna
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Burgos
Saragossa
Barcelona
MEDITERRANEAN
Ciudad Rodrigo
Madrid
SPAIN
Torres Vedras Line
Lisbon
Badajoz
Baylen
SEA
Seville
Cadiz
Gibraltar
LEGEND
International Boundary
National Capital
Town or City
Major Road
Scale
N
0 50 100 miles

Map 1

coordinate the Spanish guerrilla operations with main force operations. He went out of his way to maintain good relations with the Spanish resistance government at Cadiz and with a number of guerrilla chiefs, even though this was not easy and even when he had little in common, philosophically or culturally, with these groups. Wellington had no structural authority over guerrilla chiefs, and except for opposition to the French, little common philosophy. He nonetheless found that he could successfully coordinate guerrilla actions simply by giving guerrilla chiefs operational advice and then rewarding those who carried out this advice with funds, arms, and supplies. Wellington established partial operational control over a number of guerrilla bands through this simple system, which, unlike the coercive systems the French employed, inspired gratitude, not resentment. When Wellington planned major offensives in 1809, 1811, 1812, and 1813, he stirred up simultaneous guerrilla activity in many parts of Spain to fix the French forces in place. Wellington also required his guerrilla chiefs to regularly bring him intelligence. This led at times to astonishing intelligence windfalls.[19]

Wellington discovered what other commanders have discovered since, that regular and irregular forces are by their nature complementary. Irregular forces can provide their regular confreres with intelligence and expedite their supply and, at the same time, constrain the intelligence and supply of the enemy in the main battle. Regular forces can protect the irregular ones by drawing away or repelling enemy forces and providing irregular forces with materiel, specialized training, and the information they need for coordinated action. Since regular and irregular forces draw largely on different resource bases, they can both operate near their maximum potential at the same time. Regular and irregular forces are by their nature complementary, and there are many rewards for the commander who understands this.

Wellington's policies for mobilizing the guerrillas are of the greatest importance for the evolution of modern warfare because they show that Wellington was a self-conscious practitioner of modern compound warfare. He added an entire dimension to war. He understood perfectly the double pressure the French forces were subjected to and therefore did everything he could to increase that pressure and exploit it. This makes Wellington one of the first major commanders to grasp and exploit the potentialities of modern compound warfare, that is, using regular and irregular force complementarily and together. Wellington

succeeded in part because he had quickly mastered the still new art of compound war.

Moreover, Wellington exploited other advantageous methods at his disposal to practice "fortified" compound warfare. These methods included, notably, establishing a safe haven for his army and cultivating the advantages of alliance between the technologically advanced major power he represented and the insurgent indigenous power. Adding the elements of safe haven and major power alliance to his compound warfare system in effect made this a very powerful "fortified" compound warfare system, the significance of which will become clear momentarily. Wellington even went beyond fortified compound warfare to do several other resourceful things: he maximized his opportunities in the areas of joint and multinational warfare. Insofar as he could, Wellington coordinated his operations with main force Spanish operations directed by the Spanish Supreme Junta at Cadiz. In other words, he practiced multinational warfare. Also noteworthy is Wellington's reliance on joint warfare and on the technical and tactical advantages this made possible. He worked closely with and made full use of the Royal Navy. From the start, Wellington established a safe haven for his small army at Lisbon that was protected by a triple defensive line across the narrow Lisbon peninsula at Torres Vedras. Wellington's lines behind this secure Lisbon base were all seaborne and so absolutely secure from interdiction by the French army. In other words, Wellington used the technical superiority of a sister service to provide security for his lines that was effortless and absolute. Because of this arrangement, it was almost impossible for the French to destroy Wellington's small army. In the worst case, the British troops had only to withdraw to their secure base at Torres Vedras and depart by sea. This meant that no matter what else the French did in Spain, they would always have to face a British force in being.

Besides using the Royal Navy to provide absolute security for his lines, Wellington used the navy for offensive actions against objectives on land. Wellington used a small but mobile naval force to constantly threaten the whole eastern and southern coasts of Spain. He used his regular naval forces to replicate the kinds of operations that were otherwise carried out by Spanish guerrillas and with the same consequence of pinning French forces in place. In other words, this was a regular force using irregular tactics. A small strike force of five frigates, two sloops, and two marine battalions carried out quick coastal sieges, seizing a coastal town for a few days, then withdrawing to the sea. Because the British had exclusive control of the sea, a

technological leverage, they could conduct this raiding strategy—using regular forces and guerrilla methods at will—thus holding large numbers of French forces in place and out of the main battle.[20]

Wellington was the strategic master in the Spanish theater. With 40,000 troops he defeated 200,000. He was able to prevail in this effort because he was militarily resourceful enough to employ modern compound warfare, that is, guerrilla warfare in concert with conventional warfare. But he also used every other leverage at his disposal, and many of these leverages were only available to a populous and highly structured major power. He used not only all the leverage that the traditional agrarian fighters gave him but also all the leverages that the world's most technologically advanced nation gave him. He cheerfully used these leverages together. Besides that, Wellington was wise enough to maintain an alliance with the Spanish Supreme Junta at Cadiz, who also at times had a conventional force in the field. The upshot of all this was that Napoleon, who sent a quarter of a million men to face Wellington's 40,000, was still outnumbered. In Spain, the French lost and Wellington won, and he won because he was master of a particularly powerful kind of modern compound warfare, what might be called "fortified" compound warfare (whose effects, of course, Wellington amplified further by skillful application of joint and multinational warfare). Wellington was able to apply conventional and unconventional pressures simultaneously and persistently because his main force was effectively secured, or fortified, by safe haven and a major power alliance.

The crucial importance of "fortifying" the main force can be better grasped if we consider what had happened a few years before in Naples, where in the years 1806 to 1811, the French had conducted what had appeared to be a similar campaign and decisively won. In 1806, Napoleon deposed the rulers of the kingdom of Naples in favor of his brother Joseph. In March 1806, Joseph's armies defeated the reigning Bourbons' conventional army at Campo Tenese. The British navy, which controlled southern Italian waters, landed a ground force that defeated the French at Maida in July 1806 but was evacuated in August and did not return. Thereafter, the British navy protected the Bourbon court in exile in Sicily but otherwise remained apart from the struggle for Southern Italy. Withdrawal of the British ground forces in August did not mean an end to the French campaign, however, because Joseph's successor, Murat, also faced widespread local guerrilla uprisings in the Southern Italian territories south of Naples. As in Spain later, the more liberal populations of the cities tended to accept French

reforms and French rule. As in Spain, the more traditionalist agrarian communities of the villages rejected French rule. Priests encouraged the peasants to believe that the French threatened their religion and their way of life. Local guerrilla leaders, whom the French regarded as bandits, rose up against the French and practiced harsh reprisals against them, which French troops, as in Spain, eventually reciprocated.

The outcome of the guerrilla uprisings in Southern Italy was quite unlike that in Spain, however. Major French forces in Southern Italy, with no conventional adversary to face, advanced around the southern Italian peninsula reducing port cities that might accommodate still-threatened British landings. When this was done, French forces tracked down the guerrilla bands one by one and executed the leaders. French commanders implemented this by establishing firm control over each of the villages in the guerrillas' vicinity, rigorously preventing the guerrillas' receipt of food from the villages and thus forcing the guerrillas to come out of hiding and engage. As in Spain, food tended to be the weapon of decision. The last resisting bandit leader was killed in combat in 1811, leaving Southern Italy securely in French hands. In the end, the French obtained everything they wanted in the kingdom of Naples, albeit at the cost of 20,000 casualties and a five-year campaign.

The similarities of the guerrilla campaigns in Spain and in Southern Italy are remarkable. In both cases, conventional French forces faced a general uprising of guerrilla bands. In both cases, there was a struggle of ideas between revolutionary rationality, represented by the French, and the religious conviction adhered to by the villagers. In both cases, the French resorted to the resolute application of force. The results of the respective Spanish and Southern Italian campaigns were diametrically opposite, however. It was theoretically possible for conventional forces to defeat a general guerrilla uprising in what Jomini called a "war of opinion." In Southern Italy, French forces actually did so.[21] In fact, French forces conducted a number of campaigns against guerrilla insurgencies in the years of the Revolution and Napoleon—in the Vendee, in the Tyrol, and in Tuscany, as well as in Southern Italy and in Spain.[22] French forces prevailed in all of these contests except the last which they disastrously lost. Those with a serious interest in the evolution of modern warfare must ask why. What dynamics dictated the categorically different outcomes in what appeared to be similar cases?

Our two cases, Southern Italy and Spain, represented two significantly different forms of modern compound war: "ordinary" and

"fortified." Ordinary compound war deliberately mobilizes regular and irregular forces in a complementary way. Fortified compound war does this but also strengthens the main force and makes it invulnerable by adding the advantages of safe haven and a major power ally. Usually the leverages of compound war can be sustained in a protracted conflict only if the compound operator "fortifies" his main force because, as a practical matter, only fortified methods allow a minor compound operator to maintain a regular force reliably in the field against a resolute major-power operator. Since the regular force will perpetually secure or revive the regional irregular forces, survival of the regular force also means the survival of the irregular forces. Fortification actually guarantees the survival of both kinds of force. Unceasing existence of both kinds of force compels the adversary to conduct exhausting, simultaneous warfare indefinitely against both kinds of force. This is why fortified operations usually win. The adversary faces major casualties from both conventional and unconventional forces on a perpetual basis with no hope of resolution. The adversary may be overcome directly by exposure to both kinds of force. Even if not, when he eventually realizes his problem is unsolvable, he is likely to withdraw from the campaign without having gained his objectives, without "winning." The fortified operator, thus, may win either directly or by default.

It should be immediately apparent that several factors significantly differentiated the "fortified" Iberian case from the Neapolitan case. In Spain, but not in Southern Italy, the resistance to the French enjoyed certain advantages: (1) simultaneous and continuous pressure by conventional and unconventional force, (2) a conventional force that was continuously in being and indestructible because it had a safe haven (Torres Vedras), and (3) a great power ally (Britain) that matched or exceeded the adversary in technological means, global diplomatic means, and other means one expects to find at the disposal of a major power. The essence of this powerful complex of levers was, of course, the first advantage: simultaneous application of regular and irregular force. In practice, however, this could not be achieved against an organizationally and technologically superior power without some combination of the second and third levers. A larger, more developed enemy force will normally track down and destroy a smaller, less-developed conventional force unless the latter can escape to some kind of safe haven. (Whether the safe haven is determined geographically, technologically, diplomatically, or in some other way is immaterial.) Moreover, unless a major power ally neutralizes the

technological advantages of the more developed enemy, the friendly main force may not be viable enough or mobile enough to even survive to reach its safe haven. The allied power may also add a mass of forces, global diplomatic resources, and numerous other important advantages. To keep the guerrilla movement alive, the main force must be kept alive. Keeping the main force alive in the presence of a technologically superior enemy force seems to require both a safe haven and a technologically competent major power ally. Historically, operators who, like Wellington, have brought all three of these elements to bear—regular and irregular forces, safe havens, major power allies—have almost always prevailed against superior numbers.

Naples and Spain exemplify ordinary and fortified compound war respectively. Ordinary compound war, such as Napoleonic forces faced in Southern Italy, is difficult to defeat. Fortified compound war, such as Napoleonic forces faced in Spain, is nearly impossible to defeat. This distinction between the difficult and the impossible is extremely important for military planners to be aware of. In other words, ordinary and fortified compound war have different characteristic outcomes, which are usefully illustrated by our two Napoleonic cases. The Iberian outcome, where the invaded minor power defeats the invading major power, occurs when the three elements of fortified compound war are effectively brought to bear, as we have seen. The Neapolitan outcome, where the invading major power defeats the invaded minor power, occurs where the strategic operator of the major power (1) destroys the adversary's main force, (2) takes steps to preclude intervention by another major power, and then (3) destroys the guerrilla movement in the regions by a main force at his leisure. This sequence, especially the initial elimination of the foe's main force, seems to be typical of historical cases, such as the Boer War, where the major power has prevailed against an ordinary compound-war operator. These cases seem to show that victory against an ordinary compound operator is costly but possible; victory against a fortified compound operator is in most cases not possible—a crucial distinction. (The operator seeking victory against a fortified adversary must first attempt to defortify him—somehow decisively overcome the barriers of his safe haven or somehow dissolve his major power alliance.)

The three techniques of fortified compound warfare—if they can be successfully applied despite the enemy's efforts to frustrate them—greatly multiply the leverages of the practitioners such that it is almost impossible to defeat them. At the least, a different calculus of force must be used when a conventional operator faces a fortified

compound operator. Such a calculus must anticipate and explain how 40,000 troops may outnumber, in effect, 200,000. The best analysts understood the need for such a calculus at the time. Clausewitz knew that the dynamics of warfare of a "people in arms" were different from those of other warfare. Jomini also cautioned that his celebrated principles of war could not be directly applied in wars where one faced "an army and a people in arms."[23]

The significance of the dynamics of compound warfare—especially fortified compound war—for the development of modern war is great, because in conflicts since Napoleon's time, fortified compound operators seem usually to prevail, and the opponents of resourceful fortified operators seem usually to fail. This is useful information for planners. It would be going too far to assume that knowledge of the dynamics of modern compound war would allow an analyst to predict the outcome of a campaign. But it might be fair to say that a grasp of the dynamics of compound war would enhance planners' abilities to judge the outcome of certain campaigns.

In order to achieve a better comprehension of the nature of compound war and its usefulness for analyzing modern conflicts, let us briefly consider two matching pairs of instructive cases in modern U.S. experience: the American War of Independence, 1775-83 and the U.S. Civil War, 1861-65; the Philippine Insurrection, 1899-1902 and the U.S-Vietnam War, 1965-72. In each of these cases, which are fairly familiar to most serious U.S. students of military history today, a power with distinctly lesser population and industry opposed a power with distinctly more population and industry. In each case, the contest as embraced by the lesser power seemed to have been imprudent at best. In each case, the lesser power won, nevertheless, if it applied the three elements of fortified compound war, but lost if it did not. These examples represent a whole category of unequal and hard-to-predict cases, cases where estimating conventional force ratios seems to give results that are erratic. This apparently erratic analytic effect can be overcome, however, if the analyst applies the model of fortified compound warfare to the case. If the three classical elements of fortified compound warfare are present, the observer may know that he must use an unconventional calculus, a kind of calculus where 40,000 troops outnumber 200,000. In those fortified cases and in them alone, the smaller, less-developed power may prevail. The three-criterion template of fortified compound warfare seems to provide a remarkably reliable explanation of outcomes over a remarkably wide variety of

cases, cases that span broad differences in time, place, and political culture.

In the American War of Independence, 1775-83, a population of 2.5 million opposed a population of 9 million—a country with more-developed industries, a world class navy, and a global empire. The attempt might have seemed foolhardy, but the colonial leaders boldly went forward. They prevailed because Washington and the Continental Congress had the wisdom to apply simultaneous pressure through both the Continental Army and militia forces throughout the country; because these same authorities kept a conventional army continuously in being that was practically indestructible since Washington could always withdraw into the great interior the British did not control—a safe haven; and because a major power, France, allied with the embattled colonists to neutralize the technological advantage the British wielded on the sea, provided additional conventional forces on the ground, furnished diplomatic means and global legitimacy, and otherwise provided accommodations at the disposal of a major power. In other words, Washington seemed beleaguered, yet his force defeated a much larger redcoated force and the empire behind it. This was because Washington was able to resourcefully apply all the major leverages of fortified compound warfare. (Of course, this was not the work of Washington alone but grew out of a collective effort by the community that favored independence, including notably Nathanael Greene, who masterfully combined regular and irregular forces in the southern theater, and Benjamin Franklin, who appreciated the need for and energetically sought out the French alliance.) Washington and his resourceful colleagues obliged the British to deal with an entirely different calculus of war. Although the social and cultural context of the North American case differed in many ways from that of the Iberian case, the operational dynamics of fortified compound war seemed to function similarly. Washington's achievement antedated Wellington's by half a lifetime. The argument could plausibly be made that Washington, along with adept military colleagues such as Nathanael Greene and the steadfast statesmen in the Continental Congress, were the true authors of modern, fortified compound war, even though the forces deployed by the respective sides were only a fraction of the forces that would later be deployed in Spain.

The leaders of the Southern Confederacy in 1861 self-consciously wished to follow in the footsteps of Washington's success. With a free population of 5.5 million, they chose to stand against a population of 22

million that possessed more-developed industries and predominant naval power. By any conventional estimation of force ratios, this effort might have seemed unwise. For Southern statesmen, however, the most compelling historical example was naturally Washington's. If they applied Washington's unconventional calculus, they could win. They could overcome the great odds against them, as Washington had. But did Southern statesmen understand the dynamics that had allowed Washington to win and could they apply them? The answer ultimately was no. The South from 1861 to 1865 successfully implemented none of the three criteria of modern fortified compound war. Therefore, the military contest developed as a wearing struggle between conventional armies in which Southern forces, though brilliantly marshaled, were overcome. Southern leaders relied on conventional forces and never envisioned or tried to prosecute a general uprising. The Confederacy had a policy of maintaining conventional forces in being but had no safe haven that would guarantee their security; Union armies could go wherever Southern ones did and compel engagement. Let us note also, that historically, successful minor operators have usually avoided main force engagements unless and until the major operator's preponderant power was somehow compromised; they won by not losing. The Confederacy followed the opposite policy and tried to win by winning. This active operational policy, like the absence of safe haven, made it difficult for the C.S.A. to keep its all-important main force in being. For the minor-power operator, persistence rather than predominance may be the more effective approach. Of course, such a policy of avoiding engagement may only delay the final outcome for the minor-power operator against a determined adversary unless the operator also has the advantage of a safe haven or of a great open space combined with superior mobility, which is the functional equivalent of a safe haven. Though the South eagerly courted British intervention on its side, the British never obliged. The main elements of fortified compound warfare—the compounding of regular and irregular leverages, the safe haven, the major power ally—were all absent from the Southern war effort. The outcome of their enterprise thus hinged on conventional force ratios, not on ratios of the exceptional calculus available to Washington. If Confederate statesmen had more perfectly appreciated the extraordinary methods that had allowed Washington to prevail, they might have had a clearer understanding of real outcomes when they made their plans in 1861.

The twentieth century has also brought the United States into wars in which societies with lesser populations and industries have faced those

with larger ones and in which lesser operators have hoped to prevail through guerrilla methods. One of these was the Philippine Insurrection of 1899 to 1902. In this conflict, a resolute major power defeated an ordinary compound-war operator. The United States, having defeated Spain in the Spanish-American War, sought in 1899 to establish U.S. authority in the former Spanish possession of the Philippines. Thus, near Manila in February 1899, U.S. forces collided with Philippine liberation forces under Emilio Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo's army lost this battle and withdrew from Manila. U.S. forces were unable to effectively pursue until November 1899 when they attacked across the Luzon plain and dispersed the Filipino army. Filipino guerrilla leaders continued to resist, however, in the various regions.

The U.S. Army in the Philippines, with no conventional force to face, developed rigorous methods for pacifying the guerrillas. They established U.S. garrisons throughout the islands, gathered the civilian population around those garrisons to protect them and prevent their aiding the guerrillas, then patrolled actively from the garrisons. Without food and other assistance from the population and militarily pressured, guerrilla leaders began to surrender in February 1901. (Food in this case, as in Naples and Spain and many other cases, tended to be the weapon of decision.) Aguinaldo himself was captured in March. By the summer of 1902, pacification of the guerrillas was substantially complete. Aguinaldo was prepared to use regular and irregular force together, the essential leverage of compound warfare; however, when his conventional force was dispersed, U.S. forces were free to establish dominant control in the countryside and use imposed food shortages, as the French had in Naples, to force the guerrillas to engage. Without a conventional force in being to oblige the U.S. forces to concentrate, U.S. forces were free to disperse, pursue, and defeat the guerrilla bands, and did. Napoleon's classic Southern Italian sequence—eliminate the main force first—worked for the Americans in the Philippines.

Aguinaldo could not keep a regular force in being, though he grasped the advantages of doing so. This was because he had no safe haven that would exempt his smaller force from engagement and no great power ally to neutralize the Americans' decisive technical and other large organizational advantages. Aguinaldo had a robust guerrilla movement to rely on, but guerrilla action of itself does not constitute modern compound warfare and can often be defeated by a resolute major power, as guerrillas were in the Kingdom of Naples in 1811. The Philippine case, like the Neapolitan case, demonstrates the

characteristic outcome of ordinary compound war, as distinct from fortified compound war.

The U.S.-Vietnam conflict, 1965 to 1972, was superficially similar in many of its attributes to the Philippine Insurrection of 1899 to 1902, and yet the Vietnam conflict hardly was similar to the Philippine Insurrection because Vietnamese operators practiced fortified compound war, and the Filipinos did not. In both cases an armed population in Southeast Asia opposed determined forces of the U.S. Army. A smaller, less-developed society opposed a larger, more-developed society, hoping for good results by relying on guerrilla methods. North Vietnamese statesmen relied on several advantages unavailable to Aguinaldo, however. Their main force, though far smaller than the Americans', could never be destroyed because it enjoyed a safe haven in the form of the North Vietnamese and Cambodian borders, which U.S. forces could not cross because of diplomatic pressures. Since the North Vietnamese Army could never be destroyed, U.S. forces were perplexed throughout by the dilemma of whether to prosecute the main battle or the guerrilla battle. Moreover, the North Vietnamese had two great power allies, Russia and China, who neutralized the technological and other major organizational advantages of the Americans. The U.S. had decisive technological advantages over the North Vietnamese, but this fact was moot because the U.S. did not face the North Vietnamese but rather an alliance of which the North Vietnamese were a part and over which the United States had no decisive technological superiority. The North Vietnamese leaders made resourceful, maximum use of all of the criteria of fortified compound warfare—regular with irregular force, a safe haven, and major power allies. Like Wellington and Washington, they employed the elements of fortified compound warfare to create an environment where a different calculus of warfare applied, a calculus highly favorable to themselves. One wonders if U.S. planners in 1965, like Confederate planners in 1861, did not suffer from insufficient intellectual control over the dynamics of modern compound warfare: what they were, when and how they might operate, and with what likely consequences.

Napoleon's experiences in his Spanish and Neapolitan campaigns would cast long shadows. They provided a classic doctrinal school for an important category of subsequent conflicts in modern warfare. Above all, Wellington's work defined the "fatal knot" of fortified compound warfare: a conventional force that was indestructible combined with a guerrilla force that was ubiquitous. Guerrilla war was

hardly new in 1808, but the "fatal knot" was new (although Washington had used these same methods on a smaller scale earlier). These sophisticated methods have been a continuous force in modern warfare in the centuries since Napoleon, across a broad span of time, place, and cultures. Those who wish to understand and explain the outcomes of modern warfare need to know when they can apply the calculus of conventional force ratios and when they must apply the extraordinary calculus of fortified compound warfare, by whose leverages 40,000 may, in the correct circumstances, defeat 200,000.

Notes

1. Napoleon Bonaparte, *Memorial de Sainte-Helene, Vol. 1* (Paris: 1961 [1823]), 609-10; quoted in John L. Tone, "The Fatal Knot: Popular Resistance and Guerrilla Warfare in Navarre, 1808-1814" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1989), vi.

2. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 220.

3. David G. Chandler, "Wellington in the Peninsula," 155-65, in David G. Chandler, *On the Napoleonic Wars* (London: Greenhill, 1994), 156. (Hereafter referred to as "Peninsula.")

4. David G. Chandler, "Wellington and the Guerrillas," 166-80, in Chandler, *Napoleonic Wars,* 172. (Hereafter referred to as "Guerrillas.")

5. Chandler, "Guerrillas," 173.

6. The number 250,000 divided by 115,000 yields 2.2. See Chandler, "Guerrillas," 173, for the 50,000 figure. Note also, however, that some analysts believe that force ratios in Spain were more favorable to Wellington than these numbers suggest. They would argue that naval strength should also be put in his column, as well as the numerous guerrillas who were only active intermittently.

7. Chandler, "Guerrillas," 172.

8. Ibid., 170-71, 173, 175-76.

9. Cf. Tone, 224-25; cf. Chandler, "Guerrillas," 171. In ibid., 173, Chandler points out that as many as 30,000 "liberals" and townsmen may have been eliminated by the guerrillas. These were, of course, liberals in the eighteenth and nineteenth century sense, that is, persons who were nonetheless very conservative with regard to the way such terms are usually used today.

10. Tone, 28-29, 32, 35-36, 550.

11. Ibid., 221; Chandler, "Guerrillas," 176.

12. Chandler, "Guerrillas," 174.

13. Quoted in ibid., 175.

14. Tone, 16-17.

15. Chandler, "Guerrillas," 173-74.

16. Ibid., 172, 174. For Dumas quote, see Chandler, “Peninsula,” 157.

17. Don W. Alexander, *Rod of Iron* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1985), xvii, 233, 237-38.

18. Chandler, “Guerrillas,” 174.

19. Ibid., 171, 173-74, 177.

20. Ibid., 177.

21. The best recent scholarship on the Naples campaign is Milton Finley’s *The Most Monstrous of Wars* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994). Most of the brief account given here is drawn from Finley’s insightful study.

22. For a discussion of religious motivation in all these cases, see Finley, 145.

23. Clausewitz, 47-83; Antoine de Jomini, *The Art of War,* 389-557, in *Roots of Strategy, Book 2,* J. D. Hittle, ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole, 1987), 444-45.

Compound Warfare on the Great Plains: A Missed Opportunity

Jerold E. Brown

The promise inherent in compound warfare is not always realized, nor do practitioners of war always take full advantage of the opportunities to employ all the forms of warfare available to them, including compound war. This was certainly true in the series of wars fought between the United States and numerous Indian tribes in the Trans-Mississippi West from the early 1840s to about 1890. Most of the necessary conditions for the successful employment of compound war existed at that time: a vast area, sparsely inhabited, that called for extensive skill in tracking and finding an enemy force or his village but at the same time offered ample opportunity for undetected movement and escape; a tenacious and skillful enemy superbly adapted to the environment and capable of sustaining himself without returning to a fixed base for extended periods of time; the availability of indigenous peoples with a historic and deep-seated antipathy to the recalcitrant groups that were the objects of government force; and a governmental policy of expansion. Among the necessary conditions that were not, perhaps, present were an understanding by the U.S. Army of the use of compound warfare and the political will of the U.S. government essential to appeal to it.

Although the Euro-American experience from the early seventeenth century until the middle of the nineteenth century was replete with struggles against the indigenous inhabitants of North America, that experience substantially differed in nature from what awaited those Americans trekking across the vast continent to the Pacific Ocean in the second half of the nineteenth century. While the two experiences were different, however, they were not entirely disconnected. The experience of two and a half centuries of struggle by Euro-Americans was critical in establishing attitudes, policies, and techniques for dealing with each successive indigenous group as the frontier extended across the continent. While the focus of this essay is on the Trans-Mississippi West in the period after 1840, a brief review of the earlier period of Indian warfare will help establish the connections, as well as the disconnections, between the two periods.

The first Europeans to arrive in North America encountered myriad peoples, some friendly and peaceful, others aloof and hostile.[1] Most of

the tribes along the eastern seaboard and in the woodlands of the Ohio and lower Mississippi valleys were small, sedentary, keenly territorial, and technologically primitive. They lived in permanent or semi-permanent villages and kahokias ranging from several dozen to several thousand in population. Generally, they subsisted on some combination of agriculture and hunting. In the majority of cases, the rich soil of the river valleys provided these tribes adequate amounts of produce, and they supplemented their diet through hunting and fishing. Some long-distance trade existed, reaching from the northeast down through the Ohio Valley to the Mississippi River; however, most trade was local, usually between bands of the same tribes and between neighboring tribes.

All of the eastern tribes were well acquainted with war, and the use of arms and fighting was integral to almost all Indian cultures. Internecine tribal warfare was common, usually precipitated by territorial disputes. Casualties were infrequently heavy, as few tribes had either the numbers, stamina, or the resources to fight a protracted war. The greatest threat to tribal survival, however, was the sporadic, deadly forays of the militant tribes of the northeast, especially those of the Iroquois confederation, that extended as far south and west as present-day southern Illinois. These raids caused extensive destruction, kept the woodlands of the Ohio and lower Mississippi valleys in continual turmoil, and created the necessary conditions for the effective use of indigenous peoples in compound warfare.

Meanwhile, the appearance of Europeans in the seventeenth century dramatically changed the geopolitical relationships of the native peoples of North America as well as their social, cultural, and technological ways of life. In the first place, the ever-increasing number of Europeans—whose numbers grew through natural population growth and the annual arrivals of immigrants—employed more aggressive agricultural techniques that placed a greater demand on natural resources. The impact of this situation created considerable pressure on the Europeans for the acquisition of further land that could only be satisfied at the expense of the native populations. As Europeans moved inland from the coast, they increasingly came into contact with more Indian groups and ones of greater diversity. Those native groups that survived the infectious diseases arising through this contact—the contact, incidentally, was a two-way street, with small pox, chicken pox, typhoid, measles, mumps, and other viral diseases killing large numbers of native inhabitants, while malaria and a host of parasitic diseases took a heavy toll on white immigrants—were forced to

accommodate the new arrivals or ally with other Indian groups against the Europeans.

The European presence in North America introduced another dynamic factor to intertribal relations that would have far-reaching effects. By the mid-seventeenth century, struggle for European political and economic hegemony expanded to North America and was played out principally between the French and the English in the north but also, to some extent, between the Spanish and the English in the south. While not inevitable, intertribal relations and Indian resistance to white intrusion into their territory became inextricably bound up with European politics.[2] The political strife and wars of Europe came to the New World. Regular European military forces organized, manned, disciplined, trained, and equipped to fight the highly stylized, late-dynastic and early-modern wars of the period thus found many convenient uses for "savage" allies.[3] Into this milieu, the effects of compound war as described in this book made their appearance and made a deep, abiding impression on the English settlers in North America.

Following the successful struggle for American independence, the U.S. government set about consolidating its hold on the territory recognized by the Treaty of Paris as the United States. An area extending from the Atlantic on the east to the Mississippi River in the west, Canada in the north to the northern border of Florida in the south defined the new nation. Included in these boundaries were still a great many Indian tribes, some nearly extinct and passive, while others remained vibrant and militant, posing a clear threat to whites with any ambition to settle, establish homesteads, and develop the "dark and bloody ground" (as the land beyond the Appalachians was called) for farming and commerce.

The government of the new constitutional republic, meanwhile, had no tolerance for Indian depredations against white settlements and little patience for dealing with the tribes diplomatically. Almost two centuries of fighting the indigenous inhabitants of North America had left most whites with only one conclusion: the Indians had to be completely pushed out in order to make way for the peaceful and inevitable development of the rich lands of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Within this context, there was no place for alliances with Indian tribes, nor even for the employment of friendly tribes against their more hostile neighbors. Thus, there was no place for compound war. After many battles and numerous wars, this period would end with the defeat of Tecumseh's confederation in the north, the Creeks in the south,

Black Hawk in the west, and the suppression of the Seminoles in Florida.[4] Perhaps most indicative of the attitudes of the white population and the policy of the government in Washington was the removal of the Cherokee from North Carolina and eastern Tennessee across the Mississippi into the marginally useful land of the middle west and southwest.[5] This exodus, called the "Trail of Tears," brutal and inhumane as it was by later twentieth-century moral standards, elicited only feeble protests at the time and few regrets in the coming decades.

So what was the legacy of this 240-year period of history in our consideration of compound war? First, and perhaps most important, the experience of fighting Indians, armed and equipped first by the French and then by the British, left a most unpleasant taste in the mouths of the westward-looking Americans. The concept of Manifest Destiny was already accepted by most Americans as a natural extension of the idea of the "City on the Hill" that had lured many of their ancestors to the New World in the seventeenth century.[6] From this perspective, all Indians, friendly or hostile, were viewed as impediments to progress. The publication of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* in 1826 only added to the perception of the native Americans as savage and bestial.

Second, the pace of expansion was moving at a substantially greater rate than heretofore. If it had taken 240 years to clear the area east of the Mississippi, the expectation might have been that a similar time would allow for the settling of the great heartland. But the tide of immigration, in fact, was increasing at an unprecedented rate: the population of the United States grew 32 percent from 1830 to 1840, from 12.8 to 17 million. Thomas Jefferson's great gamble, the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France, was proving to be one of history's great bargains. The value of New Orleans alone was greater, by many times, than the price paid for the entire package. With the admissions to the United States of Louisiana in 1812 and Missouri in 1821, the process of peopling and developing the vast interior of the North American continent was proceeding apace.

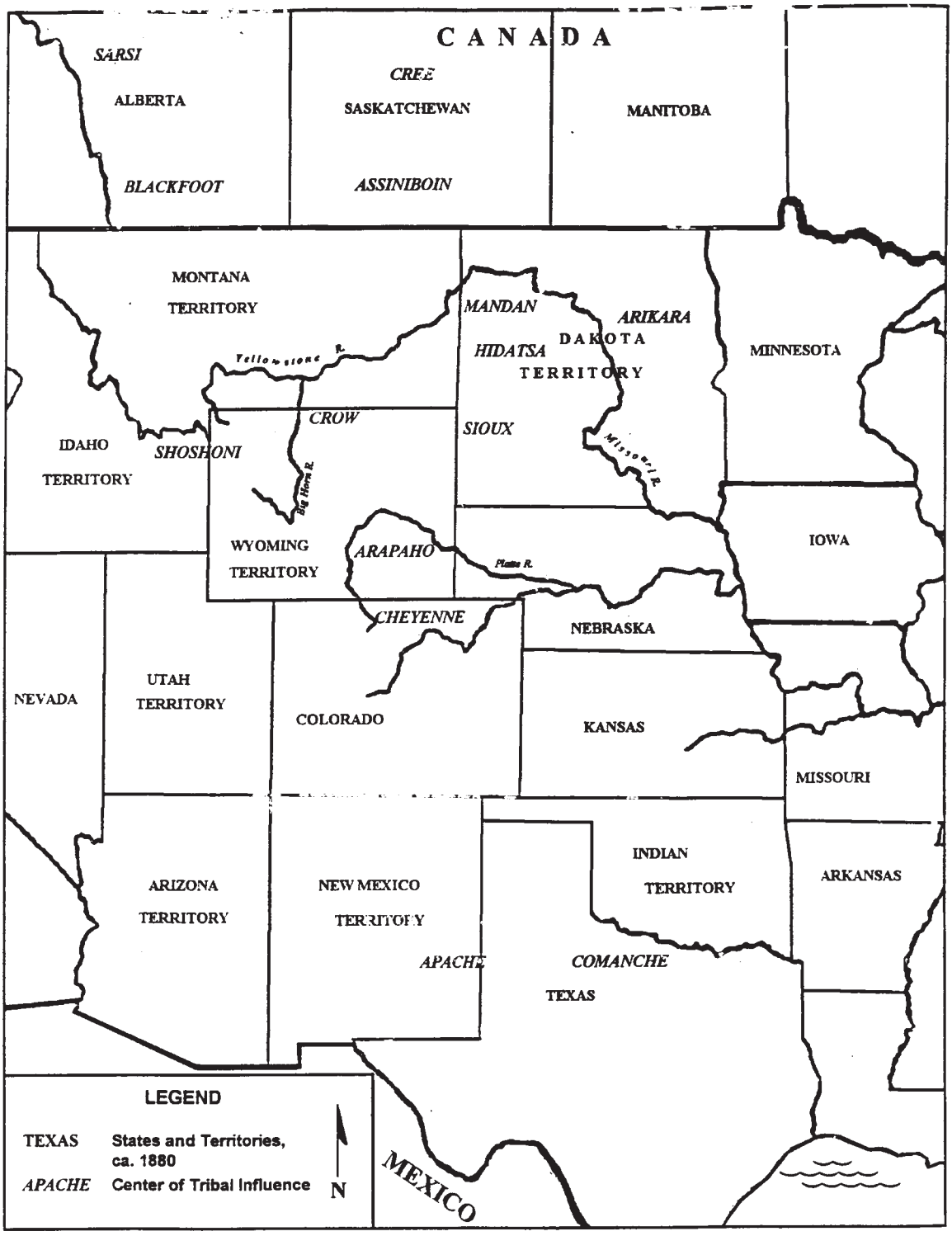
To many Americans looking westward in the 1840s and 50s, the Indian seemed to present the only significant obstacle to easy conquest (the real obstacles were distance, nature, and the harshness of the land). Early explorers (including Meriwether Lewis and William Clark), fur and hide traders, travelers on the Santa Fe Trail, and numerous adventurers had already attested to the hostility and militancy of some of the Indians they had encountered, especially noting the ferocity and

aggressiveness of tribes like the Lakota Sioux.[7] They had also written about and spoken of friendly Indians—Indians eager to trade for all types of metal and other manufactured goods, Indians who had saved whites' lives and salvaged their expeditions on more than one occasion. Nevertheless, the Indian threat always appeared monolithic and a serious obstacle to Manifest Destiny.

The western Indians were soon recognized as substantially different from the eastern Indians with whom the English colonists and early Americans had previously dealt and dealing with them would present a more complex problem. Most of the tribes on the Great Plains—that vast expanse of land stretching from the Rio Grande in the south to Alberta and Saskatchewan in the north and from the Missouri River valley in the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west—were nomadic peoples who annually followed the vast herds of bison in their seasonal migrations. They lived primarily on meat brought in from the hunt and the berries, nuts, roots, and wild grains they gathered to supplement their diet. They had no fixed villages or settlements and claimed great tracts of land only for hunting purposes. Their hold on these hunting lands was always tenuous because other groups of Indians continually encroached on these lands; their claim could only be enforced through strength of arms. The strongest, most aggressive, most ruthless, and wiliest were bound to be the winners in this environment.[8]

Life and death, survival and extinction, success and failure largely revolved around hunting and fighting. If the hunt was successful, the village would eat well over the winter and, perhaps, have extra food to trade with neighboring tribes for items they could not readily produce. If the hunt went badly, the village might starve. Enemy raiders, meanwhile, might strike the village while the hunters were away, stealing the food gathered and stored for the winter and carrying off the women and children they did not kill. Thus, the skill of hunters and the courage of warriors became crucial in the lives of all Indians.[9]

The knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for tribal survival were preserved and transmitted from one generation to the next through hunter-warrior societies. These societies existed in nearly all of the larger Indian nations and frequently crossed clan and band boundaries. Typically, all young boys would be apprenticed at about eleven years of age—size and strength being the likely determinants for admission—to a society based on family tradition, the father's status, and the young boy's potential for development. Over the next five or six years, each initiate would undergo extensive and thorough training in every aspect



Map 1. Indian people of the Great Plains

of his prospective craft: the use of weapons, knowledge of the terrain, tracking, survival skills, cover and concealment, communications and sign language, and the lore and ceremonies of the society. The apprenticeship culminated in an extraordinarily rigorous ordeal in which the initiate was given a series of tasks and problems, each one of which he had to accomplish. Successful completion meant full induction into the society; failure—if the initiate survived the ordeal—meant return to the village, where he would have a diminished role in tribal affairs. The future of the village rested largely on the skill and prowess of these hunter-warriors, who were responsible for feeding and defending it.

For the Plains Indians, the village was the social, economic, and political center of life. A typical village was composed of fifty or sixty lodges or tipis, each with a family unit of about five or six people: a mother, father, and perhaps an uncle, aunt, or grandparent and two or three children. Upon their return to the village from hunting or raiding parties, unmarried braves lived in wickiups, simple huts built of brush, in the vicinity of or adjacent to the village. Normally, they did not live in a lodge again until they married. From spring through autumn, the village moved every ten to fourteen days, following the migrating herds of bison north as the grass greened with the spring rains, then south as the cooler temperatures of fall drove the bison toward their winter pastures. The period a village could remain in the same location depended upon the size of the village, readily available resources such as water, grass, fodder, firewood, roots, and other foods that could be easily gathered and the movement of the all-important bison. During the winter, the village moved when weather permitted or when the village site became so totally despoiled that a move became necessary for health reasons. The village could be broken down, moved about eight to ten miles, and reassembled in one day.

As an economic entity, the village was self-sufficient. Women were the primary productive units within the village. They produced nearly everything the village needed: stripped and dried the meat; scraped, cleaned, and worked the hides for blankets, clothes, and lodges; cooked and prepared meals; birthed babies and reared children; made and repaired clothes; tended the sick; struck, moved, and set up the village; and, occasionally, fought in defense of the village. Parturition was a dangerous proposition: death resulting from childbirth was not infrequent and infant mortality may have been as high as 50 percent. What could not be produced within the village was acquired through

trade with neighboring villages—which were normally of the same band or tribe—or was stolen in raids on enemy or hostile tribes.

Politically, the Plains Indians practiced a type of democracy that allowed each individual almost total freedom. At any time, any member or family in the village who disagreed with the decisions of the village leaders—who held their positions by dint of personality, reputation, and wisdom, not by heredity or force—could take their lodge, family, and any other members of the village who might choose to go with them and leave. They could then establish a separate village or join another village with ties to their band or clan. At the same time, each "chief" was free to make decisions for himself and his immediate family and was never compelled to subordinate himself to any other authority. Thus, village decision making was a complex process characterized by the accomplishment of consensus. Rarely was unanimity achieved. This process always bewildered those with European ancestry, who were used to centralized decision making and the delegating of political authority.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Plains Indians had benefited from two elements of European culture introduced into the New World: horses and guns. The Spanish brought the horse to New Spain in the early seventeenth century, and Indian societies in Mexico and the Southwest quickly adopted the hardy and versatile animals into their local culture. By the end of the eighteenth century, horse culture had spread north and east across the Great Plains, becoming an essential element of Indian life that crossed tribal and cultural boundaries. The horse offered the Plains Indians a degree of mobility previously unknown. Now horses carried the villagers' household goods from one site to the next during the seasonal treks and gave hunting parties much greater mobility and range to pursue the all-important bison and other game. This enhanced the Indians' ability to obtain nutrition and provided them with a greater margin of security against starvation. War parties, meanwhile, could rapidly concentrate their strength for raids and disburse much more quickly and effectively for security than in the past.[10]

The horse, moreover, added significant economic and social dimensions to Plains Indian culture. Horses became a store of wealth and value, important trade assets, as well as symbols of status and prestige within the family and tribe. In the meantime, horsemanship became an essential skill on the Plains. Accomplished riders were admired, and the best and most daring riders held an advantage in the hunt or in combat. Individuals painted their horses in the same

distinctive way they painted themselves so that their horses would be recognized and known after the hunt or the battle and the warrior would achieve renown also. Thus, less than fifty years before the Europeans launched their conquest of the Great Plains, the horse had transformed native cultures.

Firearms would likewise have a deep and fundamental impact on Indian cultures. Gunpowder weapons, however, came to the Indians not from the Spanish—who had always striven to keep firearms out of Indian hands lest the native peoples use them against the ruling elites—but from the French and English in Canada and along the Atlantic coast. Just as horse culture was spreading north and east, gunpowder culture was inching its way south and west. The French and English traded their firearms to the Indians for furs, food, shelter, and other necessities, and the Indian quickly found them useful in hunting and war making. Although the Indians never had the ability to manufacture or perform more than minimal maintenance on their guns, they became experts in their use.

Tribes or bands that possessed guns had a clear and evident advantage over their neighbors that did not. Those tribes that already held significant power, had visionary and perceptive leaders, had readier access to valuable resources (such as abundant, high-quality furs), or had the good fortune to be useful to the Europeans received guns first and acquired a continuous supply of ball and powder without which the weapons were useless. Thus, in some instances, the arrival of firearms reinforced the existing order of dominance among the tribes; in other cases, it led to the rearrangement of that order. In any case, the spread of gun culture became a major factor in the social, political, and economic life of the Indians of North America and their relationship to the expanding white society.

The appearance of firearms and horses, however, did not fundamentally change the role of war making in Plains cultures. The fate of the band or tribe and an individual's status continued to depend largely upon success in war. The warrior gained status and position in his society and village by counting "coup"—by performing a prescribed act of bravery while engaged with an enemy. Acts of bravery were hierarchical in nature. Thus, touching a live opponent in combat with one's "coup stick" was considered a greater deed than killing or wounding an enemy. The quest to establish one's reputation and gain status in the hunter-warrior society through counting coup led to extraordinary demonstrations of personal courage on the battlefield. The best horsemen, the most skillful and knowledgeable warriors in the

use of the new weapons, and the most daring braves served both themselves and their people.

For the purpose of this essay, the significance of both horse and gun culture is their convergence in the Great Plains in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This coming together of two dynamic complexes occurred on the Great Plains but was experienced by neither the Southwestern nor Northeastern Indians. The adoption of the horse and gun by the Plains Indians created the possibility for an Indian power never before imagined on the North American continent. Armed with this capability, the Lakota Sioux became well-armed, fast, agile, mobile, capable of ranging far—in short, superbly suited to their climate and terrain. Brigadier General Anson Mills, a veteran of the Indian wars who served in the U.S. Army for fifty-five years, said of them: they are "the best cavalry in the world; their like will never be seen again."[11] With this newly gained potency, the native peoples of the Great Plains might have effectively resisted the encroachment of the white hordes. They lacked only a great visionary leader who could resolve the tribal hatreds and animosities that had divided the aboriginal inhabitants of North America since time immemorial. But no messiah appeared to lead the Indian nations to their salvation.

This milieu, one can argue, was ideal for the employment of compound warfare. The indigenous populations were deeply divided by cultural differences (especially language), religion, and claims to the same hunting grounds—that terrain so critical to the very survival of each tribe, band, and clan. The introduction and rapid adaptation by Indians to certain elements of European culture, firearms in particular but to some extent all metal objects (which were far superior to the stone-age tools previously in use), created a certain degree of dependence by the Indians on continued, amicable contact with whites. The success of this contact and the trade that it would most surely continue to generate to the benefit of both the red man and the white man could determine power relationships, not only between white and Indian groups but also between Indian nations. Thus, if cleverly exploited, the Indians' training and experience, the inherent animosities between the Indian tribes, and the Indians' dependence on white trade goods could have led to the successful use of irregular indigenous units to complement regular U.S. Army units in subduing and suppressing the Plains tribes.

That the U.S. government never developed such a policy to systematically and deliberately use Indians in attacking and destroying other Indians is, perhaps, more a result of the historic attitudes about the

native Americans and the particular missions of the U.S. Army on the frontier than any negligence or lack of insight. In retrospect, the implementation of such a policy might have accelerated the process of clearing the vast interior of the continent, reduced the cost to the government, and saved the lives of untold numbers of Euro-American immigrants trekking across the Great Plains on their way to California and Oregon or endeavoring to eke out a living busting the sod of Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, or Colorado. The government, however, chose another course of action that did not include compound war and resided more in the attitude of the American people, their government, and the U.S. Army toward the native Americans than in considerations of efficiency or economy.

Long before Horace Greeley told his fellow countrymen, "Go West, young man," Americans had already taken that advice. In the late 1820s and 30s, thousands of individuals and families left Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana and headed for Texas, lured by stories of vast stretches of rich soil and promises of easy land grants from the Mexican government. They scratched "GTT" (gone to Texas) on gateposts and doorjambs, both as a forwarding address and an encouragement to their neighbors to follow. As they proceeded, the settlers encountered hostile Indians in Texas, primarily Apache and Comanche, but a dozen smaller tribes inhabited this area as well, Indians that the Mexicans were either unable or unwilling to subdue. Texas cotton farmers and cattle ranchers struggled with this Indian menace for decades after winning independence from Mexico and being admitted as the twenty-eighth state of the Union in 1845. Some of the great Indian heroes—Geronimo (born 1829) and Cochise (born ca. 1812) are perhaps the best known, but they are by no means the only Indian heroes of the era—were born in west Texas and the seemingly endless desert that lay beyond. Many stories of torture and the horrific massacres perpetrated by these tribes were published in Eastern newspapers and magazines. The frequency of the incidents and the accuracy of the reports can be debated, but the perceptions they engendered are indisputable. They served to keep alive now-fading memories of Indian massacres on an earlier frontier, in the east, and aroused new fears in immigrants, who had not been here long enough to see native Americans. The consequence was the development of an extremely bad, although not entirely unearned, reputation for the red man.

When subsequent waves of Euro-Americans streamed west in the 1840s and 50s, drawn by cheap, fertile land in Oregon and by gold to

California, they went well armed and deeply suspicious of any Indians they encountered. Although few immigrants traveling up the Oregon Trail or crossing the Sierra Nevadas saw Indians—incidents were few, deaths were fewer, a great many more pioneers and Indians dying of disease than by hostile action—the few incidents that did occur created an enduring image. And every time an incident occurred (which invariably became "massacres" thanks to the language reported in the Eastern tabloids), a hue and cry went out for the U.S. Army to provide more protection for the migrant trains and to discipline and punish the miscreant Indians.

That the citizens of the nation would call upon the Army for defense against a clear and evident threat is to be expected. But the Army was hardly prepared to deal with a threat that was not always clear. If a migrant train met Indians, they were just as likely to be "friendly" (meaning not hostile) as they were to pose a serious obstacle to the progress of the train. In fact, many Native Americans did not resist the passage of whites through their territory; they found the opportunity to trade with the travelers quite profitable. In his journal, Meriwether Lewis noted the extent and importance of trade and assistance to his expedition by the various tribes— several instances of which actually saved the expedition.[12] Some Native American groups, the Crow and Shoshone, for example, welcomed the Europeans and found common cause with the whites against the more aggressive and dangerous nations, especially the Sioux and Cheyenne, who had earlier moved west, pushing their Indian brethren out of traditional hunting lands. Thus, the Indian threat was not monolithic, and it was never serious enough to staunch the flow of immigrants west. But that does not mean that the Army was prepared to surrender any of its authority to some Indians in order to deal with others.

To better understand the nineteenth century U.S. Army of the frontier and its relationship with Native Americans, the U.S. Army's institution, missions, and challenges must be examined.[13] Military institutions in America have always suffered from a number of disabilities during periods of peace. During the nineteenth century, the United States was at war for less than ten years, and during those periods, it expended considerable national resources. But for the rest of the period, during peacetime, the Army's most significant disability was the limited resources and manpower available to it. Congress, expressing the attitude of the American people that a large military is not only unnecessary but also dangerous and that government should keep its hands out of the taxpayers' pockets, provided for only a limited

regular Army establishment. This regular Army, during wartime, could be expanded and augmented by the state militias. This system left much to be desired in the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. In 1861, however, Lincoln was forced to call for volunteers to put down the Great Rebellion. In general, the system proved sufficiently satisfactory that there was no concerted movement to change or reform it.

The system, nonetheless, left the peacetime Army on the frontier in the precarious position of facing war-like conditions without wartime resources and manpower. From 1840 to 1890, the Army built and maintained scores of forts and posts spread across thousands of square miles from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean and from the Rio Grande to the Canadian border. Many of these posts were small, manned by no more than a company of fifty or sixty men and a handful of officers, and existed for only brief periods. Other posts, like Fort Riley, Kansas, and Fort Huachuca, Arizona, endure as major Army installations even today, a legacy of the frontier past.

In the nineteenth century, officers and enlisted men at frontier posts accepted isolation as part of their lot, logistics and communications were often tenuous, supplies arrived sporadically, and soldiers frequently tended gardens and hunted bison and deer to supplement their meager or uncertain rations. Moreover, medical care was primitive; ambulances had no springs and hospitals were poorly equipped. In addition, the paymaster was sometimes months overdue—and when he did arrive, a private's pay of $16 per month (reduced to $13 in 1873) did not buy much. The desertion rate, consequently, was extraordinarily high—one in three privates deserted in some years. Not until the 1880s did the War Department take steps to stem this annual, unauthorized exodus. Some officers and a very few noncommissioned officers brought their wives and families to live with them on the Plains, but it took a hardy woman, indeed, to make a home in the shabby quarters available on a frontier military post hundreds of miles from civilization. Enlisted men were strongly discouraged from marrying, and they made do with Indian squaws or the "soiled doves" that appeared on the periphery of military posts since biblical times. Courts-martial were a weekly occurrence in most units, and discipline, like life on the frontier, was harsh.

Perhaps most indicative of the government's policy of economy toward all things military were the arms provided the U.S. Army on the frontier throughout the period of the Plains Indian wars.[14] Firearms designs progressed significantly from 1855 to 1875, and a number of breech-loading and magazine-fed rifles and carbines that used metallic

cartridges appeared prior to or during the Civil War. The best known, although by no means the only such weapons, were the .56-caliber (later reduced to .50-caliber) Spencer and the .44-caliber Henry. Both saw extensive service during the Civil War. Nevertheless, for logistical purposes, the War Department adhered to the .58-caliber Springfield muzzle-loaded rifled musket as the standard shoulder weapon throughout the Civil War. The Springfield's rate of fire was three to four rounds per minute, while the Spencer's seven-round magazine could be fired in ten seconds, and the fourteen-round Henry could be emptied in fifteen to twenty seconds. Quite clearly, the days of the muzzle-loader were nearing an end.

Once again, however, in the name of saving taxpayer dollars, the War Department chose not to provide the U.S. Army with state-of-the-art weapons. In 1865, Erskine S. Allin, working at the Springfield Armory, patented a design to convert the muzzle-loaded 1861 Springfield to accept a center-fire, metallic cartridge loaded through the breech. A military board's subsequent recommendation to reduce the standard round from .58- to .50-caliber led to a further modification. Approved by the War Department and fielded for the first time within a year of the Civil War's end, the M-1866 Springfield rifle, known as the "second Allin conversion," offered the infantryman a substantially higher and more reliable rate of fire than the muzzle-loader, but it was still a single-shot weapon. The government had saved money, but at a cost.

In 1873, the War Department adopted yet another single-shot breechloader, the Model 1873 "Trapdoor" Springfield. In its basic design, the Trapdoor was similar to the 1866 Allin conversion and was operated the same way. The 1873, however, was not a converted muzzle-loader. It was chambered for a .45-caliber cartridge, although it retained the seventy-grain powder charge and was available in both a long rifle (called the Long Tom) for the infantry and a carbine for the cavalry. The carbine fired a 45-55 (fifty-five grains of powder) cartridge, but it could fire the 45-70 cartridge when 45-55 ammunition was not available. For the next two decades, the Trapdoor was the standard shoulder weapon of the U.S. Army. It was used in every regiment in the Army and in every engagement between the Army and the Indians. But it was not the best weapon on many battlefields. All too often, soldiers found themselves outgunned on the battlefield. Native American warriors were frequently better armed, carrying a variety of modern repeating rifles and carbines acquired through battlefield pick-ups, purchases, trades, thefts, and distributions from Indian agents

who believed that such gifts encouraged Indians to remain on the reservations.

Nevertheless, in spite of the disabilities under which it operated over the half century from 1840 to 1890, the Army on the frontier conducted a multitude of missions. It provided security for migrant trains, miners, homesteaders, cattle herders, and tradesmen along all of the major immigrant trails. The Army, moreover, worked closely with Indian agents on the reservations, supervised the distribution of government supplies to Indian bands, and protected Indians and their lands from white interlopers. At the same time, semi-permanent settlements grew up around Army posts that provided immigrants with a haven from the vicissitudes of pioneer travel with a variety of commercial opportunities and with an opportunity to rest, to recover, and to refit before they pushed on westward. Soldiers, meanwhile, rescued travelers during floods, blizzards, and other natural disasters and provided emergency food, water, and repairs to distressed and stranded migrants. In the emerging territories of the West, the Army served as a constabulary, frequently the only visible and viable symbol of the authority of the United States government. In addition, Army engineers surveyed the land, published maps, cleared roads, built bridges, operated ferries, and performed a host of other activities that today would be considered "nation building." The Army was, in a real sense, the heart of the developing infrastructure of the new nation as it spread across the continent.

To support its operations on the frontier, the Army routinely contracted with Indian bands and recruited and enlisted individual Indians to serve as scouts.[15] These scouts provided an extremely valuable service for the Army. Their knowledge of the enemy and terrain and their skills in tracking and survival clearly surpassed even the best-trained Army scouts. On a few rare occasions, the Army contracted with larger groups of Indians to support the Army in the field. For example, in the 1876 Centennial Campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne in the unceded territory of Montana, Major General George Crook delayed the departure of his Wyoming column from Goose Creek (present-day Sheridan, Wyoming) until his chief civilian scout, Frank Grouard, returned with a contingent of more than 260 Crow and Shoshone.[16] These allies rode with Crook's force of nearly a thousand cavalry and mule-mounted infantry on the morning of 16 June. The next day, they fought alongside the Blue Coats at Rosebud Creek, the largest Indian battle fought west of the Mississippi River. The Crow and Shoshone proved themselves able and loyal allies,

saving the lives of more than a few white soldiers in the day's action. But the Army never armed, equipped, and commissioned these allies or any other tribes or bands to act independently against enemy bands, attack enemy villages, or undermine the enemy's sustainment base by slaughtering the bison upon which he depended. At the end of the Rosebud battle, the Army's Crow and Shoshone allies simply returned to their villages. This was the *modus operandi* of the U.S. Army throughout the Indian wars; the U.S. Army never resorted to compound warfare on the western frontier.

Why, one might ask, did the U.S. Army not employ compound warfare in this environment? After all, the necessary preconditions were present. The plains presented a vast, sparsely populated area inhabited by hostile or potentially hostile peoples. It addition, the area offered ample opportunity for undetected movement and escape and called for extensive skills in tracking and finding an enemy force. Moreover, within the area resided a tenacious and skillful enemy superbly adapted to the environment and capable of sustaining himself without returning to a fixed base for extended periods of time. However, also within this area were indigenous peoples who were sympathetic to the U.S. Army and had a historic, deep-seated antipathy to those groups that resisted the government's expansion policy. Furthermore, because the U.S. government had clearly demonstrated that it was unwilling to provide more than minimum resources to accomplish the task of opening the Trans-Mississippi West, the existence of these Indian allies created an ideal situation, it would seem, for the U.S. government to ally with one or more of these indigenous tribes to conduct irregular warfare against a common enemy.

While a definitive response to the question posed above is, perhaps, beyond the limited scope of this essay, one or two tentative answers can be offered. In the first place, the entire intercultural history of North America, from the arrival of the first Europeans at the beginning of the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century, was one of tension and conflict. Good relations between the white and red man were episodic; poor or deteriorating relations were far more common. Two such diametrically opposed cultures simply could not accommodate each other. While each learned and adopted cultural elements from the other, in the final analysis, both parties viewed more thorough cultural accommodation as surrender. Almost two hundred years of conflict east of the Mississippi established the paradigm for intercultural attitudes, perceptions, and expectations west of the Mississippi. By the time Americans were expanding into the

Trans-Mississippi West, racial and cultural prejudices and beliefs by both parties were too deep-seated to give way to compromises. Furthermore, the concept of Manifest Destiny left no place for a primitive, backward-looking, anachronistic, stationary society to coexist with what was perceived to be a modern, forward-looking, progressive, dynamic society. While the aboriginal inhabitants of North America comprised many different ethnic, religious, and language groups and ways of life, Europeans did not distinguish qualitatively between the subcultures. They viewed the indigenous peoples as a monolith. All of the Indians appeared to them to be essentially the same.

Armies represent their societies. They are products of the institutions and ideas that societies value. This was certainly true of the nineteenth-century U.S. Army on the frontier. The frontier Army expressed the attitudes, perceptions, prejudices, and demands of the young, developing United States. If the U.S. Army saw no reason to resort to compound warfare, it was because the American people saw no reason to make alliances and any binding promises to the Indians. And, perhaps more important, there was nothing in the military officer's professional education that trained him to think in such terms. After all, the school at Leavenworth—an institution that would play such a vital and critical role in making the U.S. Army of the second half of the twentieth century the preeminent army in the world—was not established until 1881, very near the conclusion of the conquest of the Trans-Mississippi West.

Notes

1. See Angie Debo, *A History of the Indians of the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 3-68; Richard H. Dillon, *North American Indian Wars* (New York: Facts on File, 1983), 17-34; George E. Hyde, *Indians of the Woodlands: From Prehistoric Times to 1725* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), passim; Patrick M. Malone, *The Skulking Way of War: Technology and Tactics among the New England Indians* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 9-32.

2. Debo, 69-83; Dillon, 35-48; Douglas Edward Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 43-44, 105-6, 211-12, 439-72.

3. See: Michael D. Pearlman, "The Wars of Colonial North America, 1690-1763," *supra*, passim.

4. Following years of conflict with Spain along the southern border, the United States offered to purchase Florida from that country. Spain finally ceded East and West Florida to the United States in the Treaty of 1819, but the U.S. Senate did not ratify the treaty until 1821, and the United States took possession of Florida in 1822.

5. Numerous accounts have been published on the Civilized Tribes, the Cherokee, and the "Trail of Tears." See, for example, Samuel Carter, *Cherokee Sunset: A Nation Betrayed: A Narrative of Travail and Triumph, Persecution and Exile* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), passim; Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932, 1953, 1972), 229-312; Gloria Jahoda, *The Trail of Tears* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), passim; Grace Steele Woodward, *The Cherokees* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 139-237.

6. For a survey of twentieth century interpretations of Manifest Destiny, see Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935), passim; Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), passim; Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Destiny: Anxious Aggrandizement on Late Jacksonian America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), passim.

7. See, for example: Bernard DeVoto, ed., *The Journals of Lewis and Clark* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953), 33-41.

8. See Norman Bancroft Hunt, *Native Americans: The Life and Culture of the North American Indians* (New York: Mallard Press, 1991), 140-72 and *The Indians of the Great Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 29-53; William K. Powers, *Indians of the Northern Plains* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1969), 7-67.

9. Powers, 68-85; Colin Taylor, *The Warriors of the Plains* (New York: ARCO Publishing Co., 1975), 4-16; Francis Haines, *The Plains Indians* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976), 70-90.

10. Haines, 42-8, 58-69, 112-9; Taylor, 18-33, 50-69.

11. Anson Mills, *My Story* (Washington, D.C.: Byron S. Adams, 1918), 406.

12. Lewis comments frequently on trading with Indians throughout the expedition. On several occasions, trading with the Indians was crucial to the continuation or survival of the expedition. If the Shoshone chief Cameahwait had not agreed to provide the expedition with horses at the end of August 1805, the expedition might not have been able to go on. Cameahwait's decision, however, was not entirely beneficent; the Shoshone drove a hard bargain and received premium prices in trade goods for the horses, most of which were not their better animals. See: Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 280-3. Also, passim.

13. On the frontier Army, see: Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 42-103, 137-286, 328-399; Don Rickey, *Forty Miles A Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), passim; Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 10-93, passim, and *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 1-90, 261-340; Robert Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 76-128, 177-94.

14. On U.S. Army weapons throughout the Indian Wars, see David F. Butler, *United States Firearms: The First Century* (New York: Winchester Press, 1971), 174-93, 202-10, 222-34; James E. Hicks, *U.S. Military Firearms, 1776-1956* (La Canada, CA: James E. Hicks & Sons, 1962), 79-102; Joseph W. Shields, *From Flintlock to M-1* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1954), 46-51, 69-131.

15. On Indian Scouts, see: Fairfax Downey, *The Red/Bluecoats: The Indian Scouts, U.S. Army* (Ft. Collins, CO: Old Army Press, 1973), passim; Thomas W. Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers: Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-90* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), passim.

16. John S. Gray, *Centennial Campaign: The Sioux War of 1876* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 111-23; J.W. Vaughn, *With Crook at the Rosebud* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 20-6, 151-4.

The Anglo-Irish War of 1919 1921: "Britain's Troubles Ireland's Opportunities"

John T. Broom

> How is it that the English political parties are shaken to their foundations and even shattered in almost every generation by contact with Irish affairs? . . . Whence does this mysterious power of Ireland come? It is a small, poor, sparsely populated island, lapped about by English Seapower, accessible on every side, without iron or coal. How is it that she sways our parties, and inflicts us with bitterness, and deranges our actions? How is it she has forced generation after generation to stop the whole traffic of the British Empire to debate her domestic affairs?[1]
>
> —Winston Churchill

The Anglo-Irish War of 1919–21 and the creation of the Irish Free State pose an interesting problem and question for the study of compound warfare. In this war, there was no regularly constituted major force on the Irish side, no substantial official outside power providing support to the Irish, and no apparent sanctuary for the Irish forces—conditions that often exist in struggles characterized as compound warfare. Upon closer examination of the situation in Ireland and England, however, other factors and resources appear to have existed in relation to that struggle that provided replacements to the Irish for all those mentioned resources.

Those factors, which we will shortly examine in detail, were (1) the need of the British government to provide military forces to garrison and protect a worldwide empire, (2) the ability of the Irish Republican movement to create a variety of threats to British security forces, (3) the impact of world opinion on British policy, and (4) the self-imposed restrictions on various actions by British security forces. Together these factors created circumstances that can be analyzed using the compound warfare model. These factors are also significant for analyses in the context of current democratic governments that seek to restore and ensure order in an increasingly fragmented and disordered world.

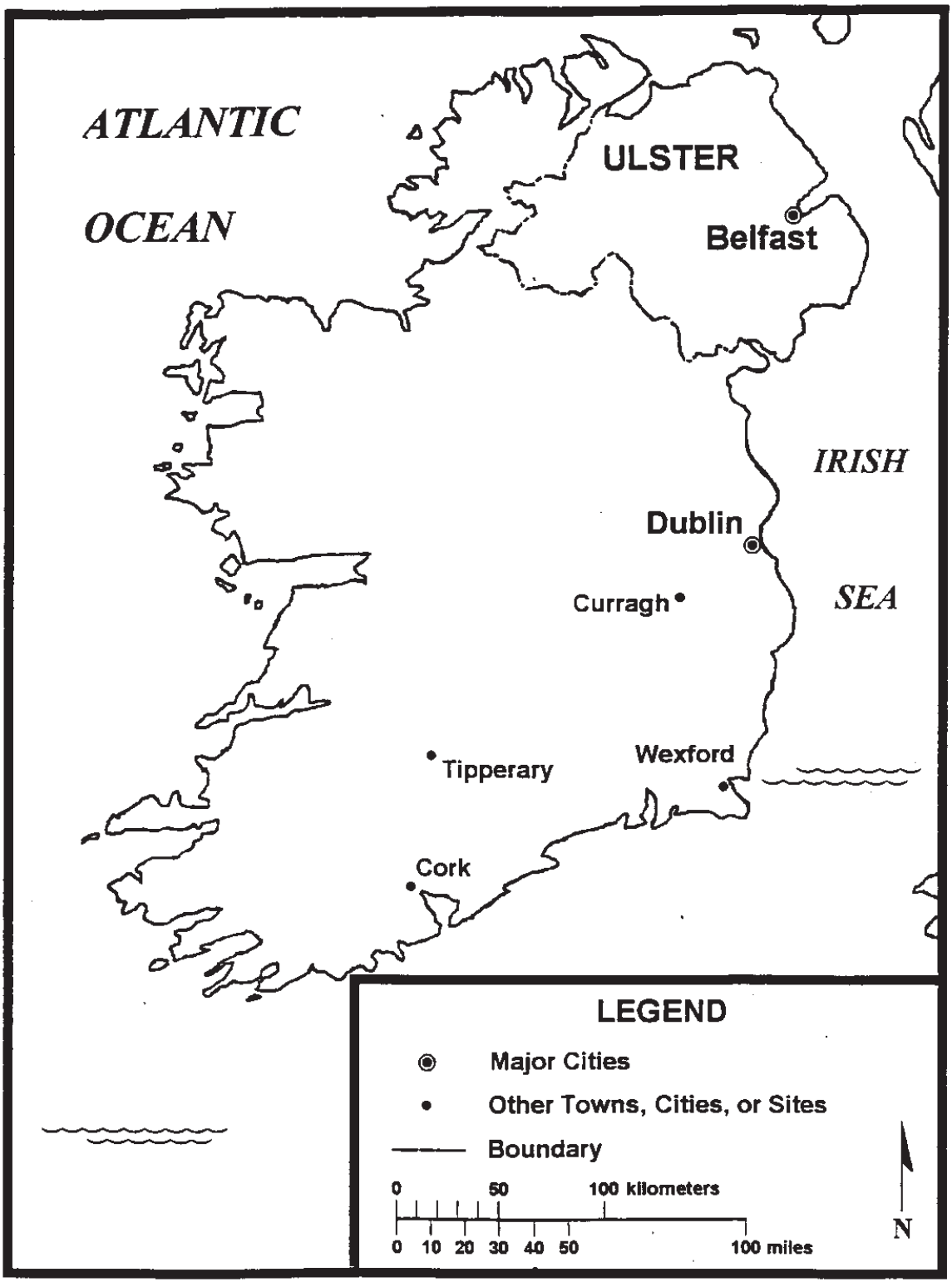
Historical Background

Prior to the Easter Rising of 1916, the last significant rising in Ireland had been the Fenian Rising in 1867. After the failure of that attempt, the vast majority of Irish nationalists attempted to work through constitutional means to secure some form of independence, typically a home rule bill from the British government. Despite this attempt, however, there was still an undercurrent of activity by those who would resort to physical force to achieve their ends.

The Irish nationalists had traditionally attempted to wage open, positional warfare against the English forces. In this vein, the modern series of uprisings began in 1798 with the United Irishmen, inspired and led by Wolfe Tone. This coincided with an attempted landing and invasion of Ireland by French forces. This rebellion was crushed rapidly by the English and posed difficulties for them only in the area around Wexford Town in County Wexford. A few years later, in 1803, Robert Emmet led another abortive rising. This was followed by the First Fenian Rising in 1848, which occurred subsequent to the massive emigration and starvation of the potato famine years. "Fenians" was the popular name for a group known officially as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). Once again, the English forces easily quelled this uprising, that had attempted to wage conventional warfare by seizing positions and attempting to hold them. The final rising of the nineteenth century was the Fenian Rising of 1867.

This rising, too, was rapidly crushed, and many of the Fenians were imprisoned. A few of the surviving Fenians, however, subsequently experimented with new forms of physical violence. The aftermath of the 1867 incident was one prison breakout, an assassination, and a rash of bombing attacks in England. These were the isolated storm clouds and harbingers of an entirely new approach to violent resistance to English control of Ireland.

A most evident foreshadowing of the new struggle was the "land war" agitations of the 1870s–90s. In this situation, the Irish peasants had been renters on land held for centuries by Anglo-Irish landlords. The potato famine of the 1840s, however, highlighted and exacerbated the problem. That famine caused widespread evictions when the tenants were unable to pay their skyrocketing rents; the eventual result was massive overseas emigrations to the United States, Australia, Canada, and the British Isles itself. By the 1870s, the Irish peasants and small landholders took the matter of rents into their own hands and began attacking landlords and their agents. In some cases, the landlords



Map 1. Ireland

or their agents were assaulted; in other cases, they were assassinated. Eventually, a tradition of relatively low-level, violent resistance was generated. The British Liberal party responded to this unrest by recognizing the legitimacy of the peasants' complaints and by passing land reform acts that allowed the peasants to purchase their rental plots with loans from the government.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the nationalist approach moderated and took the form of three separate movements that eventually came together under the leadership of Charles Stuart Parnell of the Constitutionalist Irish party. These three elements were the surviving Fenians, the land agitators, and the Constitutionalist Irish party itself. After 1880, many of the Fenians abandoned their policy of noncooperation and moderated their rhetoric and actions. Nevertheless, breakaway elements known as the "Invincibles," primarily located in the United States, initiated a series of bombing attacks in England in 1881. Meanwhile, Irish land agitators continued to wage a land war to establish fairer rents, to redistribute land in Ireland, and to stop the wave of evictions that plagued the Irish peasantry in the nineteenth century. At the same time, a series of land bills passed the British Parliament that suggested a constitutional solution to the home rule issue.

Parnell's Irish party quickly gained enough seats in the British House of Commons to periodically shift the balance of power from the Conservative party to the Liberal party. The result of this Irish party strength was a series of home rule bills that passed the House of Commons only to be held up and defeated in the House of Lords. However, Parnell became involved with a married woman, suffered personal embarrassment, and was driven from office. The resulting scandal temporarily weakened the Irish party's influence until its resurgence in the early years of the twentieth century under John Redmond.[2]

During this period of parliamentary weakness, several other Irish nationalist groups rose to prominence. Among these were the Gaelic League, which promoted the Irish language, culture, and literature; and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), which encouraged the renaissance of such Irish games as Irish football and hurling—in contrast to English soccer, rugby, and cricket. These two groups were joined by a literary group that attempted to create a new sense of Irish nationality and culture. This movement resulted in a brief literary revival in Ireland from the turn of the century to the outbreak of the First World War.[3] The IRB, which after the rise of Parnell became primarily

an Irish-American organization, began to revitalize itself in America and Ireland.[4] In 1907, Tom Clarke, an old Fenian and member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, returned to Ireland and slowly rebuilt the organization there. By the time of the resurgence of the Irish party in 1912 and with the renewed hope for a home rule bill, these organizations had merged to some extent with members of the IRB, forming an interlocking network within the Gaelic League and the GAA.[5]

Three separate religious groupings and ethnic subgroups in Ireland played crucial roles in the evolution of the Irish rebellion and settlement. Throughout most of Irish history many Irish nationalists were Protestants, a number of these prominent figures within British political and cultural circles.[6] However, the most numerous group in Ireland was the native Irish (Gaelic) Catholics. They constituted the proprietary, tenant farming, and working class in the southern counties of Ireland, as well as a prominent and relatively affluent middle and professional class in the southern counties. In the north, the Catholics were overwhelmingly the poorest of the working class, having been subjected to nearly 200 years of religious and economic persecution by the predominant Presbyterian Scots-Irish of the Ulster "plantations."

Also located predominantly in the southern counties were Anglo-Irish Anglicans, who constituted most of the aristocracy, landowner, professional, and literary classes. The Anglo-Irish had roots in Ireland dating back to the late 1100s and often thought of themselves as being simply Irish who were Anglican, rather than being a distinct ethnic subgroup. Traditionally, many of the leaders of earlier Irish rebellions had been organized and led by members of this Anglo-Irish aristocracy, many of whom felt that Ireland was a separate and distinct political and cultural unit within the British Isles.

The third major ethno-religious grouping was the previously mentioned Presbyterian Scots-Irish. Unlike the Anglo-Irish, the Scots-Irish immigrated to Ireland over a short period of time, in the late 1600s and early 1700s, and came to Ireland with the intent of completely replacing native Gaelic Catholics in the province of Ulster. While the Catholics were never completely supplanted, they did become a minority in most of the province. The Scots-Irish were a cross-section of society constituting all classes and were more apt to view themselves as distinctly different from and superior to the Gaelic Catholics. Thus, politicians and other leaders could use the fear of loss of status by these people to mobilize "Unionist" sentiment among

working and middle-class Presbyterians in opposition to a Catholic-dominated Irish home rule state.[7]

The election of a Liberal party to government in 1906—with the Irish party again having the deciding votes in the Imperial Parliament in London—set the stage for a renewed attempt by the Irish dissenters to gain home rule for Ireland. By 1911, the Irish party, now led by John Redmond, had an advantage that Parnell had lacked. Changes in the British constitution now restricted the House of Lords to only delaying a bill; they could no longer prevent its passage. Redmond, meanwhile, believed in and trusted in the British devotion to the constitution and the rule of law; over the next seven years, he was to be sadly disappointed.[8]

At the same time, the unionist sentiment in Ulster was strong, and under the leadership of Sir Edward Carson, unionists became determined to resist the home rule of a unified Ireland—by force if necessary. As the passing of a home rule bill became more likely, the unionists protested strongly. As the initial debates over home rule started in the spring of 1912, the unionists began a series of mass demonstrations in Belfast. Upwards of 100,000 unionists attended a demonstration to hear Carson argue that the Ulstermen would resist a Dublin-led home rule by any means necessary. They adopted Lord Randolph Churchill's phrase: "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right."[9]

By the fall of 1912, the Ulster Covenant had been signed by thousands of unionist supporters pledging resistance to the home rule measure, and in November 1912, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) was formed to resist the home rule bill, by military means if necessary. An indication of the level of support these radical unionists had was that Carson went to Field Marshal Frederick Sleigh Roberts of the British Army for recommendations as to who should command the UVF. Another indication of the support the unionist cause commanded was the successful smuggling of a large quantity of German arms into Ulster in the spring of 1914.[10]

It was the creation of this volunteer force to support the resistance to home rule that inspired the creation of the Irish Volunteers in the fall of 1913. On 1 November 1913, Eoin MacNeill wrote in the nationalist Gaelic League's journal that the Ulster unionists had demonstrated to the Irish nationalists that Britain, to be forced into action, needed to be prodded by the threat of physical force.[11] Just as Carson welcomed the creation of an armed force to lend credibility to his opposition to home rule, so John Redmond welcomed the formation of the Irish Volunteer

Force (IVF), which supported his own constitutional attempts to secure home rule. Founded on 11 November 1913, the Irish Volunteers were not as successful as the UVF in gaining highly placed support, although many of its original members were drawn from outside Catholic circles. The Irish Volunteers were also not as successful in gathering arms as the UVF was. The British authorities did not turn as blind an eye to the activities of the Irish Volunteers—formed ostensibly to defend the constitutional creation of Irish home rule—as they did to the unionists' activities. Meanwhile, the largest shipment of arms to both sides came from Germany; on one occasion, the IVF succeeded in landing two yacht loads of arms near Dublin, one of which was brought in by Erskine Childers, author of *Riddle of the Sands*.[12]

The acquisition of arms by either group was technically illegal, and on several occasions, there were raids on arms shipments and caches held by the UVF. But, by and large, the British authorities were more energetic in seizing arms intended for or held by the IVF. Meanwhile, the secretive Irish Republican Brotherhood quickly gained control of several seats on the Irish Volunteers executive council, effectively taking over the organization, while still remaining in the background and keeping their distrust of the British to themselves.[13]

Another Irish nationalist force was the Citizen Army. This force was formed as a reaction to police attempts to break the 1913 transport workers strike by intimidation. Created primarily by James Connolly, a Scottish-born Irish socialist and labor organizer, this small (approximately 220-man-strong) organization was primarily a defensive body created to provide security for the labor organizers. As the tension increased through 1914 and 1915, however, Connolly and Larkin, the two principal Irish socialist labor leaders, came to see the cause of Irish nationalism as bound up with their own socialist cause. Larkin immigrated to the United States to organize labor and Irish nationalist activity there. Under Connolly's leadership, the Citizen Army would join with the Irish Volunteers in the Easter Rising.[14]

Though Redmond continued to trust his British parliamentary colleagues, many Irish nationalists began to suspect the motives of the British again. This suspicion was confirmed in the spring of 1914 by the Curragh mutiny, which involved British officers in the Irish garrison based at Curragh Barracks. When the troops in Ireland were warned that actions might have to be taken against the unionists in the province of Ulster and the Ulster Volunteer Force, a strong reaction developed. Senior officers led by Sir Hubert Gough informed the chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Secretary of State for War that

they would resign before taking up arms against the unionist cause. The army, officered to a large extent by the landed gentry class—many of whom were from Anglo-Irish families—supported the would-be mutineers. One of their strongest supporters was the director of military operations for the British Army, the future chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Henry Wilson.[15]

Rather than discipline these officers, the British government backed down. This concession perhaps ignited the Easter Rebellion and the subsequent Anglo-Irish War of 1919–22. Meanwhile, soon after the Curragh mutiny, the storm clouds of the First World War began gathering over southeastern Europe. While Britain prepared for war in the summer of 1914, Parliament finally passed the Irish Home Rule Bill, with the proviso, however, that it would become effective only after the war was over—something that many thought would happen soon anyway.[16]

When the war broke out, there were 180,000 Irish Volunteers, though many of them were not active members. These were matched by 100,000 Ulster Volunteers who were supportive of the unionist side.[17] Both Redmond and Carson offered their Volunteers for British service, Redmond without consulting the Irish Volunteer executive. The experience of the two, at best quasilegal forces, was another cause of anger on the part of the Irish nationalists. The UVF was incorporated into existing Ulster-based regiments as intact units, eventually forming the 36th Ulster Division in Kitchener's "New Armies." Although Kitchener was willing to accept the Irish Volunteers into service, too, he would receive them only as individuals and resisted accepting them *en bloc*.[18]

Eoin MacNeill, founder and commander of the Irish Volunteers, opposed Redmond's offer of the Volunteers for British service. This resulted in the first split in what became the Irish Republican Army. Approximately 10 percent of the 100,000 actively enrolled Volunteers refused to follow Redmond's lead and stayed with MacNeill. Redmond's volunteers became known as the National Volunteers, while MacNeill's faction became known as the Irish Volunteers. The Irish Volunteer element, meanwhile, became even more dominated by the Irish Republican Brotherhood.[19]

As the war dragged on and political conditions in Ireland deteriorated, tensions began to rise. The core of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, centered around such figures as Padraic Pearse, became convinced that a unified Ireland with home rule would not emerge after the war. One of the principal reasons for this hardening attitude was the

introduction into the British War Cabinet of Sir Edward Carson and F. E. Smith, both diehard unionists. This action was not matched by the corresponding introduction into the cabinet of any of the prominent Irish nationalists.[20] Padriac Pearse, among others, became convinced that the Irish people needed to be roused from their slumber, that the cause of the republic needed a rising in this generation to maintain its momentum, even if the rising were unsuccessful. Thus, he and his collaborators resolved to stage a rising before the end of the war.[21]

Instrumental in this attempt would be the activities of Sir Roger Casement, a Protestant Irish nationalist and a veteran of the British Foreign Service. Highly regarded and decorated by the government for his exposé of Belgian excesses in the Congo, Casement had gradually gravitated to the Irish nationalist movement.[22] He had been in the United States in 1914, where he attempted to raise money and public support for the Irish cause. In late 1914, he left the United States and traveled to Germany. There, he undertook two separate but related tasks. The first was to form an Irish Brigade for German service from among Irish prisoners in captivity. In this, Casement was notably unsuccessful. The second task was to attempt to obtain German arms and support for a rising. While he succeeded in securing a limited amount of arms, however, the Germans gave him no practical support.[23]

The Easter Rising of April 1916

The Easter Rising was timed to coincide with a bank holiday (Easter Monday) and the arrival of Casement's German arms shipment. The plotters planned on a nationwide rising, and to cover the assembly of the Volunteers and the Citizen Army, a long holiday weekend of training activities was scheduled. Many members of the Irish Volunteers, however, did not know that a rising was intended, and the plotters were limited in their assembly of manpower to the Irish Republican Brotherhood and its close associates. Even the commander of the Irish Volunteers was only informed late in Holy Week. Subsequently, when the arms shipment was intercepted and Casement captured, Eoin MacNeill attempted to call off the rising. He succeeded in canceling the exercises in all areas except Dublin and Dublin County, where the IRB successfully called out the Irish Volunteers and held exercises, countermanding his orders.[24]

At noon on Easter Monday, the rebels assembled and occupied some key positions in the center of Dublin, principal among them being the General Post Office. The leaders, Pearse and Connolly among others,

proclaimed an Irish Republic. The onlooking crowd was unimpressed and disinterested—if not hostile—as many of their husbands and sons were currently fighting for the British, and they were dependent upon stipends paid by the British Army through the General Post office.[25] The British reaction, meanwhile, was at first disorganized and hampered by the scattering of the garrison's officers at holiday activities. The reaction, however, gathered strength and organization, and by the end of the week, the isolated Volunteer forces' positions were reduced one by one. As one position surrendered, the post commander warned his surviving troops to never allow themselves to be caught in fixed positions again. This was to be a prophetic warning.[26]

The public reaction was initially one of derision, with jeering crowds lining the streets as the defeated rebels were marched off. The British then made perhaps their most significant mistake. Beginning shortly after the apprehension of the last rebels, a series of court-martials were held, and many of the rebel leaders were hastily shot, including all those who had signed the Proclamation of the Irish Republic. James Connolly, because of the wounds he had received in the rising, had to be shot while strapped in a chair. After a trial in England that invoked an archaic Norman-era statute, Sir Roger Casement was hung for treason. In reaction to the severity of this British response, however, the tide of public opinion in Ireland began to shift swiftly. The rising had achieved its purpose: the awakening of the Irish people.[27]

Many of the remaining rebels were incarcerated in various prisons and prison camps in England, the most famous of them being Frongoch, in Wales, which came to be called "The University of Republicanism." There, Eamon De Valera, Michael Collins, Richard Mulcahy, and others began to assess the significance of the rising. During what amounted to an eight-month after-action review, the IRB selected new members and created a truly nationwide organization of men familiar with one another.[28]

The release of prisoners began in August 1916 and continued over the next year, with almost all of the prisoners released by Christmas 1917. As the former prisoners returned to Ireland, they found a much different feeling in the country. At the same time, they found legal organizations (The Irish National Aid Fund and the New Ireland Insurance Company among them) now available to them as a cover for further organizing and fund-raising activities.[29] Sinn Féin, the old political organization of Arthur Griffith dedicated to noncooperation

with the British, began to win by-elections and gradually increased its abstentionist strength among the Irish members of Parliament.[30]

The Crisis of 1919

The IVF (soon to be known widely as the Irish Republican Army) was reorganized and began clandestine training in a new style of hit-and-run warfare. Once again, senior members of the IRB were placed in key positions within the IRA. The IRB and the IRA also created full-time administrative organizations, chief among them the General Headquarters.[31] Meanwhile, Michael Collins, appointed as director of intelligence, began to examine the security and intelligence structure of the British administration in Ireland.[32]

The British then made their second most significant error of the period: they attempted to extend conscription to Ireland. The result was widespread opposition and resistance. Although theoretically Ireland had been liable to conscription under the 1916 Conscription Act, the act had not been implemented in Ireland until the manpower crisis of 1918. In response, John Redmond called for the immediate creation of home rule, but the British government ignored him, and he died a broken and bitter man in March 1918.[33]

In April, the British government announced that conscription would be extended to Ireland. An immediate and fierce reaction ensued. The decision to implement conscription united all segments of the Irish nationalist movement: the Irish party, Sinn Féin, the IRA, the IRB, and the Catholic Bishops (who up until then had been staunch opponents of the nationalist movement). All rose in joint opposition. The resistance became so fierce that a month later the British government announced that the order to extend conscription was "suspended."[34] The Irish had won this round. The effect of the opposition was felt more significantly in the fall: Sinn Féin won the parliamentary elections of December 1918, handily sweeping aside the late John Redmond's Irish party. This was the first general election held in Great Britain and Ireland since 1910 and included a much larger percentage of the population than previous elections, as the franchise had been extended to nearly all males over the age of twenty-one and women over the age of thirty. Sinn Féin won 73 of the 103 seats in the Irish delegation and was strongly supported by the new, younger male voters and by the newly enfranchised women voters. Separatism and noncooperation became the order of the day.[35]

Instead of attending Parliament, however, the Irish members of Sinn Féin created the Dáil Éireann, proclaimed that an Irish republic existed, and began immediately to create a parallel government in Ireland, complete with courts and finance.[36] The Dáil, meanwhile, sent representatives to Versailles to place the issue of Ireland before the Peace Conference, which was ostensibly designed to protect the interests of national self-determination and the rights of small nations. Meanwhile, the Dáil appealed to Britain's allies to support the cause of the infant Irish Republic. The appeal was ignored.[37] The British also began to strike back at the Dáil, arresting members of the illegal body.[38]

In the late summer and fall of 1918, simultaneous with the campaigning for the "Khaki Election" (so named for the large influence wielded by World War I veterans), the IRA began a series of raids to secure arms and ammunition from the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC). As the Dáil opened in January of 1919, the Tipperary Brigade of the IRA under Dan Breen struck a convoy carrying gelignite (gelatin dynamite) and killed two RIC men at Soloheadbeg in County Tipperary. The Anglo-Irish war was on. Breen's attack was without orders and unsanctioned by either the GHQ or the Dáil, but it was approved and reluctantly supported by them after the fact.[39] This was to be a different kind of Irish rising. Instead of attempting to defeat the British quickly and throw them out of Ireland, this war was to be characterized by guerrilla warfare, terrorist attacks, and diplomatic and propaganda campaigns.

The Troubles and Compound War

The conflict was a nontypical example of Compound Warfare. Compound Warfare theory essentially specifies four interrelated and dynamic factors: first, a guerrilla war conducted by irregular forces; second, a supporting main force element capable of conducting open conventional warfare; third, an unassailable or viable sanctuary; and fourth, active support from an outside power. In the case of the Anglo-Irish War of 1919–22, these elements are present, but in a nontypical form and amalgamation that has to be understood in its own special context.

The guerrilla war in Ireland was waged on three fronts. The first, and perhaps most important front, was the urban terrorist campaign waged by Michael Collins against the intelligence system of the "Castle." (The Castle was the headquarters of the British government in Ireland, the Royal Irish Constabulary, and the Dublin Police.) The second front was the small-scale warfare waged by part-time guerrillas attacking the

RIC and outlying British posts. And the third front was the larger scale but still guerrilla war conducted by the flying columns of the IRA.

To comprehend how the Irish struggle involved Compound Warfare, one needs to understand that in the Irish struggle, British "imperial overstretch" (i.e., the effect of imperial commitments) replaced and compensated for Compound Warfare's usual supporting main force. British worldwide military commitments—the overstretch—prevented the British from massing sufficient forces in Ireland to overwhelm the guerrilla forces. This situation was the result of Britain's requirement to garrison a far-flung empire, its provision of forces for the League of Nations newly mandated territories, and the sustaining of an occupation force for the German Rhineland. In addition, the British government faced public pressure to reduce the unprecedented size of the British Army and to control costs in the wake of a very expensive global war. By 19 May 1920, the entire British strategic reserve was thirty-seven battalions, garrisoned in Britain.[40]

Besides the worldwide British commitment and the paucity of forces available for the Irish conflict, the actions of the IRA's flying columns further exacerbated the situation for the British. The flying columns presented an opposing force just large enough so that the British military, as opposed to paramilitary forces, was required to deal with them. These flying columns were the full-time, irregular field forces of the IRA.

Although portions of Ireland were difficult and remote to traverse, the British also provided the Irish rebels with a viable sanctuary. Being a democratic state supposedly dedicated to the rule of law and to freedom of the press, the British Government was limited in its actions to those supportable and acceptable to Parliament and the British people. Extraordinary measures to seek out and destroy the rebels—especially measures that could be perceived publicly as illegal or immoral—would be difficult to justify and thus difficult to effect in the light of an open press and public opinion.

The fourth element, significant outside support, would take the form of popular opinion and governmental disapproval in the United States and among the dominions—South Africa, Canada, and especially Australia. In addition, substantial financial aid and a small, though critical, armaments supply would become available from the United States and to a lesser degree from the British dominions. Together, these would create a complex, nontypical case of Compound Warfare that is especially instructive for the soldiers of global democratic powers.

The Guerrilla Campaign, Intelligence

The first element of the guerrilla campaign was the counterintelligence campaign of Michael Collins and "The Squad," centered in Dublin but having implications across the island. Historically, the British government and its paramilitary police force, the Royal Irish Constabulary, had been able to infiltrate every Irish nationalist organization. The RIC's agents moved freely and built dossiers on all the nationalist leaders.[41] Collins, as the director of intelligence for the IRA's GHQ, sought to eliminate this threat. Although the British accused him of unbridled murder, the Irish-born targets of his campaign were carefully identified, researched, and generally warned before being targeted for elimination. British officers involved in the activities were equally well-researched and identified but were much less likely to be warned.

To combat the Castle's extensive intelligence system, built around RIC agents and paid informers, Collins built a network of his own informers. He chose common people as his agents. They were positioned to observe actions and overhear comments of value to the IRB and the Volunteers. They were the invisible people that kept the society going: mailmen, telegraph and telephone operators, railway employees, and maids in hotels and even residences. They provided timely and accurate information, each piece of which was nearly meaningless but when centralized, assessed, and placed in a pattern revealed extensive information about the Castle and its garrison's activities. As a capstone to this system, Collins also recruited, or accepted as volunteers, a select group of RIC agents, constables, and even a few British Army officers who, for a variety of reasons, had nationalist sympathies.[42] Consequently, for the first time, the nationalists had an intelligence system as pervasive and effective as the British government's network.[43]

Once Collins had built a file of potential targets, he recruited a special squad of twelve hard young men, known as the Twelve Apostles, to carry out executions. Just as Collins attempted to do thorough investigative work to identify his targets, he and the squad did extremely detailed planning to conduct the actual assassinations. The general method was to follow the target to establish his habits and patterns of action. Then, a team of two to four gunmen was selected to conduct the attack. The attack was planned to provide the greatest possibility of success and to allow for a subsequent escape. As an example of the level of planning, in one case, the squad ascertained that

the target consistently wore a bulletproof vest, so he was intentionally shot in the head.[44]

Collins ran an effective urban terrorist campaign in the heart of British-occupied Dublin, challenging the British government within yards of the Castle gates itself. Despite its focus on the intelligence apparatus of the British government in Ireland, the campaign also had the effect of challenging the legitimacy of that government. If the British could not even control the streets of Dublin, how could they control widespread Irish opposition?

Within a year of the inception of Collins' deliberate attack on the Castle's intelligence system, the traditional sources of information for the British government in Ireland dried up. Now, the British were forced to bring in serving intelligence officers to augment—in reality replace—the lost Irish agents. The largest and most effective group of these men was collectively known as the "Cairo Gang." Sir Henry Wilson had ordered this group created and organized in Cairo, Egypt.[45] The Cairo Gang relied on intimidation and force for information (much of which was unreliable for that very reason) and this generated negative comments in the press, even in England. The Gang was, however, successful in getting information that resulted in the arrest and detention of hundreds of active political and military members of the nationalist movement. However, this was not the real purpose of the group.

Once it had identified the leaders of the nationalist movement, which still operated relatively openly in Dublin, the Cairo Gang intended to conduct its own series of assassinations, effectively eliminating the leadership of the nascent Irish republic. The Gang had already conducted several nighttime attacks, killing the sitting Lord Mayor of Limerick and the former Lord Mayor as well. The murder of the Bishop of Killaloe by the same team was prevented only by the intervention of the commander of the "Auxiliaries"—a special paramilitary police force brought in to augment the RIC. In this instance, General F. P. Crozier warned the bishop to take a holiday; thus, the bishop wisely took a vacation and was out of the area when the strikes were made.[46]

The Cairo Gang was clearly operating beyond the pale, at the very edge of legality. Collins' intelligence network even uncovered a plot by the Gang to assassinate Arthur Griffith, acting president of Sinn Féin, and thus acting president of the surreptitious "Irish Republic." Griffith eventually briefed the press on the plot.[47]

By November 1920, the Gang had conducted a few selective attacks, but it had not yet really begun its offensive. What the British press and public's reaction would have been is conjectural. However, given the developing opposition to the war and the reaction to both the hunger strike death of Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork City,[48] and the execution by hanging of the teenaged Volunteer Kevin Barry for his part in an attack on British soldiers,[49] it is likely that reaction would have been counterproductive to the British cause. However, Collins was more concerned about the efficiency of the nationalist movement and his own security than about the potential propaganda value of British mistakes.

He took the information that his network had gathered to the chief of the General Headquarters staff and to key members of the Republican cabinet. General Richard Mulcahy, chief of the GHQ Staff, supported the decision to strike preemptively to eliminate the Cairo Gang. The cabinet went along with the decision as well, after reducing the hit list from thirty-five to twenty. Cathal Brugha, Minister of Defense in the Republican government, was suspicious of both Collins and his organization and questioned the accuracy of the information on the fifteen to be spared. It is a sign of the discipline of this supposed "murder gang" run by Michael Collins that the decision of the cabinet was obeyed.[50]

In a stunning attack, Collins decided to eliminate the Cairo Gang in one morning. On 21 November 1920, the Twelve Apostles augmented by members of the Dublin Brigade of the IRA struck at locations across the city. In a carefully timed series of attacks, his special squad and the reinforcing men of the Dublin Brigade executed fourteen of the twenty English agents between 9:00 A.M. and 9:20 A.M. Although the "Castle" was aware that something was afoot in Dublin and had conducted a series of raids the night before, capturing two of Collins' men in the process, the attack was a complete surprise and was over before the authorities were even aware it had begun. There were several close calls on the part of the hit teams, but in the end, the entire force escaped into the crowded streets of Dublin.[51]

The Irish would continue to maintain an edge in the intelligence field throughout the conflict, though, of course, the British would also achieve some successes in arresting members of the political and military wings of Sinn Féin. Collins and Mulcahy seemed to lead charmed lives, however, freely moving about Dublin on bicycles, blending into the population and effectively controlling the military organization of the Irish republic. Collins' intelligence and

counterintelligence campaigns operated primarily in Dublin but were matched by a campaign to force the withdrawal of the RIC from its rural stations as well.

The Guerrilla Campaign, Attacks on the Rural Outposts

In order to destroy the intelligence and security structure of the British government in rural Ireland, the Royal Irish Constabulary's hold in the countryside also had to be attacked. The field brigades of the IRA, under the overall direction of General Richard Mulcahy, staged attacks on RIC barracks across Ireland. These isolated police posts were vulnerable, and the members of the RIC, being for the most part Irish, were susceptible to intimidation and threats. The combined campaign to drive the RIC out of the countryside and to drive members of the RIC out of their organization was designed to reduce the visibility and effectiveness of the British government in Ireland.[52]

Mulcahy attempted to coordinate the attacks on police posts, both occupied and unoccupied, to demonstrate the size and reach of the IRA. In the month of January 1920, the IRA attacked thirteen RIC barracks. In the first six months of 1920, sixteen barracks were destroyed, forty-seven courthouses burned, and hundreds of unoccupied barracks put to the torch to prevent reoccupation, serving as a reminder of the retreating influence of the British administration.[53] On the night of the 4 April 1920, three hundred unoccupied police posts were burned as well as every tax office in Ireland with all their records.[54] The IRA was driving the British administration from the countryside.

The IRA generally lacked the strength to win open engagements, though it could conduct hit-and-run raids and ambushes. By focusing on destroying the power of the RIC in the countryside, the IRA could achieve a number of objectives simultaneously. In addition to reducing the visibility and authority of the British administration—its most obvious result—it also raised the visibility and authority of the republic in the minds of the population. The campaign, moreover, gave part-time members of the IRA experience in a reasonably controlled environment.[55] Furthermore, the campaign gained arms and ammunition for the IRA, supplies that were in chronically short supply.[56]

The part-time guerrillas conducting these attacks were spread across the countryside and, as with most guerrilla movements, relied on their ability to blend in with the population for security and survival. At the same time, they forced the British to disperse their forces in their

attempt to control as much of the countryside as possible and to restrict the free movement of the guerrillas. This enabled the semi-regular forces of the IRA, the flying columns, to strike at these dispersed British security forces.[57]

Although probably not really welcomed by the IRA, the campaign also forced the British to bring in the Auxiliaries to supplement the beleaguered RIC. A second force also entered the fray in Ireland as a supplement to the RIC.[58] These were the infamous "Black and Tans." Recruited from among veterans of the Great War and uniformed in a mixture of RIC and military uniforms (thus their nickname), these forces were less than ideal. Lacking the knowledge of the local population possessed by the RIC, they were less than selective in striking out at the IRA and its supporters, thus driving many people into the ranks of the opposition by their actions. Additionally, they lacked the discipline of regular military formations and frequently got out of control, increasing their reputation as an illegitimate force.[59] The reprisals and counterreprisals conducted primarily by the Auxiliaries and the Black and Tans did much to generate unfavorable publicity in Britain and overseas.[60] The British clearly were maintaining their position in Ireland through the use of naked force, not a very supportable or survivable position for a democratic government.

By late 1920, Prime Minister David Lloyd George and the cabinet would seriously consider abandoning most of Ireland, withdrawing their forces to the major cities and port areas of Ireland, and thus tacitly conceding their inability to control Ireland or the Irish as a whole.[61] Nonetheless, the security services were successful in arresting increasing numbers of Sinn Féin political figures and members of the IRA. This success combined with the realization that an "enclave" policy would be conceding defeat persuaded the British government to engage in further reprisals and attempts to effectively control all of Ireland and to crush the resistance.[62]

The Guerrilla Campaign, The Flying Columns

The success of the British in 1920 in arresting members of the political and military wings of Sinn Féin caused the IRA to create a third element in its guerrilla campaign, the semi-regular Flying Columns. These 30- to 100-man formations were full-time Irish fighters who had been identified by the British and were being hunted. The British authorities, by arresting and detaining nationalists, had created a usable manpower pool for the IRA of men who had escaped the British grasp but still could not remain at home.[63]

Mulcahy and the IRA's GHQ exerted their time, money, and expertise to equip and train these men as part of Flying Columns as close to regular military standards as possible. Although the Flying Columns never posed a threat to the bulk of the British Army in Ireland and never attained conventional campaign strength, they still posed a significant threat. The RIC, Auxiliary, and the Black and Tans were not normally strong enough to deal effectively with the Flying Columns. And the British forces, by attempting to mass and contend with the Flying Columns, abandoned their primary task of controlling the countryside. Thus, the fight against the Flying Columns had to rely on the British Army's regular units, which by late 1920 included nearly 40,000 regular British troops. This size of force was required to contain, at most, 2,000 Irishmen in the Flying Columns.[64]

Remote Theater and Regular Forces

The three-pronged guerrilla campaign conducted by the IRA comprised the first element of compound warfare found in the Anglo-Irish War. It effectively presented diverse threats to the British, never permitting its authorities the time or resources to concentrate on any one of the three efforts. The second element of compound warfare was the regular military threat that supplemented the guerrilla campaign.

In conventional compound war theory, as was noted earlier, a regular military threat is generally a recognizable physical force present in the theater of war as a "supporting main force element capable of conducting open conventional warfare" to augment rebels. In the case of the Anglo-Irish War of 1919–21, this threat was not located in Ireland at all. A substitute for it was found in the pressures placed on British resources, outside that theater of war in England's empire, that sapped British strength available in Ireland and made a "supporting main force element" unnecessary for the rebels. While Great Britain and its empire and commonwealth had just emerged victorious from a long and exhausting war, the British, before and during the First World War, had maintained the world's largest empire with an almost ridiculously small military force. However, after the war, the British public would not accept even that large a standing force.

In addition to the "Irish Troubles," the British were beset by "the nascent Indian nationalist movement of Mahatma Gandhi and the Amritsar Massacre,"[65] the need for garrisons in the newly mandated territories of the German and Turkish Empires, and a requirement for an army of occupation in the German Rhineland, all in addition to the

traditional need for British garrisons in the empire itself.[66] This combination of requirements was matched by the rapid demobilization of wartime British forces. Thus, the British tried several innovative expedients to reduce the need for troops on the ground in the Empire, one notable example being the attempt to police Iraq with air power augmented by Royal Tank Regiment armored car units.[67]

Because of all these requirements, many of the 40,000 men of the Irish garrison were desperately needed elsewhere, and any reinforcements for Ireland would seriously strain an already overstretched British Army. By the summer of 1920, over 20 percent of the British Army was concentrated in Ireland,[68] and the creation of the "Black and Tans" and the Auxiliaries, were expedients meant to relieve the need for further manpower.

Added to this problem were the danger of labor unrest in Britain and the spilling over of Bolshevism into Poland and Central Europe (including Germany), both posing omnipresent threats to British interests. Obviously, the empire was strapped for manpower and cash. The Great War had turned Britain from the world's greatest creditor nation to the world's greatest debtor nation.[69] Meanwhile, the continuing "Irish Troubles" distracted the British government and reduced the available manpower and financial options open to it in solving military problems in other areas.

While the IRA lacked the strength to face the British Army in open warfare, the British Army was so decisively engaged elsewhere that it could apply little of its main strength in Ireland. And because of these commitments elsewhere, the British lacked sufficient troops to effectively impose Ireland-wide martial law. The RIC, Black and Tans, and Auxiliaries were unable to do the job alone, and the undermanned, regular British troops in Ireland were occupied trying to contain the Flying Columns. Britain's imperial commitments prevented it from employing a main-force threat in Ireland, and thus the Irish did not need a substantial outside power to provide them with support, which fulfilled the requirements of the second element of compound war theory.

Public Opinion and Sanctuary

The third element of compound war theory is the requirement of an unassailable sanctuary for insurgents. While portions of the Irish countryside are rugged and difficult to traverse, the small size and barren nature of these areas, combined with the small size of the theater,

argue against the utility of such terrain as sanctuaries. Thus, no part of Ireland was truly secure against determined penetration by British security forces. While the guerrillas could find some measure of security in hiding among the population, Ireland is neither large enough nor its land difficult enough to travel over for it to act as a safe haven for large numbers of full-time fighters. Had Britain possessed sufficient troops, the will to conduct extensive search-and-cordon activities, and a policy of concentrating the population in controlled areas, the Irish Republican Army could have conducted little else but terrorist actions.

Counterinsurgencies, by their nature, are a cruel and nasty way of war. Insurgents, in such struggles, feel free to take all necessary actions to secure victory, justifying their actions by the fact that they are fighting for their freedom from an oppressive power. When facing a totalitarian state, these actions can be and often are matched by an equally unrestrained policy on the part of the established order, which acts largely unconstrained by either domestic or world opinion. However, an ostensibly democratic government, like Britain, was faced with limitations. Atrocities, real or imagined, by the insurgents—when matched by what are seen by the outside world as atrocities by the established order—call into question the legitimacy of that established order. This Irish situation for the British, in this regard, was further amplified by the presence of a freely elected body that represented the "oppressed" population. This was the dilemma faced by the British in Ireland between 1919–21.

The Dáil was freely elected as part of the British elections of December 1918, even if its members participated in the Imperial Parliament in London. In this case, the people of Ireland chose the separatists of Sinn Féin to represent them, knowing full well the noncooperation policy of the Sinn Féin party. Thus, one could perceive a certain popular legitimacy to the actions of the rebel forces in Ireland. In the meantime, this "shadow" government created administrative law courts to adjudicate land disputes and other civil matters, raised a national loan by subscription, maintained an active press campaign, and to a degree, oversaw economic and social conditions in Ireland.[70]

Having just emerged from a war supposedly waged for the rights of small nations, the British government faced a severe problem wherein it was impelled into a sort of split personality over the issue of rising nationalism in the Empire and Commonwealth. Making conciliatory moves to India (while participating in the Amritsar Massacre), the government was granting increasing autonomy to the dominions.[71] At the same time, it was engaged in the application of martial law, police

terrorism, and reprisals against the Irish—who were constitutionally a part of the United Kingdom. As time went on, this practice would be increasingly difficult to justify to the Irish, the British public, British critics, members of the Commonwealth, and citizens of the United States.[72]

Despite having granted "Home Rule" to Ireland in 1914, albeit delayed until the end of the war, the British were now engaged in a war to suppress the very independence that home rule had theoretically established. Only within the context of domestic interparty politics does this make sense. The Khaki Election of 1918 in Great Britain, for instance, had returned a Conservative majority to Parliament, a majority built around a hard core of unionist sentiment. Lloyd George had maintained the coalition government primarily as a means of stemming the rising tide of Labor party power, but he could maintain his power only with the active support of the Conservative majority. To do this, he had to placate unionist sentiment. In a series of pledges, beginning in 1916, he had personally promised that the British government would never coerce the unionists in Ulster to join the Irish State.[73]

Simultaneously, the nationalists in the south and in Ulster had always insisted that there be a single Ireland, and they could not understand the intransigence of the Protestant unionists. After all, most of the great Irish nationalists from Wolfe Tone in 1798 to Parnell in the 1890s had been Protestants. But they had been southern Protestants, part of an imposed elite minority class well-integrated into Irish life in general. In the north of Ireland, in Ulster, Protestant society ranged from the upper classes, to peasant farmers, to the working class—all immigrants or their descendants from England and more especially from Scotland. They had created a society in which they dominated the remaining Catholic minority—economically, politically, and socially. Thus, they were understandably reluctant to surrender their protection by Great Britain and to be subsumed into the larger Catholic society of Ireland as a whole.[74]

Determined to maintain their unique and privileged positions, supported by members of the landed gentry and business classes in Britain and especially within the army and government service, the Ulster unionists refused to consider anything that would place them under a Dublin-based home rule. The Anglo-Irish War of 1919–21 was not fought merely for Irish independence; it was also fought by the unionist side to preserve the traditional special privileges of the

Protestant North. The unionists and their Conservative party colleagues supported the uncompromising policies that Lloyd George and the cabinet adopted.[75]

British public opinion provided the final and best sanctuary for the Sinn Féiners and the IRA. A portion of British sentiment had always favored the Irish cause, and as the repressive measures of the government became widely known, this portion grew. The hunger strikes and reprisal executions of Irish nationalist prisoners drew much public attention, and the British public began to recoil from this precipice of unrestrained violence. Opposition in Britain was voiced not just by unfriendly newspapers; even newspapers that had previously been staunch supporters of Lloyd George began to take the prime minister and the government to task over the policy of police terrorism and reprisals in Ireland.[76] The protestant bishops of Britain also expressed deep concern and reservations over the Irish policies of the government.[77] Some members of the press and later historians have described this period as the "blackest" period of modern British history.[78]

In the end, however, the British government was restrained from taking the military and security steps it needed to control the insurgency—not because they *could not* but because they *would not*. Imposing martial law across Ireland—that is, deploying thousands of troops and police to control the Irish population—was impossible in the light of a free press in a democratic society. Militarily far stronger than the IRA could ever hope to be, the British government, in the end, sought to secure only what was truly vital to British interests: domestic tranquility within Britain itself, the independence of the unionists, and the semblance of imperial unity. The nature of the British government and the society it represented provided, to a degree, a special potency to the Irish that replaced the advantages of the sanctuary needed by Sinn Féin and the IRA to operate between 1919 and 1922.

Foreign Opinion and Major Power Alliances

A significant element of fortified compound war theory is the existence of military and diplomatic support from a significant foreign power. The examples of France's support to the nascent American republic during the American Revolution, Britain's support of the Spanish guerrilla campaign against Napoleon, and Western support to the Afghan rebels in recent memory are all examples of this sort of support. The outside partner, in such instances, provides arms, equipment, and expertise, as well as diplomatic pressure to assist the

insurgent forces. In the case of Ireland, obviously this direct support and intervention did not appear; instead, it was provided by other, analogous means.

Perhaps the greatest specter hanging over the British government's attempt to quell the "Irish Troubles" by force of arms was the disapproval of Britain's policies by the British dominions and the United States. While never officially recognized by any power during the period of the "troubles," the Dáil and the Irish people in general had a great reservoir of support in these countries. The Diaspora of the Irish during the great potato famine and the land struggles of the nineteenth century had sent between three to five million Irish men and women to Australia, Canada, and America. In addition, the recent experience of South Africans in the Boer War made them sympathetic to the suggestion that the British were attempting to impose their will by force of arms on a weaker power.[79]

Throughout the Irish conflict, the British were sensitive to the feelings of the dominions and the United States. Therefore, the British tried to influence public perceptions in two separate ways: the first was to portray the nationalists as intransigent and in collusion with outside opponents—specifically the Germans during the First World War and the Bolsheviks in the period 1919–21. The second way was to attempt to mollify the émigré Irish and their overseas friends with efforts to reach a compromise with the Irish. Neither was successful.

The intransigence of the Irish nationalists was difficult to portray since they were ostensibly only trying to secure that which the imperial Parliament had already granted them in 1914 with the Home Rule Act. Attempts to paint the Irish nationalists to the British public as a danger to British society and democratic society failed and also fell short within the dominions and the U.S. Meanwhile, the links with Germany became moot by 1920, and Irish connections alleged with the Soviet Union were tenuous at best.[80] Any serious examination of these charges by impartial observers easily discredited the claims. The last contacts from the Germans had been dismissed by the Irish themselves, and the Soviets were more interested in gaining recognition and economic agreements from the British than in the ephemeral advantages of recognition of the underground Irish republic. Irish attempts to secure Soviet recognition, moreover, were seen in the light of their attempts to gain general recognition from any overseas governments, including that of the United States.[81]

The attempts to reach a compromise all foundered on the unionist rock of Ulster. Beginning with the creation of the Ulster Covenant and the Ulster Volunteer Force in 1912, and continuing though the Curragh mutiny of 1914, Ulster had exercised a decisive veto on British policy through its unionist majority. The defection of the unionist vote in Parliament would have brought down the wartime coalition needed to wage the First World War. After the Easter Rising in 1916, an attempt to reach a quick compromise failed when it became apparent that Lloyd George, then minister of munitions and chief negotiator for the government, was playing a double game. He was promising the Irish nationalists that Ulster separatism was only a temporary solution while, at the same time, promising Sir Edward Carson that Britain would never concede to coercion against the unionists.

The all-Irish convention called in 1917 was equally destined to fail because the wide diversity of views (even among the moderates) prevented any sort of consensus or unanimity demanded by the Conservative and unionist elements in the British Parliament and government.[82] Although discussions were carried on for almost a year, the base positions of a united Irish state and a separate Protestant Ulster were incompatible. By May 1918 when the Convention's final report was published, the British had already ruined any hope of its success by attempting to impose conscription on Ireland, then deciding not to enforce it, and then by arresting the open and moderate members of Sinn Féin after trying to portray them as being involved in a German plot.

The Irish also made conscious and deliberate attempts to get their message out to the émigré Irish in the U.S., Australia, and Canada. The Dáil created and supported a propaganda campaign by releasing information twice a week in the *Irish Bulletin*. Eventually funded at a number of 4,000, the *Bulletin* presented the Irish side of the story to the world's press.[83] Also involved in the overseas efforts were Irish nationalist figures, including Eamon De Valera. De Valera remained in the U.S. for over a year after being spirited out of Lincoln Jail in England. He toured the country and spoke to large sympathetic crowds and many political figures. Though unsuccessful in his attempts to speak to President Woodrow Wilson, he spoke with governors, senators, congressmen, and mayors.[84]

In addition to the publicity campaign—as a part of Michael Collins' National Loan campaign—bonds were sold in the U.S. and the dominions, which resulted in the raising of several million badly needed dollars for the Irish cause.[85] Much of this money went into the

daily accounts of the shadow Dáil government, whose power and influence extended from foreign affairs to judicial courts. Some of the money, however, was diverted to the purchase of weapons for the IRA. The number of weapons was small but, on occasion, significant. In a force lacking automatic weapons, fifty .45-caliber Thompson submachine guns was a substantial augmentation.[86] Rifles, pistols, and hand grenades made up the bulk of the military supplies—weapons that, in the hands of IRA guerrillas, could be used to secure additional arms from the British themselves.

In the end, it was the decisive intervention of the dominion leaders, chief among them Prime Minister and General Jan Smuts of South Africa that forced a settlement on the British government. It was Smuts and the other dominion leaders' belief that the Anglo-Irish War was poisoning the attempt to build a new "empire" dominated by the good will of subjects, to expand home rule for many areas, and to establish a system of sovereign but associated dominions.[87] Beginning at the Versailles Conference and building to a crescendo during the Imperial Conference of May and June 1921, Smuts pressured Lloyd George to accept a negotiated end to the war. Smuts prepared the first draft of the king's conciliatory address to the newly seated Ulster Parliament on 21 June 1921.[88]

During the cabinet's deliberations over the proposed truce in June and July 1921, Smuts took an active part, sitting with the cabinet as he had during much of the First World War.[89] He constantly reminded the cabinet of the damage being done to Britain's reputation and its reservoir of good will by the harsh means it was employing to bring the Irish to heel. Ultimately, it was pressure from the public in Great Britain, the dominions, and the United States—as well as the substantial influence of the dominion's leaders, especially Jan Smuts—that brought an end to the Anglo-Irish War of 1919–21.

Conclusion

While a non-typical example of compound war theory, the Anglo-Irish War of 1919–22 does validate the components of the theory. Existing in that war were all the requisite factors for success by the insurgents. The Irish presented a complex set of challenges to the British, who were unable to bring the full power of the Empire to bear due to other commitments and the restraints to violence present in a democratic state. The Irish insurgents, meanwhile, were able to capitalize on the limitations inherent in a free and democratic state by waging a counterinsurgency campaign that created a type of sanctuary,

one that existed more in the mind of the enemy than in the advantages of geographical features. Meanwhile, the Irish were able to mobilize sufficient sympathy and practical (though limited) support abroad that approximated the effect of a supporting outside power.

Ireland's war for independence presents an interesting variation of the compound war theory that is timely and relevant. In an age of worldwide communications and a pervasive media, with conflicts often muddied by conflicting moral and ethical claims to the high ground, the Irish insurgency demonstrates how difficult it is for a democracy to wage a counterinsurgency campaign. Thus, with the Irish experience in mind, policymakers and soldiers should examine the unique circumstances of the Anglo-Irish struggle and appreciate and anticipate the traps that ensnared both sides and eventually led to a British withdrawal. Ironically, oftentimes the military actions initiated in an attempt to quell such an insurgency will provide the insurgents with components of compound war theory, in transmuted form, that will ensure the rebels success.

In the opening of this paper, a quotation by Winston Churchill comments about Ireland's impact on British affairs. Another of his remarks offers sage words that apply equally well to the United States as with Great Britain on the subject of counterinsurgency warfare in general. Churchill said: "No country in the world is less fitted for a conflict with terrorists than Great Britain, not because of weakness and cowardice, but because of our restraint and our virtues."[90]

Notes

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2. Ulick O'Connor, *Michael Collins and the Irish Troubles: The Struggle for Irish Freedom* (New York, 1996), 16-19; Alan J. Ward, *The Easter Rising*: *Revolution and Irish Nationalism* (Arlington Heights, IL: A. H. M. Publishing Co., 1980), 39-45.

3. O'Connor, 21-22, 26-28.

4. O'Connor, 51-53; Ward, 50-56; J. Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA from 1916-1979* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 7-9.

5. O'Connor, 20-21; Ward, 58-59; Frank J. Costello, "The Anglo-Irish War, 1919-1921: A Reappraisal," Ph.D. diss., Boston college, 1992, 12-17.

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7. Ward, 17-31, 82-83.

8. Costello, 11.

9. Ibid., 5-8; Ward, 81-87.

10. Costello, 6; Ward, 87-88.

11. F. X. Martin and P. Byrne, "Eoin MacNeill and the Irish Volunteers" in *The Scholar Revolutionary* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1973), 169.

12. Peter De Rosa, *Rebels: The Irish Rising of 1916* (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1992), 13-27.

13. Costello, 22-23; Maryann Gialanella Valiulis, *Portrait of a Revolutionary: General Richard Mulcahy and the Founding of the Irish Free State* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 1992), 7-9.

14. O'Connor, 54-59.

15. Stephen Mark Duffy, "No Question of Fighting: The Government, the Army, and the Currah Incident, 1914," Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M University, 1993, presents a detailed study of the entire incident.

16. Ward, 90-92; F.X. Martin, "The Origins of the Irish Rising of 1916," in *The Irish Struggle, 1916-1926*, ed., Desmond Williams (London, 1966), 15-16.

17. UVF strength from Martin, "Origins"10, IVF Strength from Tim Pat Coogan, *The IRA: A History* (Niwot, CO: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1993), 14.

18. O'Connor, 69-70; Ward, 98; F. X. Martin, "Origins," 16.

19. Coogan, *IRA*, 14; O'Connor, 71.

20. Ward, 97-98.

21. Martin, "Origins," 16; Costello, 25-26; O'Connor, 71-78.

22. Brian Inglis, *Roger Casment* (New York: Harcourt Jovanovich, 1974, 1973), 19-91, provides a detailed history of Casement's service to the British Foreign Ministry, especially his exposure of Belgian excesses in the Congo.

23. Bell, 5; Ward, 100-103.

24. Valiulis, 13; Bell, 6; O'Connor, 79-80.

25. Tim Pat Coogan, *Michael Collins: The Man Who Made Ireland* (Boulder, CO: Roberts Rinehart: Distributed by Publishers Group West, 1996), 45; Bell, 12; Ward, 14-15.

26. G. Hayes McCoy, "Military History of the Rising," in *The Making of 1916*, ed. K. Nowland (Dublin: Library of Trinity College of University of Dublin, 1969), 300.

27. Costello, 32; Bell, 13; Ward, 110-12; O'Connor, 95-96.

28. Coogan, *Collins*, 54-57; Bell, 14.

29. Costello, 34; Coogan, *Collins*, 55, 63-65.

30. Ward, 115-21; Coogan *Collins*, 73-93.

31. M. L. R. Smith, *Fighting For Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement* (London, Routledge, 1995), 33-34; Coogan, *Collins*, 72-75; Costello, 112.

32. Coogan, *Collins,* 75-77.

33. Ward, 115-21; Costello, 108; Coogan, *Collins*, 88-89.

34. Ward, 118; Costello, 110-15.

35. Ward, 120-21; Costello, 110-15.

36. Coogan, *Collins*; 104-7; Costello, 117-18.

37. Coogan, *Collins*, 107-13; George Dangerfield, *The Damnable Question* (Little Brown & Co., Boston, 1976) 309.

38. O'Connor, 136.

39. Smith, 39; Costello, 118-19.

40. Dangerfield, 317.

41. Coogan, *Collins*, 78-80; O'Connor, 137-38.

42. Dangerfield, 313.

43. Coogan, *Collins*, 78-84; Smith, 34-35; O'Connor, 138-40.

44. Coogan, *Collins*, 116-18; O'Connor, 142-44.

45. Coogan, *Collins*, 157-58; Costello, 159-62.

46. O'Connor, 177; Coogan, *Collins*, 124; Costello, 138.

47. Costello, 159.

48. Ibid., 133; Coogan, *Collins*, 155-56.

49. Coogan, *Collins,* 154-55.

50. O'Connor, 178-79.

51. Costello, 159-63; Coogan, *Collins*, 159-60.

52. Smith, 34-35; Costello, 133-35, 146-47.

53. Smith, 34; Costello, 124.

54. Dangerfield, 316.

55. Costello, 201-5; Tom Barry, *Guerrilla Days in Ireland*: *A Firsthand Account of the Black and Tan War, 1919-1921* (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1956), 7-29.

56. Smith, 34; Costello, 123-24.

57. Smith, 34; Costello, 126-27, 167-68; Coogan, *Collins*, 140.

58. Dangerfield, 316-19.

59. Coogan, *Collins*, 125-27; Costello, 130.

60. Smith, 35; Coogan, *Collins*, 143-46, 160-64, 166; Costello, 153-56.

61. Costello, 310.

62. Ibid., 312-13.

63. Costello, 152-53; Barry, 30-37.

64. Costello, 125.

65. John R. McLane, *The Political Awakening in India* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1970), 69-73.

66. Anthony Clayton, *The British Empire as a Superpower, 1919-1939* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1986), 45-247.

67. Ibid., 124-28.

68. The British Army's peacetime establishment was set at 153 infantry battalions, 16 of them southern Irish battalions that as a rule were not used in Ireland; data from various sources.

69. David Stevenson, *The First World War and International Politics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988), 254-58.

70. Smith, 34; Costello, 116-17, 137-39, 251-54.

71. Costello, 304-5; Clayton, 13-16.

72. Dangerfield, 314-15, 323-24. Dangerfield, in fact, argues throughout his work that the British government from 1916 on was looking across the Atlantic to the United States whenever considering its actions in Ireland, first for continued or increased support during the First World War and then subsequently for continued good relations. Interestingly, the Washington Naval Arms Limitations negotiations were on-going in 1920 and 1921, and reducing naval expenditures while maintaining at least parity with the United States was a vital interest to the British government.

73. Costello, 179-81, 307-8; Ward 112-14; C. L. Mowat, "The Irish Question in British Politics, 1916-1922," in Williams, 141-52.

74. Ward, 23-25.

75. Costello, 200.

76. Ibid., 175-99, 229-31.

77. Ibid., 291-92.

78. Ibid., 154-56,165-66, 175-76, 308.

79. Dangerfield, 328, discusses Smuts' characterization of the Irish situation as similar to the Boer experience.

80. Dangerfield, 283, 285-90. Dangerfield, in the most detailed chronicling of the British government's attempts to paint the Irish nationalists as a danger, makes no mention of contacts with the Soviet Union.

81. Costello, 290-300.

82. Maureen Wall, "Partition: The Ulster Question, 1916-1926," in Williams, 83-85.

83. Costello, 285-89.

84. O'Connor, 158-59; Costello 176-80, 197-98; Dangerfield, 313-15.

85. Coogan, *Collins*, 106-7; Costello, 136.

86. Valiulis, 75-76.

87. Costello, 294, and 312 (Lloyd George specifically mentioned both relations with the United States and the dominions as reasons for seeking a settlement).

88. Costello, 322-28.

89. Coogan *Collins*, 86; Costello.

90. Winston Churchill, *Churchill in Parliament: The Sayings of Winston Churchill*, ed., Dennis Bardens (London: Duckworth Publishing, 1967), 45.

Compound Warfare in the Military Thought and Practice of Mao Zedong and the Chinese People's Liberation Army's Huai Hai Campaign (November 1948—January 1949)

Gary J. Bjorge

Acknowledgment: I wish to acknowledge the assistance I received from a number of military historians at the Chinese Academy of Military Science, the Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution, and the Huai Hai Campaign Memorial Museum in Xuzhou in obtaining information about the Huai Hai campaign. That information appears in this paper without attribution. This study also contains material obtained as a result of the U.S. Army initiative in 1998 to conduct a military history exchange with the Chinese People's Liberation Army. In October of that year, it was my good fortune to be able to study the Huai Hai campaign as a member of a U.S. Army military history delegation that carried out a staff ride to the main battlefields of the campaign and the Huai Hai Campaign Memorial Museum in Xuzhou, the main geographical objective of the campaign.

The thematic glue binding the studies in this book together is that recurring pattern of warfare in which forces categorized as regular, conventional, or main units and those described as irregular or guerrilla forces are used together in pursuit of victory. The editor of this work has adopted the term "compound warfare" to denote this pattern and, in his introductory essay, he discusses the various forms that this pattern may take. One pattern that received particular attention is a theoretical construct the editor calls "fortified (strengthened) compound warfare," a situation in which a political entity not only possesses conventional and irregular forces but also enjoys the benefits of having a safe haven for its regular forces and the direct or indirect support of a major power ally. Where these four elements are present for one side in a conflict, the editor postulates, that side is virtually assured of winning.

The present study will examine the use of compound warfare by the Chinese Communists led by Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) during their

long struggle (1927 to 1949) to wrest political power from the Nationalists under Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek).[1] The discussion begins with the origins of this civil war and examines Mao Zedong's military thought and practice during the late 1920s. A summary of the events of the 1930s and 1940s is then followed by a more detailed look at the most decisive campaign of the Chinese Civil War, the Huai Hai campaign of 6 November 1948 to 10 January 1949. This campaign is interesting from the perspective of compound warfare because of the high degree to which irregular regional and local forces were integrated into what was the largest conventional campaign ever conducted by the Communist People's Liberation Army (PLA). The campaign also highlights the level of regularization and professionalism achieved by the PLA at that time. If General Douglas MacArthur had studied the accomplishments of Communist forces during the Huai Hai campaign, his views on Chinese capabilities a year later in Korea might have been strikingly different.

The Early Development of Mao Zedong's Military Thought and Practice

Mao Zedong was born in Hunan Province in 1893 and grew up in an age of turmoil and violence, an era when China was attacked by imperialist powers from without even as internal strife tore it apart from within. Fascinated by the stories of past Chinese heroes and foreigners like Peter the Great, Washington, Wellington, and Napoleon, Mao dreamed of a day when China would be strong militarily and once again a great nation. Attracted to Marxism by the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, he began working with others to promote the study of Marxism in China. In July 1921, he was present when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was established in Shanghai and, two years later, he was elected to the CCP Central Committee.

In 1923, at the urging of agents sent to China by the Soviet Union, the Communists and the Nationalist Party (KMT) agreed on a policy of collaboration in an effort to bring down warlord rule and implement a social revolution in China. Shortly afterward, in January 1924, Mao was elected an alternate member of the KMT Central Executive Committee.[2] During the next few years, Mao held a number of posts, one of the most important being director of the Peasant Movement Training Institute (founded in 1924). This school for peasant organizers gave 128 hours of military training as well as political training as part of its 380-hour course of study.[3] The fact that many of the young men who attended this school were Communist activists from Mao's home

province of Hunan is taken by some as evidence that Mao foresaw the coming rupture in CCP-KMT relations that occurred in 1927 and was preparing already a cadre of supporters to join him in the struggle.[4] In any case, when this split occurred and Mao was forced by Nationalist military pressure to seek refuge in the remote Jinggan (Chingkang) mountain area along the Hunan-Jiangxi border, many former students at the institute went there and helped him set up a base area (see Map 1.)

Several thousand former KMT soldiers led by Communist officers such as Zhu De (Chu Teh) also made their way to join Mao. These forces played an important role in defending Mao's base area and, a year later in autumn 1928, Mao saw reason for optimism about his prospects. "It is possible for an armed independent regime of workers and peasants to survive and grow," he wrote to the CCP Central Committee, "[if] the incessant splits and wars within China's comprador [tool of foreign capital] and landlord classes [continue] . . . , [and we have] the following conditions: (1) a sound mass base, (2) a sound Party organization, (3) a fairly strong Red Army, (4) terrain favourable to military operations, and (5) economic resources sufficient for sustenance."[5] Clearly, these conditions proposed by Mao show that he saw his path to victory as much more than a military problem. There were significant political, social, and economic issues that had to be resolved correctly also. Effective organizations for implementing policies and mobilizing human and materiel resources had to be created. Yet, as the following excerpt from a report he made to the CCP Congress of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area in October 1928 indicates, Mao believed that even if CCP policies were gaining widespread popular support, without a regular Red Army to defend them, his base area could not survive:

> The existence of a regular Red Army of adequate strength is a necessary condition for the existence of Red political power. If we have local Red Guards only, but no regular Red Army, then we cannot cope with the regular White forces, but only with the landlords' levies. Therefore even when the masses of workers and peasants are active, it is definitely impossible to create an independent regime, let alone an independent regime which is durable and grows daily, unless we have regular forces of adequate strength.[6]

But if from the beginning of his revolutionary struggle, Mao viewed a regular military force as an essential requirement, as this quote indicates, Mao saw that military power could come from irregular forces as well as from regular forces. Because the Communist base area

Map 1. Political map of eastern China, 1928

had only enough economic resources to support a limited number of full-time soldiers, two irregular military organizations were established. The Red Guards, the forces Mao refers to in the above quote, was organized on a county basis. The other force, called "insurrectionary detachments," was organized on a township basis. Both forces provided military capability while allowing their members to continue their regular productive work. Of these two irregular organizations, the Red Guards was better trained and equipped. Their commanders had generally completed a training course with the Red Army, and the soldiers had a number of rifles to go along with their spears, knives, and other simple weapons. Their main mission was to combat the local security forces of the warlords and the levies of the landlords by using the principles of dispersion.[7] The insurrectionary detachments were armed with spears and some shotguns. Their job was to "suppress counter-revolution, protect the township government, and assist the Red Army and Red Guards in battle when the enemy appear[ed]." [8]

The regular Red Army at this time was not large. In June 1928, when the name of regular forces present in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Areas was changed from the Worker-Peasant Revolutionary Army to the Red Army, that army consisted of slightly over 6,000 soldiers organized into four regiments.[9] Ideally, these regiments' three subordinate battalions contained four companies of riflemen, a special task company, a machine-gun company; and a trench-mortar company. A regiment ideally wielded 1,075 rifles.[10] This small force by applying the principle of concentration, taking advantage of the terrain, maneuvering rapidly, and often achieving surprise, enabled Mao to keep the red flag of revolution flying in the Jinggang Mountains during 1928. In November 1928, Mao reported to the CCP Central Committee in Shanghai that his base was impregnable: "All the strategic passes in the mountains are fortified. Our hospitals, bedding and clothing workshops, ordnance department, and regimental rear offices are all here. At the present grain is being transported to the mountains from Ningkang. Provided we have adequate supplies, the enemy can never break in."[11]

If this base were defended, Mao told the Central Committee, it would serve as a foundation upon which to develop Communist strength. Here, he believed, conditions were favorable for the protection and expansion of his military forces and the areas under Communist control:

> If the Red Army does not move away, then, building on the foundations we already have, we shall be able gradually to expand to surrounding areas and our prospects will be very bright. If we want to enlarge the Red Army, the only way is to engage the enemy in a prolonged struggle in the vicinity of the Chingkang Mountains where we have a good mass base . . . utilizing in this struggle the divergence of interests between the enemy forces of Hunan and Kiangsi Provinces, their need to defend themselves on all sides and their inability to concentrate their forces. We can gradually enlarge the Red Army by the use of correct tactics, fighting no battle unless we can win it and capture arms and men.[12]

Mao's Early Military Thought and the Compound Warfare Model

Considering the elements of the compound warfare model (that is, where both regular and irregular forces contribute to a military struggle) and the fortified (strengthened) compound warfare model (where the regular and irregular forces fight with the benefit of a safe haven for the regular forces and with the direct or indirect support of a major power ally), it can be seen that Mao's early military thought and practice are compatible with both models. From the beginning of his armed struggle against the Nationalists, he utilized the diverse capabilities of regular conventional forces and irregular elements. In addition, he saw the value of a base area and worked hard to establish a safe haven for the Red Army. Perhaps most important, he understood the relationship between his own operations and outside support. Mao did not have the support, direct or indirect, of a major power ally, but divisions among his enemies were producing the functional equivalent of such support. These divisions, by diverting warlord forces away from attempts to wipe out Mao's base area, inadvertently aided him in his struggle. In his October 1928 report to the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area CCP Congress, Mao described this inadvertent assistance as essential to Communist survival:

> The long-term survival inside a country of one or more small areas under Red political power completely encircled by a White regime is a phenomenon that has never occurred elsewhere in the world. There are special reasons for this unusual phenomenon. . . . This unusual phenomenon can occur only in conjunction with another unusual phenomenon, namely, war within the White regime. It is a feature of semi-colonial China that since the first year of the Republic (1912), the various cliques of old and new warlords have waged incessant wars against one another, supported by imperialism from abroad and

> by the comprador and landlord classes at prolonged splits and wars within the White regime provide a condition for the emergence and persistence of one or more small Red areas under the leadership of the Communist Party amidst the encirclement of the White regime.
>
> In difficult or critical times some comrades often have doubts about the survival of Red political power and become pessimistic. The reason is that they have not found the correct explanation for its emergence and survival. If only we realize that splits and wars will never cease within the White regime in China, we shall have no doubts about the emergence, survival, and daily growth of Red political power. [13]

Developments During the Period 1928-1948

One can only speculate about what might have happened had Mao's vision been the basis for CCP policy in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Instead of following Mao's recommendations to rely on the peasantry and build up Communist base areas in the countryside, the CCP leadership, adhering to orthodox Communist doctrine about the need for urban workers to play the leading role in a Communist revolution, sought to capture cities. The result was a series of blunders that ended with the destruction of the Communist-controlled area in Jiangxi by the Nationalists in 1934. The Communists then were forced to flee to a remote area in northern Shaanxi (Shensi) Province.

In October 1934, Mao and approximately 100,000 other Communists broke through the Nationalist forces encircling their Jiangxi base and began a yearlong trek covering 6,000 miles. A year later, the 25 percent who survived the battles and other hardships of this "Long March" reached northern Shaanxi. Along the way, Mao emerged as the paramount Communist leader. Once established in Shaanxi, he worked to strengthen the party's organization and to mobilize the human and materiel resources to defend his new rural base area. As he had in the Jinggang Mountains, Mao built Communist military power using the three-tiered force structure of local militia, regional forces, and the regular Red Army.

In late 1935, the military situation facing the Communists looked bleak. Chiang Kai-shek had eliminated the Communist base areas in southern China and was determined to eradicate the northern Shaanxi base area to finish off the Communists once and for all. Even the most effective use of "simple" compound warfare (i.e., the simultaneous use of regular and irregular forces) would probably not have enabled the

Communists to protect the northern Shaanxi base against the Nationalist forces that Chiang was concentrating against them.

However, at this time, Japanese aggression against China was changing the strategic situation and was about to weaken the Nationalist efforts against the Communists. During 1936, Nationalist officers and soldiers increasingly came to view the Japanese as the major threat—not their fellow Chinese. In December, when Chiang Kai-shek visited the front in an attempt to spur on the anti-Communist campaign, this sentiment reached the breaking point. Nationalist officers in Xian (Sian) mutinied and took Chiang into custody, demanding that he cease the campaign and organize a United Front with the Communists to fight Japan. After nearly two weeks of negotiations, Chiang was released and flew back to the capital in Nanjing (Nanking). Meanwhile, offensive operations against the Communists ceased. During 1937, a United Front against Japan was agreed upon. Inadvertently, "simple" compound warfare had become fortified (strengthened) compound warfare with Japan, contrary to its important policy objective of destroying the Chinese Communists, actually becoming the equivalent of a major power ally to the Communists. Japan, in other words, saved Mao.

For the next eight years, Japan continued unintentionally to aid the Communists in their struggle with the Nationalists. During this period, Japanese armies pushed Nationalist forces out of much of northern and eastern China and implemented harsh occupation policies. This provided fertile ground for Communist infiltrators to organize underground peasant resistance. The Nationalists could do little because of the agreed-upon United Front against Japan and the attacks upon their forces by the Japanese Army. As a result, the Communists spread their influence across much of northern China and greatly expanded their military forces.

By 1945, the Communist army had grown to a strength of perhaps 900,000—a nearly twenty-fold increase over what it had been a decade earlier.[14] After the Nationalist-Communist civil war resumed in earnest in 1946, these strengthened forces made it possible for the Communists to defend large base areas, which facilitated, in turn, an even greater increase in the number of Communist soldiers. Meanwhile, Nationalist troop strength, despite the addition of several hundred thousand replacements, was declining due to heavy battle casualties. In mid-1948, Nationalist troop strength stood at approximately 3,600,000, as opposed to 4,300,000 in 1946. Communist strength

during these two years had risen from 1,200,000 to 2,800,000, including 1,490,000 regular troops.[15]

Compound Warfare in 1948

Evaluating this changing balance of power between the PLA and the Nationalist Army during the summer of 1948, the Communist leadership decided to concentrate its regular forces and conduct large-scale conventional operations to destroy Nationalist armies north of the Yangtze River. While the Nationalists still possessed an overall edge in manpower and firepower, their armies were widely dispersed and not mutually supporting. Some 500,000 troops were effectively isolated in the northeast. Around 600,000 more were tied down holding a narrow corridor running from the seacoast at Tianjin (Tientsin) and through Peiping (Beijing), Zhangjiakou (Kalgan), and into Suiyuan Province. Far to the south of these forces, approximately 1,750,000 soldiers were spread out in a wide band running some 1,500 miles from the coastline in southern Shandong Province, through Henan Province, and then turning northwestward to the Mongolian border. At the same time, the Nationalists had no strategic reserves and had lost the ability to mount major offensives against the largest Communist base areas. The situation was ripe for the Communists to seize the initiative in the civil war, and they did so.

The Communist decision to carry out large-scale mobile operations with regular forces did not mean their abandonment of what we call compound warfare. Certainly, the fortified compound warfare model does not apply to what happened at this time. During the 1920s and 1930s, Communist success and even survival had depended upon other forces drawing Nationalist units away from the main battle with the Communists. Now, there was no other power distracting Nationalist attention from their effort to defeat the Communists. This did not matter because PLA strength had increased to such an extent that the Communists welcomed the concentration of Nationalist forces against them. The Communists now felt that such concentration provided opportunities to destroy large Nationalist formations and accelerate their march to final victory.

But while the fortified compound warfare model does not have relevance for describing the campaigns of late 1948 and early 1949, the ordinary or simple compound warfare model does, as will be demonstrated by the following examination of the Huai Hai campaign, the largest of the three great conventional offensives launched by the PLA during the autumn of 1948. In this campaign, regular conventional

forces—the PLA's East China Field Army (ECFA) with 360,000 soldiers and Central Plains Field Army (CPFA) with 150,000 soldiers—clearly played the predominant roles.[16] Regional forces numbering some 90,000[17] and local militia forces totaling some 400,000[18], however, also made significant contributions to the campaign. The three-tiered military organizational structure that Mao had developed in the Jinggang Mountains twenty years earlier was still present, but it had grown greatly in size, capability, and sophistication. The Huai Hai campaign was compound warfare on a grand scale.

Development of the Huai Hai Campaign Plan

The roots of the Huai Hai campaign can be traced back to 14 July 1948 when an ECFA offensive isolated the Shandong capital of Jinan. On the next day, the Communist's Central Military Commission (CMC) directed Su Yu, the acting ECFA commander, to concentrate his forces around Jinan and prepare to attack it. "If Jinan is taken in August or September," the order of 15 July read, "then in the winter or spring Xuzhou can be seized."[19] Xuzhou, the primary geographical objective of the Huai Hai campaign, thus became a major consideration in ECFA operational planning.

Xuzhou, the largest city in northern Jiangsu, had significant military value. In Chinese strategic terms, it had been from ancient times "a place that military strategists must contend for." Its position on high ground between the lakes and marshes that extend to the southeast and northwest of the city had long made it an important point for commerce moving north and south and east and west in eastern China. Construction of the Long-Hai and Jin-Pu rail lines early in the twentieth century, moreover, had further increased the economic and military value of the region.[20] Xuzhou, being the place where the two lines crossed, became an important military objective during the warlord era (1916-27). It also became a major objective of the Japanese after they invaded China in 1937. Now, the Communists saw the capture of Xuzhou as a way to link base areas in eastern and central China and make it possible for the ECFA, operating in Shandong, and the CPFA, which was operating primarily in Henan Province, to coordinate operations more closely. For the Nationalists, holding Xuzhou kept these two field armies apart and also contributed to keeping Communist forces away from the capital city, Nanjing, and the rest of the lower Yangtze River valley. For these reasons, the Nationalists had several hundred thousand troops in and around Xuzhou and were expected to mount a vigorous defense of the region.

The ECFA launched its offensive to capture Jinan on 14 September, and it quickly became apparent to Su Yu that the time required to take Jinan and the casualties that would be suffered were less than originally calculated. Su Yu had a reputation as a general who, while fighting one battle, was already looking ahead to his next. Accordingly, once he realized that the fight for Jinan was progressing well—and even before the battle was over—he initiated discussions with his staff about how to attack Xuzhou.[21]

Su Yu considered two options. One was an ECFA move to the southwest, from Jinan into eastern Henan south of the Long-Hai Railroad. Advancing there, he noted, would make it easier to coordinate operations with the CPFA, and the broad open plain would facilitate the fighting of mobile battles of annihilation.[22] He felt that after a number of these battles, it would be possible to complete the encirclement of Xuzhou by pushing east. But advancing into eastern Henan had some disadvantages too. Since the ECFA would be separating itself from its base areas and fighting in what would be newly liberated areas, supplying food for the soldiers would be difficult. Also, because the army would be placing itself between the large Nationalist forces around Xuzhou and the Nationalist armies in the central Yangtze River valley, it would be hard to concentrate the ECFA for an attack against Xuzhou.[23]

The alternative to a move into Henan was a southward thrust into northern Jiangsu Province. The Nationalist Seventh Army had vacated its positions east of the Grand Canal, along the Long-Hai Railroad, and had moved into Xuzhou to take part in an effort to relieve the siege of Jinan. Few Nationalist units, therefore, remained in this area, so it was an opportune moment for the ECFA to strike. Su wanted to seize control of the Long-Hai Railroad between the Grand Canal and Haizhou, capture Huaiyin and Huaian, and push as close to the Yangtze River as possible in the area east of the Grand Canal. If he succeeded, the base areas in Shandong would be linked with those in eastern Jiangsu, thus giving the ECFA access to more grain and manpower. Following this option would put the ECFA in a position to threaten the lower Yangtze River valley, and by moving against the Xuzhou-Jiangpu segment of the Jin-Pu Railroad from the east, his forces would isolate Xuzhou.

Su Yu selected the advance into northern Jiangsu as the preferable course of action. On 24 September, as Jinan was about to fall to the ECFA, he sent a radio message to Communist national headquarters in Xibaipo, a small village in west central Hebei Province, proposing what

he called the Huai Hai campaign. The name reflected the importance he placed on three objectives, the cities of Huaiyin, Huaian, and Haizhou. The next day, the CMC radioed Su its approval and encouraged him to move quickly: "We feel that carrying out the Huai Hai campaign is absolutely essential. At the present time you do not need much rest and reorganization. Wait until after the Huai Hai campaign is over, and then rest and reorganize. The Huai Hai campaign can begin around 10 October."[24]

The campaign did not begin on 10 October because, after Jinan fell, the Nationalist Seventh Army was ordered back to its positions east of the Grand Canal. This caused the CMC to change the focus of its campaign. In keeping with the strategy of destroying Nationalist forces north of the Yangtze River, CMC directed Su Yu to plan how to annihilate this force after receiving intelligence reports indicating that the Seventh Army would return to its former positions. This new objective, the CMC stated, meant an increase in requirements for the operation and that, in turn, necessitated a longer period of preparation. Therefore, in its message of 28 September directing Su Yu to annihilate the Seventh Army, the CMC pushed the date for starting the campaign from 10 October to 20 October.[25]

The basic plan was to attack the Seventh Army with several ECFA corps, while at the same time isolating the battlefield from Nationalist reinforcements with a large blocking force on a line east of Xuzhou. To confuse the Nationalists about ECFA intentions, diversionary attacks against Nationalist defenses to the northeast and northwest of Xuzhou were to be conducted by ECFA units. The CPFA was also brought into the operation for the first time with the mission of drawing Nationalist forces in central Henan westward, thus making it harder for them to move east toward Xuzhou to support the Nationalist armies that would be fighting the ECFA.

Due to the complexity of preparing for the Huai Hai campaign, Su Yu suggested on 12 October moving the start of the offensive to 25 October.[26] This was in large part because although the casualties in the battle for Jinan had been unexpectedly light, they had been concentrated in two corps, which were now unable to move south before the end of the month. The CMC response was to order the start of the campaign delayed until 5-10 November to be sure that all units were available and up to full strength at the start of the offensive. The CMC also wanted to be sure that winter clothing had been issued to the soldiers.[27]

While the ECFA was bivouacked around Jinan readying its move southward, west of Xuzhou, large-scale movements were taking place that would have a significant impact on the campaign. On 7 October, the Nationalists ordered their Sixteenth Army to move east from Zhengzhou to position itself close to the Second Army west of Xuzhou and join in an offensive into southwestern Shandong Province. On 31 October, the Nationalist Twelfth Army was ordered to assemble at Queshan in southern Henan and to move to Fuyang in Anhui Province by 10 November. The effect of these eastward movements by Nationalist forces was to bring the CPFA eastward as well. In the original Huai Hai campaign plan, the role of the CPFA was to tie down Nationalist forces in Henan so they would not be shifted toward the Xuzhou-Bengbu area. Once the Nationalist shift began, however, the CPFA moved eastward, too, in an attempt to keep these two armies from adding their combat power to the Nationalist forces that would be fighting the ECFA east of Xuzhou. Unintentionally, the Nationalists were turning the Huai Hai campaign into a joint ECFA-CPFA offensive.

On 31 October, Su Yu set the evening of 8 November as the time for the start of the Huai Hai campaign,[28] and on 4 November, the campaign warning order was issued.[29] All units were directed to move from their forward assembly areas to their attack positions on the evening of 6 November. Forces east and west of Xuzhou were to launch their attacks simultaneously.

During this same period in late October and early November, the Nationalists made decisions about how to deploy their forces in the Xuzhou area. Some generals suggested abandoning Xuzhou and setting up a strong defensive line to the south along the Huai River. They saw this shortening of Nationalist lines as the best way to keep the Communists out of the Yangtze River valley and away from Nanjing. Other generals argued that such a withdrawal would be a further sign of Nationalist weakness at a critical juncture in the civil war and would have negative consequences politically as well as militarily. On 4 November, Gu Zhutong, the Nationalist Army chief of staff, flew from Nanjing to Xuzhou to discuss strategy with his army commanders. At their meeting on 5 November, they agreed that Xuzhou had to be held.[30] In order to accomplish this, they decided to abandon all positions east of the Grand Canal and to concentrate their forces close to the city.[31] The intention was to create flexibility in their use of interior lines of operation against either the ECFA, the CPFA, or both. The major thrust of this new deployment plan was the decision to bring the

Seventh Army back across the Grand Canal and deploy it on the east and southeast sides of Xuzhou. Had this movement been completed before the Huai Hai campaign began, it would have been much more difficult for the Communists to isolate and annihilate the Seventh Army. However, the Seventh Army was unable to issue orders to shift positions until 6 November, and its corps movements did not begin until 0500 7 November, only one day before the ECFA was to launch its offensive.[32]

Comparison of Opposing Regular Forces at the Start of the Huai Hai Campaign

As stated earlier, the Communists utilized three types of armed units—regular conventional forces, regional forces, and local militia forces—during the Huai Hai campaign. This combined use of regular and irregular forces means that the campaign, by definition, is an example of compound warfare. Nevertheless, it may be asked how "regular" or "conventional" were the two Communist field armies that fought in this campaign. The following examination of the force structure, organization, and weapons of the Communist and Nationalist forces on the eve of the campaign seeks to answer that question. Clearly, differences in the level of training and equipment among PLA units existed. However, on the whole, the approximately 600,000 troops represented in Figure 1 were organized, supplied, equipped, trained, commanded, and controlled in a way that justifies calling them "regulars." Furthermore, the complexity, scale, and duration of operations conducted by the ECFA and CPFA against Nationalist forces during the campaign obviously place them in the conventional category.

Within the PLA of 1948, which was a light infantry army, the column (z*ongdui*) was the largest tactical unit. Columns were equivalent to corps in function and usually contained two to three divisions with 20,000 to 30,000 men. A notable exception was the CPFA's 4th Column, the largest column in the Huai Hai campaign. After the regional force, Southern Shaanxi (SS) Division, was attached to this column on the eve of the campaign, the column contained five divisions and numbered approximately 45,000 soldiers.[33]

Generally speaking, ECFA columns were larger than those in the CPFA. This was because ECFA divisions had more men than CPFA divisions. At this time, there was no standard size for a division in the PLA, but the PLA was evolving toward 10,000-men divisions. Reflecting the fact that the ECFA had advanced further along the path

of “regularization” in organization, weaponry, and style of fighting than the CPFA, ECFA divisions were closer in strength to the 10,000-men figure than were those of the CPFA. On average, ECFA divisions had over 9,000 men, while CPFA divisions numbered between 7,000 and 8,000 men.

PLA divisions were organized on a triangular basis (see Figure 2). Divisions had three regiments, the regiments three battalions, the battalions three companies, the companies three platoons, and the platoons three squads. At each of these levels, a separate unit provided additional firepower. Just as ECFA divisions had more soldiers than CPFA divisions, they also had greater firepower. ECFA divisions generally had a separate artillery battalion, while CPFA divisions usually had only a separate artillery company.

Tables 1 and 2 show the weapons in a hypothetical “average” ECFA and CPFA division at this time. With no standard table of organization and equipment (TO&E) for PLA divisions and because even within the same field army divisions varied in size and weaponry, the chance of any one division actually possessing weapons in these exact numbers is small. However, the numbers are reasonable general estimates and illustrate two important points: first, they show the “lightness” of PLA divisions; second, they show that the firepower of CPFA divisions was much weaker than that of ECFA divisions.

On average, CPFA divisions only had two 75mm pack howitzers as opposed to an average of four in an ECFA division. Also, CPFA divisions had fewer mortars and machine guns than ECFA divisions. This difference was due, in part, to their smaller size. It also reflected the fact that the “regularization” of the CPFA organization and fighting style had not advanced as far as that of the ECFA.

In the autumn of 1948, the CPFA was still trained and equipped to execute the PLA’s doctrine of attacking small towns, isolated Nationalist units, and Nationalist units that were on the move. At neither the division nor the column level did the CPFA have the artillery necessary to carry out positional warfare and to successfully assault large, well-fortified positions. A CPFA column was fortunate if it had a full artillery battalion with three companies and a total of twelve guns to supplement the artillery in its divisions. There was not a single 105mm howitzer in the entire CPFA.

The ECFA, on the other hand, had the firepower for positional warfare and the support for frontal assaults where necessary. During 1948, divisional firepower was increased across the board as large

quantities of weapons were captured from the Nationalists. In addition, four ECFA columns—the 3d, 9th, 10th, and 13th—were designated as special attack columns and given additional artillery, mortars, and heavy machine guns so they could destroy well-prepared defenses and successfully attack large cities. For the 3d Column, this meant that each

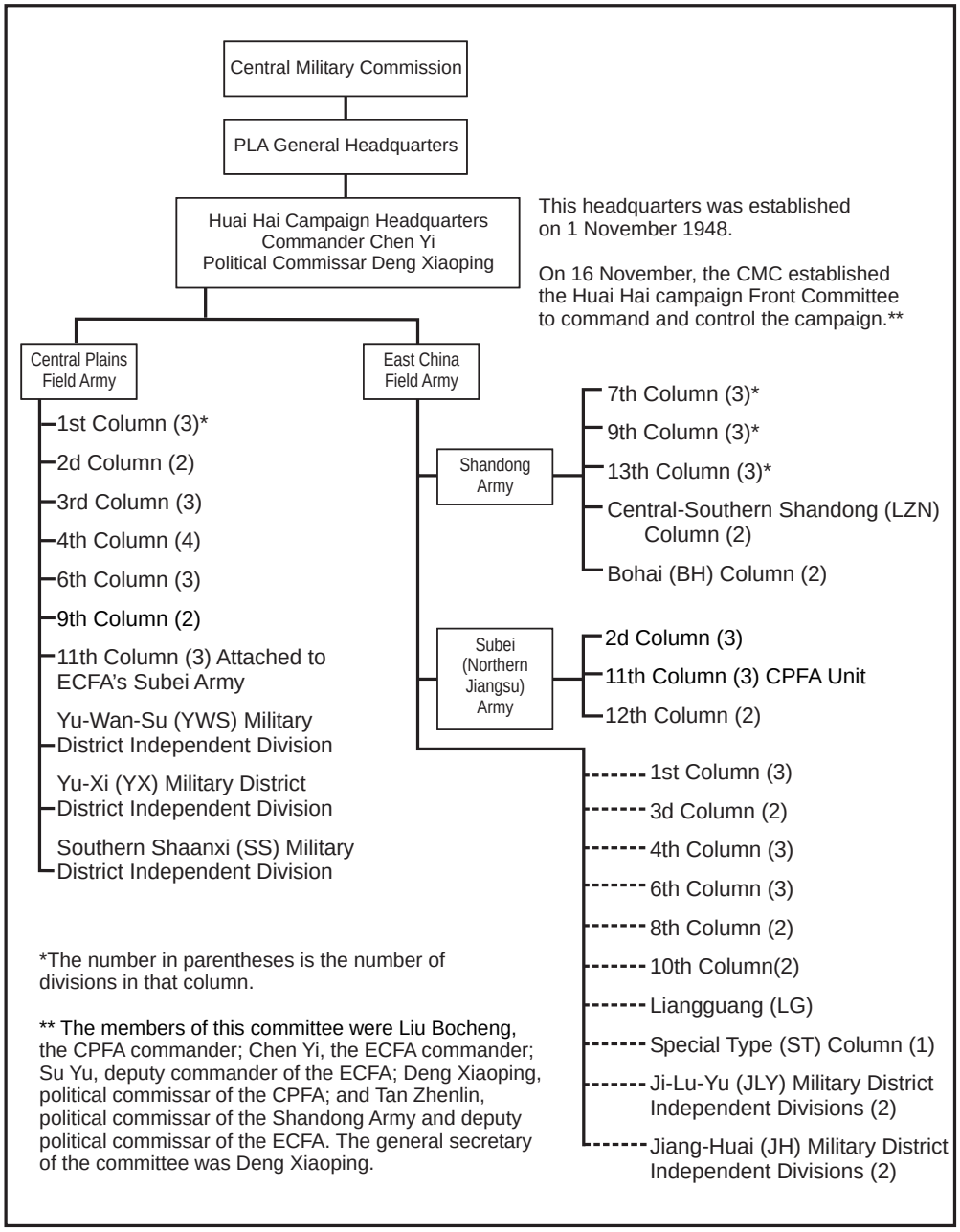


Figure 1. PLA organization for the Huai Hai campaign[34]

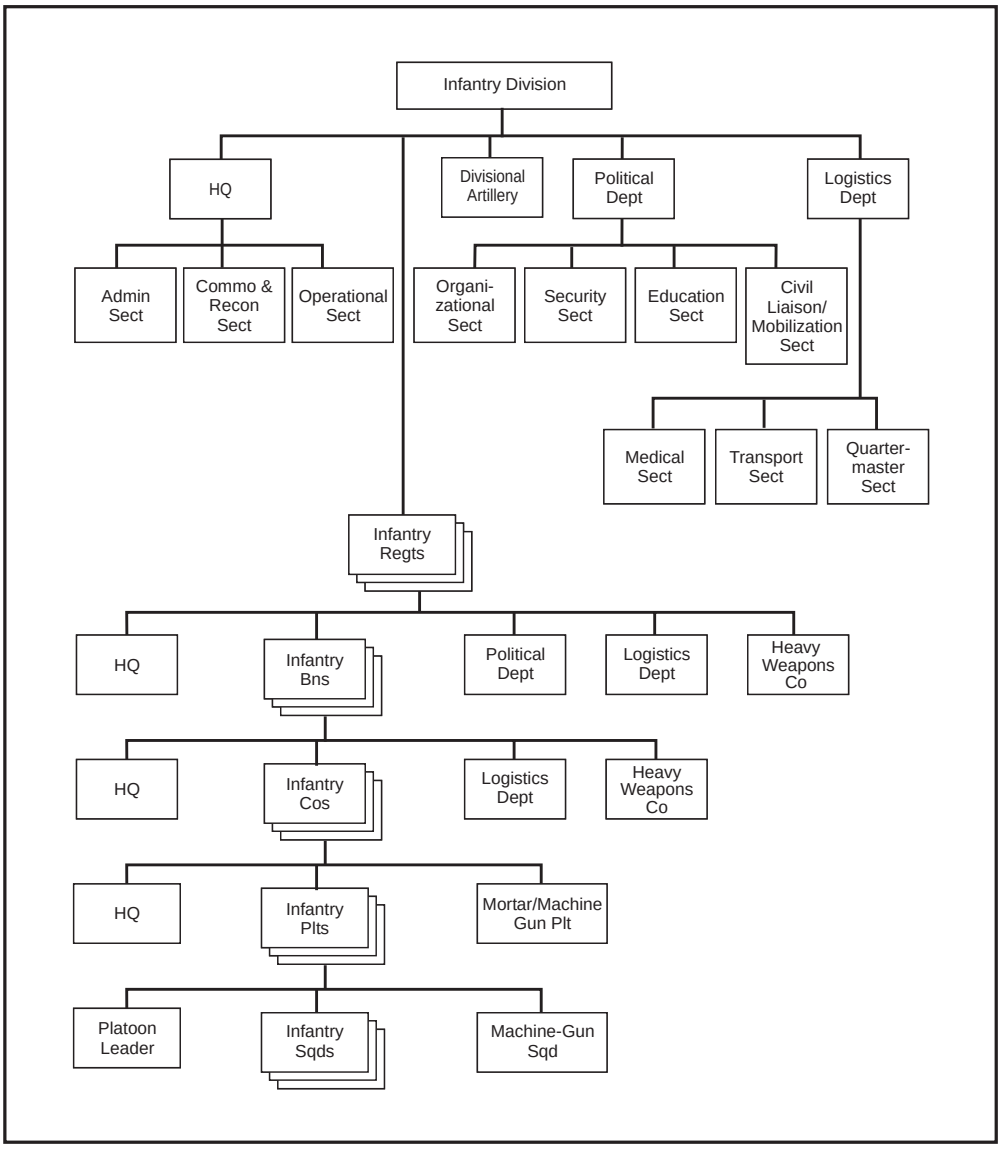


Figure 2. PLA infantry division organization, autumn 1948

of its divisions was given two 75mm pack howitzer batteries instead of the usual one, and the column also received a battery of 105mm howitzers. These special attack columns also underwent specialized training in assault tactics and artillery-infantry coordination. In 1948, furthering its ability to concentrate its firepower at decisive points on the battlefield, the ECFA acquired several batteries of 105mm howitzers. Some of these batteries were placed under the control of Shandong Army headquarters, but most were placed in the Special Type Column under direct ECFA command.

Table 1

Divisional Weapons (ECFA)	
75-mm Pack Howitzers	4-8
82-mm Mortars	20
60-mm Mortars	36
Heavy Machine Guns	36
Light Machine Guns	180
Automatic Rifles	250
Rifles	2800
Carbines	350
Pistols	130

Table 2

Divisional Weapons (CPFA)	
75-mm Pack Howitzers	2-4
82-mm Mortars	9
60-mm Mortars	12
Heavy Machine Guns	30
Light Machine Guns	150
Automatic Rifles	150
Rifles	2,000
Carbines	300
Pistols	100

By the time of the Huai Hai campaign, the Special Type Column, also known as ECFA "Artillery Headquarters," was the size of an expanded division with approximately 11,000 soldiers. It had three artillery regiments and also contained the ECFA's small light tank force and a number of engineer battalions. Each of the three artillery regiments had three battalions, and every battalion had three companies with a battery of four guns in each company. Two of the regiments had 105mm howitzers, and the third had thirty-six Japanese 75mm guns.

The Nationalist forces defending east central China against the ECFA and the CPFA numbered approximately 700,000. Their organization is presented in Figure 3. All Nationalist ground forces in the broad area around Xuzhou were under the command of the Xuzhou Bandit Suppression Headquarters (XZBSHQ). This headquarters had operational control over the Second, Seventh, Thirteenth, and Sixteenth Armies; the 1st, 3d, 4th, and 9th Pacification Areas; two independent corps; railroad protection troops headquartered in Suxian; and several independent regiments located in Xuzhou. However, this headquarters did not control the Twelfth Army that was about to begin moving from Queshan toward Xuzhou. That army was under the direct command of the Army Supreme Command in Nanjing and remained under its control for the duration of the campaign. Also, the Xuzhou Bandit Suppression Headquarters did not have control over the Chinese Air Force units stationed in Xuzhou. They were under the command of Air Force Headquarters in Nanjing.

The two types of large units under Xuzhou Bandit Suppression Headquarters reflected the two types of operations being conducted by the Nationalist Army—conventional operations against large regular Communist forces and pacification operations against irregular guerrilla forces. Although the armies and the pacification areas were roughly similar in size and organization, they had significant differences. The armies, by and large, were made up of units raised and trained by the central government. Their weapons and training were the best in the Nationalist Army. Pacification area forces, on the other hand, had generally not been formed by the central government but had been created originally by one of China's regional warlords. The 3d Pacification Area, for example, had its roots in General Feng Yuxiang's (Feng Yü-hsiang) Northwest Army. Differences in background and fighting capability between army and pacification area units sometimes led to tension between their commanders and hampered their ability to cooperate. In the eyes of officers in the armies, the pacification area forces were definitely second class.

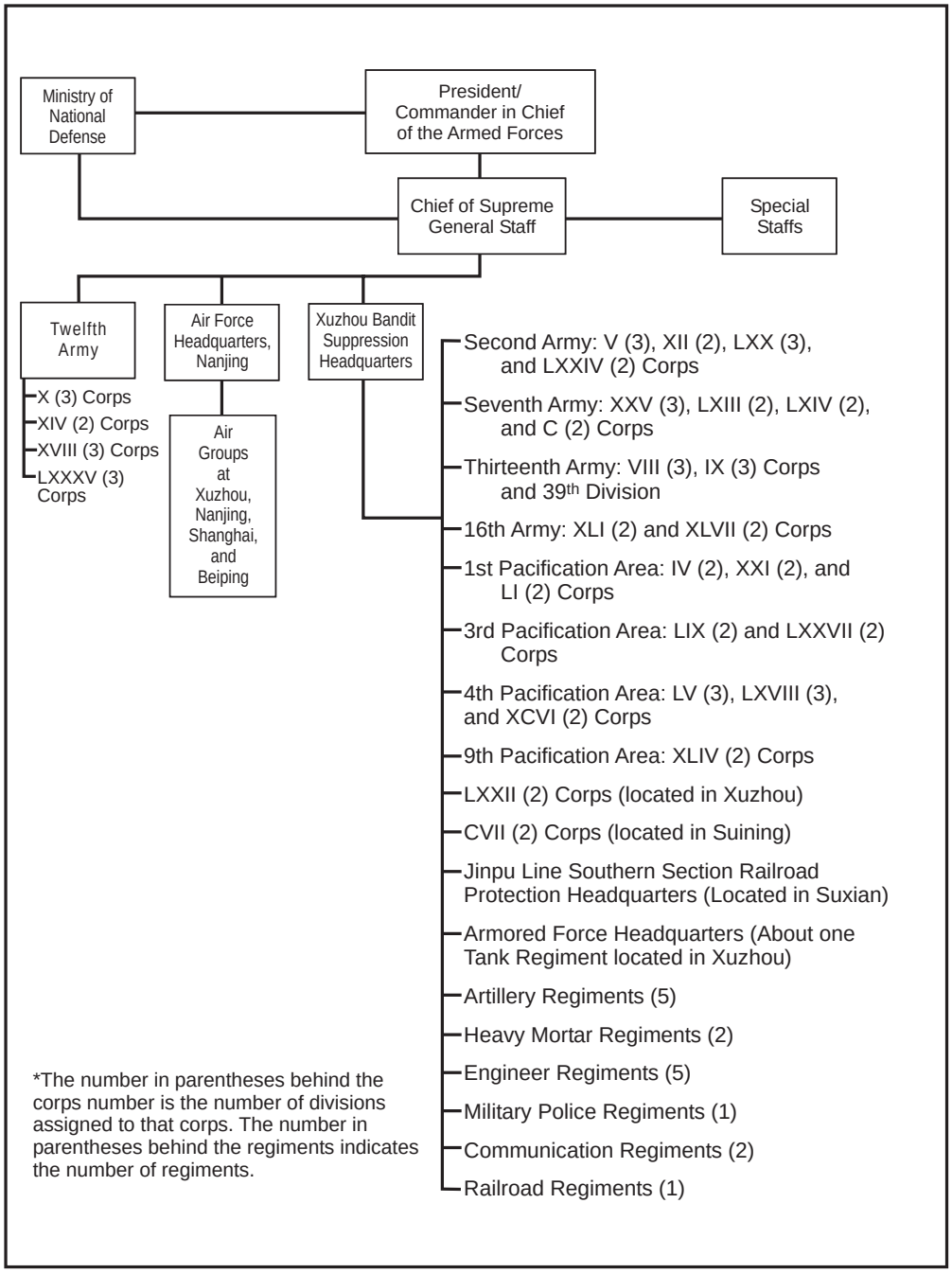


Figure 3. Nationalist military organization in the Huai Hai campaign[35]

In both the armies and the pacification areas, corps were the next lower subordinate unit. Nationalist corps were roughly equivalent in size to Communist columns, ranging in size from around 25,000 to 40,000 men, depending upon how many divisions were attached and whether or not they were at full strength. Corps also had their own assets. In the better Nationalist corps, an engineer battalion, a security battalion, a communication battalion, a 105mm howitzer battalion, and a transportation regiment were attached to corps headquarters.

Nationalist divisions, like PLA divisions, were also organized on a triangular basis. In early 1948, the size of a Nationalist division was set at 14,488. However, in August, the military conference in Nanjing authorized a change in the divisional TO&E for Nationalist infantry divisions (all divisions were infantry divisions) that reduced the standard size of divisions to 10,445. How far this reorganization had proceeded on a division by division basis by the time of the Huai Hai campaign is unclear. However, given the problems that the Nationalist army was having finding replacements for battle casualties, this change in the TO&E certainly brought the TO&E closer to the manpower situation as it existed in the field. Figure 4 shows the general

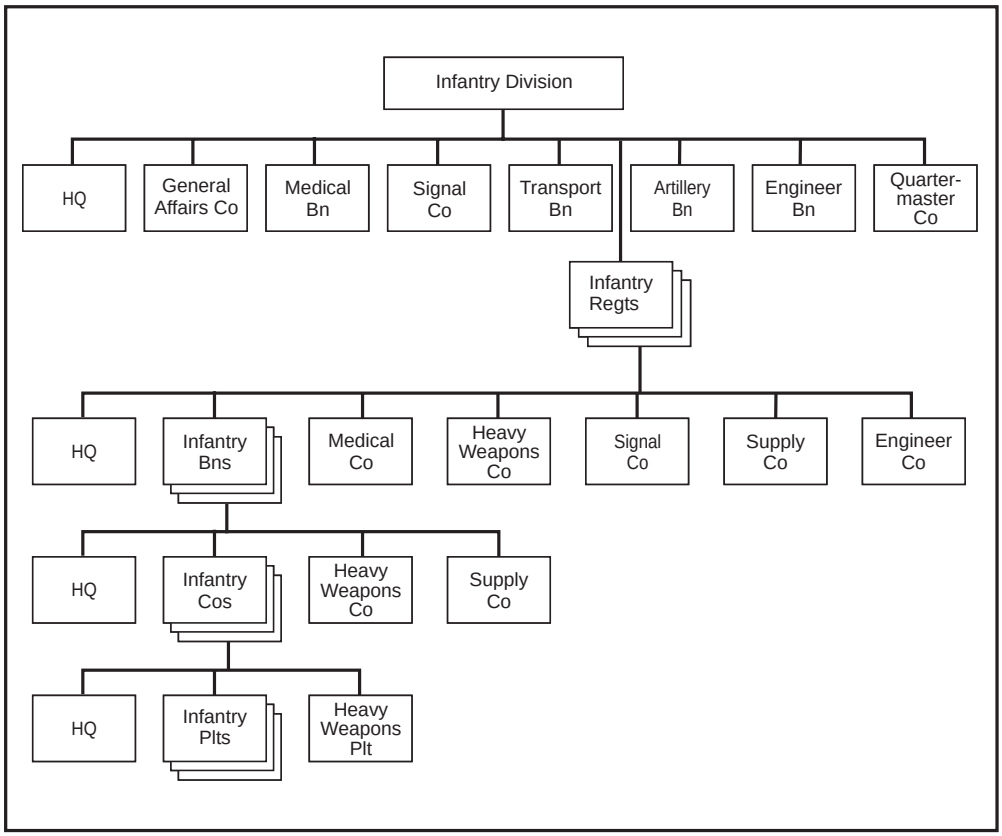


Figure 4. Nationalist infantry division organization, autumn 1948[36]

organizational structure for the smaller division adopted in August 1948.

In terms of regular soldiers, the Nationalists had a numerical advantage. They also had an advantage in firepower based on a comparison of the divisional weapons in both armies as shown in tables 1, 2, and 3. However, in both cases that these figures represent manpower and weapons available on paper, not what was present on the battlefield.

At corps level, the Nationalists had additional firepower. Usually, this was provided by an artillery battalion containing three artillery companies equipped with four 75mm pack howitzers each and a 4.2-inch mortar company with eight mortars. In the best corps—the V and XII Corps of the Second Army, the XVIII Corps of the Twelfth Army, and the VIII Corps of the Thirteenth Army—the corps artillery battalion was equipped with 105mm howitzers.

Nationalist armored forces represented another important source of firepower. Even though the tanks were light Stuart tanks that only mounted a 37mm main gun and three 30-caliber machine guns, they were formidable weapons when wielded against the lightly armed PLA infantry. The Nationalists did not have a great number of tanks, however, and used them basically in an infantry-support role. The four armored battalions in Xuzhou possibly had sixty to eighty tanks available. In addition, the three infantry divisions that were completely equipped with American weapons and truck transport (the 96th Division of the LXX Corps in the Second Army, the 118th Division of the XVIII Corps of the Twelfth Army, and the 125th Division of the XLVII Corps of the Sixteenth Army) each had a tank battalion of eighteen tanks. As the campaign developed, other Nationalist tanks, possibly numbering as many as eighty, were thrown into the fighting on the southern front north of the Huai River. But because of their small numbers, they were not able to turn the tide of battle.

The Nationalists also had an air force with significant potential combat power. At the start of the campaign, the Nationalists had the capability of putting some eighty fighters, forty bombers, and forty transports into the air around Xuzhou (see Table 4). However, as shown in Figure 3, air force units in Xuzhou were not under the control of the ground force commander. This lack of unity of command, poor communication links between aircraft and ground units, and a lack of training in close air support operations, all combined to diminish the impact of the air force. Aircraft maintenance was a serious problem, too, as the campaign progressed. Still, at the start of the campaign, the

Table 3

Nationalist Army Divisional Weapons, Autumn 1948[37]	
75-mm Pack Howitzers	18
4.2-inch Mortars	18
82-mm Mortars	27
60-mm Mortars	54
Heavy Machine Guns	54
Light Machine Guns	285
Automatic Rifles	72
Submachine guns	1,100
Rifles	2,419
Carbines	434
Pistols	219
Rifle Grenade Launchers	255
Bazookas	29

Table 4

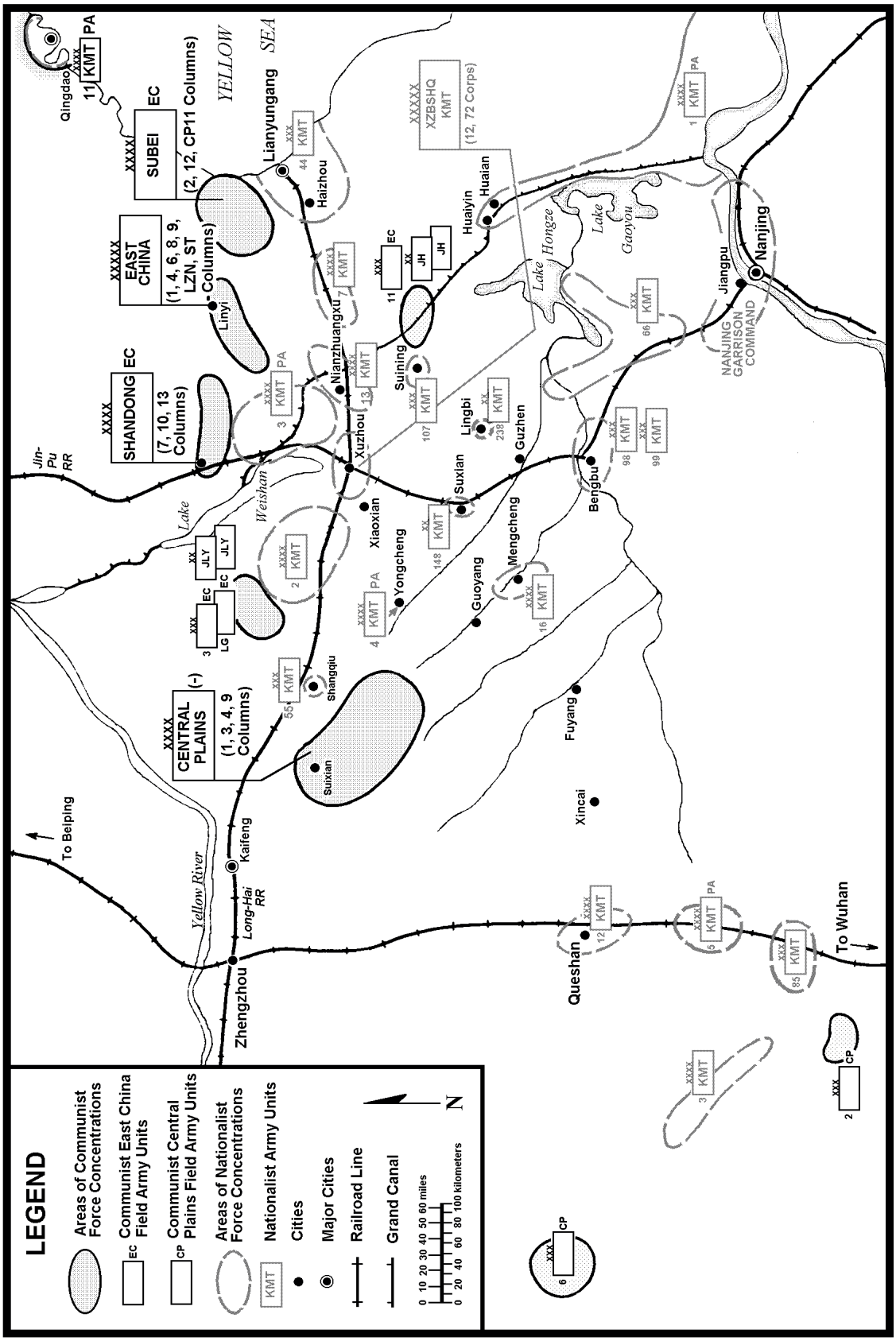
Nationalist Aircraft Available for Use During the Huai Hai Campaign[38]

Type of Aircraft	*Air Base*	*Model*	*Number*
Fighters	Xuzhou	P-51	41
Fighters	Nanjing	P-51	16
Fighters	Nanjing	P-47	16
Fighters	Unspecified	P-51 or P-47	10
Bombers	Xuzhou	B-25	5
Bombers	Xuzhou/Nanjing	FB-26	22
Bombers	Nanjing/Shanghai/Beiping	B-24	18
Reconnaissance	Nanjing	F-5	3
Reconnaissance	Nanjing	F-10	1
Transport	Nanjing	C-46	30
Transport	Nanjing	C-47	10

Nationalist air force did contribute to the Seventh Army's fight east of Xuzhou.

While the Nationalists had an advantage in the number of regular soldiers under arms and in firepower, had the benefit of operating on interior lines on the defense, and could use the Long-Hai and Jin-Pu Railroads to move troops and supplies rapidly from one point on the railroads to another, they faced major problems in several areas. Factionalism within the Army's leadership was a serious weakness; disloyalty was another. The worst example of this was in the 3d Pacification Area headquarters, where two deputy commanders who were secret members of the CCP provided intelligence to the Communists and also orchestrated the surrender of certain units when the Huai Hai campaign was launched. This opened the way for ECFA units to rush across the Grand Canal and move south quickly to cut off the Seventh Army before it could reach Xuzhou. Maneuver was also a problem. Reliance on the railroads for logistical support created areas of vulnerability that had to be defended and limited options for maneuver. Mechanized and motorized units had problems moving around the area because of the limited road network. In addition, the Nationalist Army had a weak intelligence-gathering capability, fought poorly at night, developed a defensive mind-set, and suffered from an over-centralized command structure. Too many matters had to be referred to the Supreme General Staff in Nanjing for a decision and, often times, action had to wait until Chiang Kai-shek had personally examined the issue and passed judgment. By then, the benefits of a possible course of action had generally long since disappeared. One of the best examples of a delay caused by the over-centralized command structure was the debate in late October over how to redeploy the Nationalist forces around Xuzhou. While the Nationalists did nothing, the ECFA and the CPFA used this time to move into locations that gave them a significant positional advantage (see Map 2). The bulk of Nationalist forces were positioned far forward, supported by a long, weakly defended line of communications (LOC). Their failure to keep the CPFA from moving eastward, moreover, allowed a major potential threat to this LOC to develop. On the other hand, the CPFA and ECFA had no threats to their flanks or rear that limited their freedom of maneuver. The Nationalist redeployment agreed to on 5 November was an attempt to recover the situation but, by this date, the PLA had an advantage in space and time that was virtually impossible to overcome.

Map 2 shows the deployment of Communist and Nationalist forces on 5 November 1948. Standard symbols, with some variations, have



Map 2. Positions of Communist and Nationalist forces, 5 November 1948

been used to designate the units on each side. The ECFA is represented as an army group because it contained two armies, the Shandong Army and the Subei Army. The CPFA was linked to the ECFA through an interweaving of command assignments and responsibilities but was a distinct and separate army operating in its own geographical region. Within the PLA armies, the next lower unit was the column. Since columns were equivalent to corps in size and function, on Maps 2 and 3, they are presented as such. On the right side of column boxes, there is either a CP, which stands for CPFA, or an EC, which stands for ECFA, to distinguish between EFCA and CPFA columns. The specific designation of each column appears on the left side of column boxes. Most columns had numerical designations, but some had names that reflected the area from which they had been recruited. An example is the LZN Luzhongnan (Shandong *[Lu]*) Central *[zhong]* and Southern [*nan*]) Column, which was part of the ECFA. The ECFA also had a Special Type (ST) Column (*tezhong zongdui*) that contained special artillery, armor, and engineer assets. On Maps 2 and 3, on the left side of column boxes, either the appropriate number or letter abbreviation indicates individual columns.

No attempt is made, on the maps or in the text, to track the activities of individual CPFA or ECFA divisions. However, because military district divisions are of special importance in this study as examples of regional forces supporting a large regular force in the conduct of a major conventional campaign, their activities are described in the text; their locations at various times during the campaign are indicated on Maps 2 and 3. The symbols used on Maps 2 and 3 for the military district divisions are unusual in that they have the abbreviation of their military district name inside their respective boxes. Thus, the JiLuYu Military District divisions have a JLY inside their boxes and the Jiang Huai Military District divisions have a JH inside theirs. When military district divisions appear on the map, they are not designated as belonging to either the ECFA or the CPFA. They were shifted around the campaign area during the campaign and were attached to either army as needed.

Symbols for Nationalist units have a KMT inside their boxes. KMT is the abbreviation of Kuomintang (*Kuo* [national] *min* [people] *tang* [party]) or Nationalist Party. It has been used traditionally as shorthand for the Nationalists. PA on the right side of a KMT army box indicates that this multicorps force is what was called a pacification area force. This term was explained earlier in this section. The Xuzhou Bandit Suppression Headquarters (XZBSHQ) is designated a group army

because it exercised command over several KMT armies and pacification area forces. Referring to Figure 1 (PLA organization for the Huai Hai campaign) and Figure 3 (Nationalist military organization in the Huai Hai campaign area) will help clarify the unit designations used on Maps 2 and 3.

In contrast to Nationalist weaknesses in organization and the ability to generate unity of effort, organization was a Communist strength. From the beginning of the civil war, the CCP leadership had pursued the twin goals of gaining control of the central government and implementing revolutionary changes in Chinese society. Through years of struggle, they had forged a political-military organizational structure that was able to mobilize the human and materiel resources of rural China and then employ those resources effectively on the battlefield. The large conventional forces that were ready to undertake the Huai Hai campaign were products of that organization. So, too, were the many regional and local militia units that had been formed. The existence in Communist units of long-time comrades-in-arms who worked and fought together for a common cause made the Communist organizations function well at all levels.

Figure 5 shows the Communist military and political organization from the national down to the regional level. Regional party bureaus implemented the CCP's political, economic, and social programs in the various areas under CCP control. Within these same areas was also a military region organization responsible for defending and expanding Communist-controlled territory. Unity of effort between the political and military activities was achieved by appointing people to serve concurrently in CCP regional bureau positions, military region positions, and field army command positions.

No better example of this phenomenon exists than Chen Yi. At the time of the Huai Hai campaign, Chen was commander and political commissar of the East China Military Region; commander and political commissar, ECFA; and assistant secretary, CCP East China Bureau. In addition, since May 1948—when the CCP Central Committee had decided to strengthen the CCP's military and political work in the Henan Province area—he had served as deputy commander, Central Plains Military Region; deputy commander, CPFA; and second secretary, CCP Central Plains Bureau. The multiple positions held by other members of the Central Plains Bureau at this time, as shown in Table 5, further illustrate how concurrent appointments were used to forge the links between the CCP's political and military tasks. The concurrent appointments also show that well before the Huai Hai

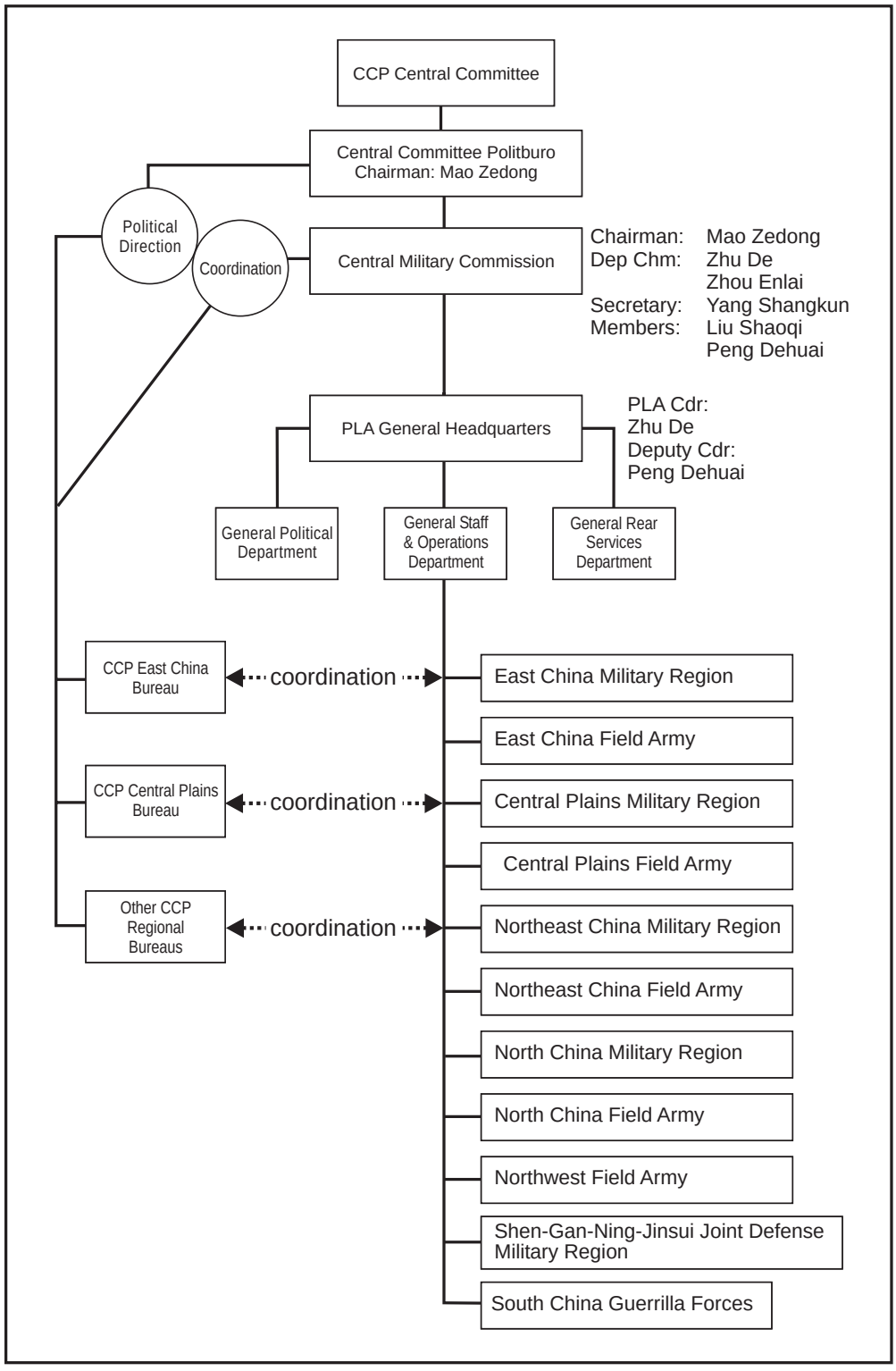


Figure 5. Communist military and political organization down to the regional level, summer-fall 1948

campaign was even conceived, the outline of an organizational structure that could bring the resources of east and central China together to support such a large campaign was already in existence.

Organization and organizational flexibility were extremely important in the Huai Hai campaign because the goals of the campaign and its scale continued to expand as it was being fought. This made the question of mobilizing more resources and transporting more supplies to the battlefields a matter of greater and greater importance with each passing day. Communist military doctrine had traditionally emphasized maneuver as a way to protect forces and to set favorable conditions for battle. In the Huai Hai campaign, maneuver was to be used to offset the Nationalist advantage in firepower, but maneuver by large numbers of soldiers required extensive logistical support. The Communist response was an unprecedented organization that mobilized resources and operated a flexible transportation system that followed the fighting forces wherever they went. Relying primarily on human and animal muscle power, the logistics system moved a tremendous amount of materiel and actually helped the ECFA and CPFA gain strategic surprise by enabling them to continue large-scale operations longer than Nationalist strategists had believed was possible. Table 6 provides data on the size of the logistical system and what it accomplished.

Table 5

Concurrent Appointments Held by Members of the CCP Central China Bureau, Summer-Fall 1948

Deng Xiaoping	First Secretary, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Political Commissar, Central Plains Military Region; Political Commissar, CPFA
Deng Zihui	Third Secretary, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Deputy Political Commissar, CPMR; Deputy Political Commissar, CPFA
Liu Bocheng	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Commander, CPMR; Commander, CPFA; Commandant and Political Commissar, Central Plains Military and Political College
Li Xiannian	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Deputy Commander, CPMR; Deputy Commander, CPFA

Song Renqiong	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Third Deputy Political Commissar, ECFA
Su Yu	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Acting Commander, ECFA; Acting Political Commissar, ECFA; Deputy Commander, ECFA; Second Political Commissar, ECFA
Chen Geng	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Commander, 4th Column, CPFA
Zhang Jichum	Member, CCP Central China Bureau; Deputy Political Commissar, CPMR; Deputy Political Commissar, CPFA
Tan Zhenlin	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; First Deputy Political Commissar, ECFA; Political Commissar, Shandong Army
Li Da	Member, CCP Central Plains Bureau; Chief of Staff, CPFA

Table 6

Selected PLA Logistics Statistics for the Entire Huai Hai Campaign[39]

Total Civilian Laborers	5,430,000
Long-Term Laborers (accompanied the army and worked for the entire campaign)	220,000
Rear Area Laborers (left their home areas to work for more than thirty days)	1,300,000
Base Area Workers (temporary laborers who worked in or near their home areas for about ten days)	3,910,000
Draft Animals	767,000
Boats	8,539
Trucks	257
Handcarts, Pushcarts, Wheelbarrows, and Two-Wheeled Carts Pulled by Draft animals	881,000
Shoulder Poles	305,000
Stretchers	206,000
Total Tonnage of Grain Transported	217,380
Mortar Rounds and Artillery Shells Transported	679,943
Rifle and Machine-Gun Rounds Transported	20,149,633

Conduct of the Campaign

As noted earlier, the Huai Hai campaign was scheduled to begin on the evening of 8 November 1948 with the objective of destroying the Seventh Army. The westward movement of the Seventh Army that began on the morning of 7 November threatened the success of this plan, but two developments facilitated the ECFA advance and still made it possible to cut off the Seventh Army before it reached the eastern edge of Xuzhou. One was the defection of a large number of 3d Pacification Area units, which was orchestrated by two deputy commanders of this force who were secret CCP members. The second was the Nationalist decision, after the Communists began their attacks, to have the Thirteenth Army leave its positions east of Xuzhou immediately and move into the city to protect it. This removed more defenders from the paths of the ECFA columns and made it possible for them to still encircle and isolate the Seventh Army. However, the encirclement occurred on the west side of the Grand Canal, not the east side, and it was much closer to Xuzhou than originally expected. This meant that Seventh Army soldiers were more hopeful about being relieved if they held out, so they fought harder. It meant, moreover, that Nationalist air support based in Xuzhou and Nanjing was more effective. Also, the four Seventh Army corps that made it to Nianzhuangxu before stopping to reorganize were able to use fortifications constructed by the Thirteenth Army to quickly establish strong defensive positions in and around the village. The combined effect of these factors was to make annihilating the Seventh Army more difficult than planned. Not until 22 November was the last resistance crushed and the Seventh Army finally eliminated.

In the meantime, a series of decisions by both the Communists and the Nationalists raised the stakes of the campaign immensely. First, on 9 November, the CMC agreed with Su Yu's 8 November recommendation to annihilate all Nationalist forces in the Xuzhou area and not to allow them to escape to the south. Consequently, the CMC ordered the main force of the CPFA to capture Suxian, thereby cutting the Xu-Beng (Xuzhou-Bengbu) Railroad and isolating Xuzhou. This operation was made easier by the Nationalist's 9 November decision to move the Sixteenth Army from west of Suxian to Xuzhou to help defend that city. Suxian was encircled on 13 November and captured in a general attack two nights later. This cut off the Second, Thirteenth, and Sixteenth Armies in Xuzhou, even as the Second and Thirteenth Armies were fighting to move east from Xuzhou to relieve the Seventh

Army at Nianzhuangxu. It also put the CPFA in a central position between several Nationalist armies.

The Nationalists' response was to order two new armies that had been formed from several corps in the Bengbu area, the Sixth and Eighth Armies, to attack northward along the Xu-Beng Railroad to recapture Suxian. The plan was to have these armies link up with the Nationalist Twelfth Army at Suxian and then reopen the rail line to Xuzhou. The Sixth and Eighth Armies, however, were unable to reach Suxian because of the resistance put up initially by CPFA units that had pushed south after capturing Suxian and later by ECFA columns that had marched southward rapidly from the Nianzhuangxu area after the Seventh Army was destroyed on 22 November. The arrival of these ECFA columns allowed the CPFA to concentrate all of its forces against the Twelfth Army. This army had received orders on 31 October to go from the Queshan area in south central Henan to the Suxian-Xuzhou area, but due to delays in receiving supplies and bringing units together, it did not begin moving eastward until 8 November, when the General Staff in Nanjing issued an urgent order for it to do so immediately. Bad weather and the actions of local Communist irregulars then combined to hamper the movement of this army so that its lead elements did not reach Mengcheng until 18 November. While waiting there for his LXXXV Corps to catch up with the rest of his army, army commander Huang Wei radioed the General Staff in Nanjing proposing that his force move toward Bengbu and push northward to Suxian in concert with the Sixth and Eighth Armies.[40] This concept was rejected by the Nanjing headquarters and, on 21 November, the Twelfth Army began moving from Mengcheng toward Suxian. On 24 November, the CPFA encircled this army and trapped it in the Shuangduiji area, some fifteen miles southwest of Suxian.

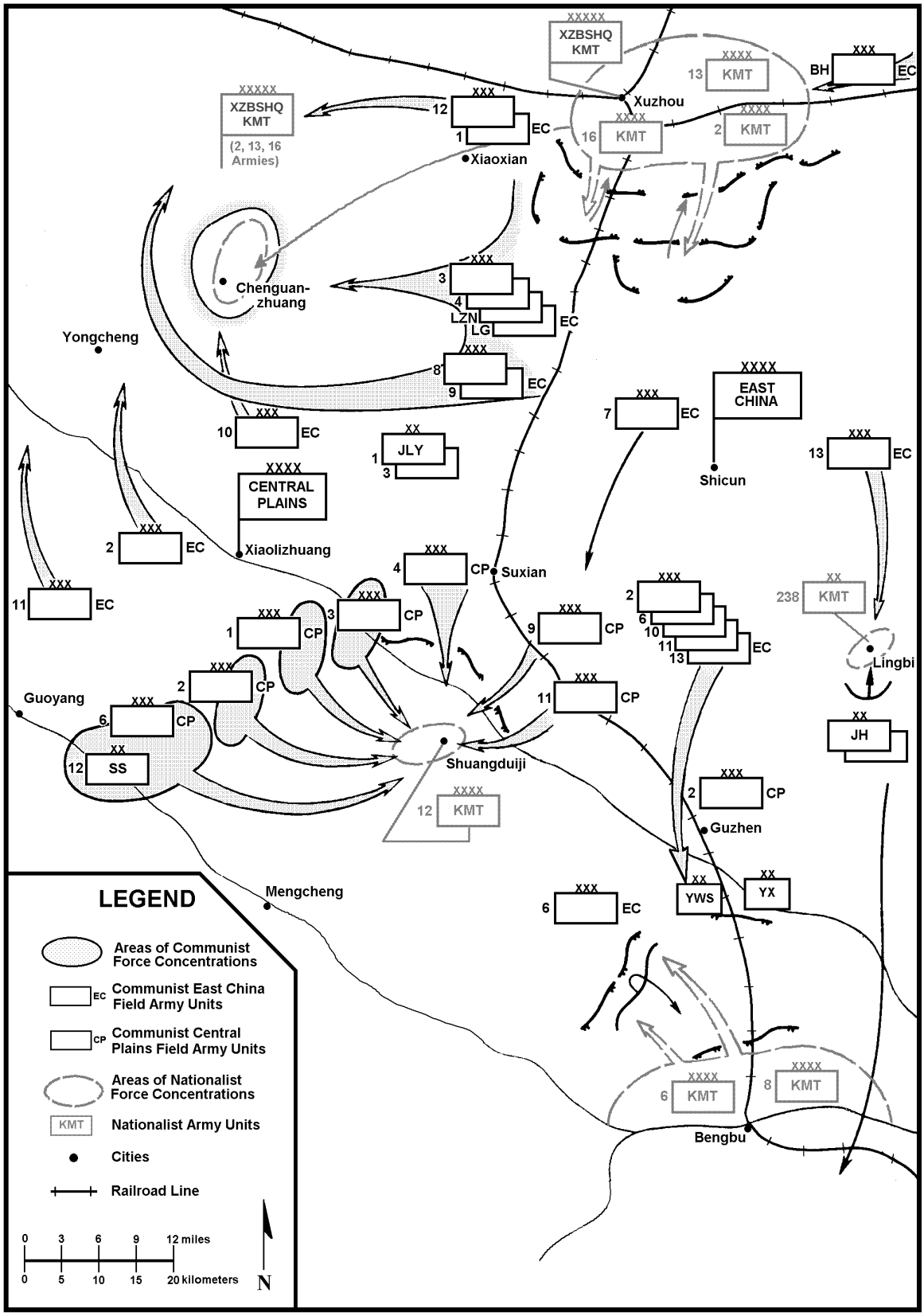
With relief efforts from the Bengbu area blocked and the Twelfth Army surrounded, the Nationalists decided on 28 November to abandon Xuzhou and to try to break out toward the southwest. The main elements of the Second, Thirteenth, and Sixteenth Armies began moving on 30 November with a goal of reaching Yongcheng by 3 December. Before reaching Yongcheng, however, this force received orders to change direction and move toward Shuangdiuji to free the Twelfth Army. As the force stopped at Chenguanzhuang to organize for this movement, it was surrounded by ECFA columns that had marched day and night from positions to the east and southeast of Suxian. By 5 December, this group army was tightly encircled with no prospect of being relieved.

On 15 December, the Twelfth Army was finally destroyed, but the three armies encircled in the Chenguanzhuang area were not attacked until 5 January. Then, a general offensive from all directions eliminated the pocket in five days of fierce fighting. On 10 January, the Huai Hai campaign was declared over. Nationalist losses were staggering. Five armies consisting of fifty-six divisions had been annihilated. Some 170,000 soldiers had been killed, 320,000 had been taken prisoner, and massive amounts of equipment and weapons had been lost. It was a defeat from which the Nationalists could not recover and a Communist victory that ensured their success in the civil war.

For a general overview of the actions taken by both sides in the area between Xuzhou and Bengbu during the Huai Hai campaign, see Map 3. Not shown is the movement of ECFA forces east of Xuzhou to encircle and destroy the Seventh Army at Nianzhuangxu. That operation, the first phase of the campaign, ended on 22 November when the Seventh Army was finally destroyed. Some of the events represented on the map occurred simultaneously, but most occurred sequentially over a period of weeks. This is why some ECFA columns are shown as participating in both the fight to block the Sixth and Eighth Armies and the encirclement of the Second, Thirteenth, and Sixteenth Armies in the Chenguanzhuang area after these armies abandoned Xuzhou. After the battle at Nianzhuangxu, ECFA columns first went to the southern front; then, on 30 November, they were ordered to move to the northwest to block the advance of the three Nationalist armies coming out of Xuzhou. The arrows pointing south from the Xuzhou pocket represent the failed Nationalist attempt of 25-28 November to push south along the Xu-Beng Railroad. For a detailed discussion of the meaning of unit designation symbols, see the introduction to Map 2.

Contributions of Regional Forces and Local Militias to the Campaign

The Huai Hai campaign was primarily won by two highly competent, professional armies, the ECFA and the CPFA, fighting in large-scale conventional battles. Yet, as already noted earlier, the Huai Hai campaign was more than a contest between regular forces. From beginning to end, the regular forces counted on the support of regional forces and local militia units. Pre-campaign planning assigned these units specific missions and, during the campaign, they contributed in many ways. In addition, as mentioned previously, over 5,000,000 civilians were mobilized to form a logistics system that sustained these forces in the field. The combined effect of this extensive mobilization



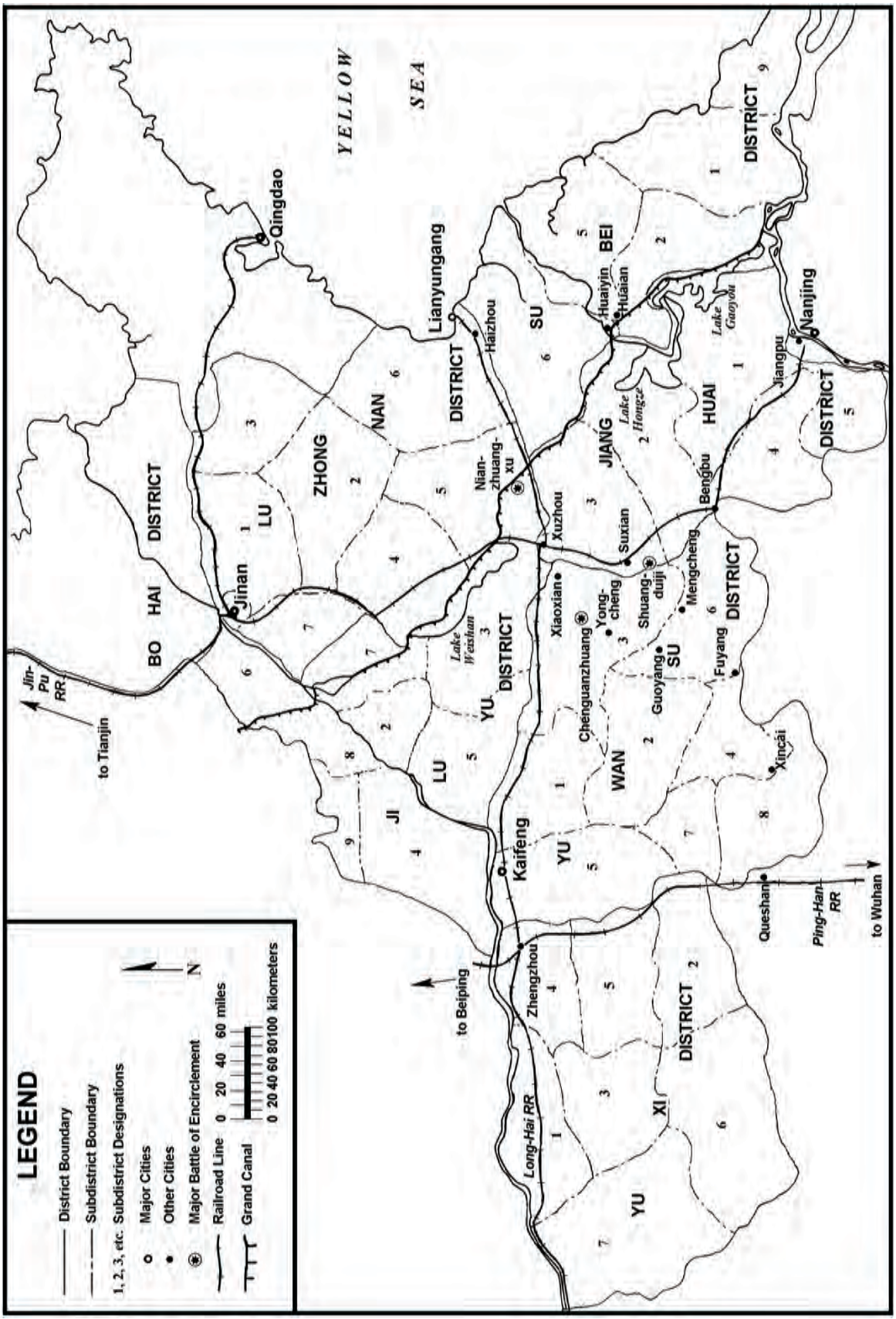
Map 3. Major movements of forces, 24 November 1948—10 January 1949

and detailed organization of resources was what might be called compound war with Chinese characteristics. In the words of Mao Zedong, it was a "real people's war."

During the Huai Hai campaign, approximately 500,000 regional and local militia soldiers assisted the main forces. The independent divisions of the military districts that are listed in Figure 1, being regional forces, were either attached to regular force columns or given special missions inside or outside their districts. The militia units were generally kept close to home in their subdistricts, although because these formations performed military-political indoctrination and training functions, many young men who served in the militia ended up in the regular force. For example, in Shandong Province alone, 168,000 young men entered military service during the campaign. Among the tasks performed by the militia were providing security for production, escorting goods and materiel, protecting communications, suppressing bandits, maintaining public security, rounding up stragglers, maintaining custody of prisoners, and cleaning up battlefields.[41] Elements of the militia were also called upon to sabotage railroads, construct fortifications, and harass enemy units.

Regional and local militia forces were organized in a hierarchical organizational structure that linked small geographical areas to increasingly larger areas. Starting from the county level, the system included military subdistricts of several counties, military districts, and then military regions that were the size of provinces or larger. Map 4 shows the military districts and subdistricts in the area where the Huai Hai campaign was fought. Their names reflect their location. The Yu (Henan)-Xi (West) District is in western Henan Province. The Yu-Wan-Su District covers parts of Yu (Henan), Wan (Anhui), and Su (Jiangsu) Provinces. The Ji-Lu-Yu District includes parts of Ji (Hebei), Lu (Shandong), and Yu (Henan) Provinces. The Lu-Zhong-Nan District is in the Zhong-Nan (central-southern) part of Lu (Shandong) Province. The Jiang-Huai District is north of the Chang Jiang River (Yangtze River) and is centered on the Huai River. The Su (Jiangsu)-Bei (North) District is in the northern part of Su (Jiangsu) Province. Except for the case of the Su-Bei District, the regional forces of these districts appear on the PLA organization table (see Figure 1). Interestingly, the force from the Lu-Zhong-Nan District is designated a corps in the Shandong Army, while the other district forces are independent divisions.

Communist peasant organizers had begun working in these districts during the War of Resistance against Japan (1937-45) and had put down



Map 4. Communist military districts and subdistricts in the area of the Huai Hai campaign

roots of support and loyalty that the Nationalists were unable to eradicate when they moved back into these areas after the Japanese surrender in 1945. Now, in 1948, former base areas against the Japanese were bases against the Nationalists. In the planning and conduct of the campaign, the PLA leadership was counting on regional forces and local militia forces from these base areas to support main force operations. This support was viewed as so important that a major factor influencing Su Yu's decision about where to attack after capturing Jinan was the presence or absence of old base areas.

Excerpts from messages sent between various headquarters prior to the start of the campaign show how regional and local forces were integrated into the offensive. Su Yu's warning order for the Huai Hai campaign, issued on 23 October, directed several military districts "to begin destroying the Long-Hai and Jin-Pu Railroads when the campaign started in order to cut off enemy communications and resupply from the rear, slow or block enemy reinforcements, and support main force operations."[42] Specific areas of responsibility for wrecking the railroad lines were assigned to the various districts. The warning order also assigned local forces the task of helping to provide security to conceal the movement of Communist troops into southern Shandong prior to the start of the campaign.[43]

The CPFA also assigned supporting tasks to military districts. For example, on 28 October, the CCP Central Plains Bureau and the Central Plains Military Region sent out a directive giving the Yu-Wan-Su Military District four tasks: (1) augment its independent division so that it had three regiments of 2,000 soldiers each; (2) establish a second independent division; (3) prepare to send 16,000 soldiers to the ECFA in early 1949; and (4) establish a garrison force to undertake the responsibility for garrisoning Kaifeng, the capital of Henan Province, which had just been occupied on 24 October.[44] This same message also directed the Yu-Xi Military District to provide a force to garrison Zhengzhou, which had been taken on 22 October, and to prepare to send at least 12,000 soldiers to the CPFA. [45]

During the campaign, the military district divisions carried out missions across the campaign area. On 8 November, the two Jiang Huai divisions along with the ECFA 11th Column pushed north along the west side of the Grand Canal to help cut off the Nationalist Seventh Army. That same day, the two Ji-Lu-Yu divisions joined the ECFA 3d and Liangguang Columns in a diversionary attack northwest of Xuzhou. By 12 November, the ECFA 3d and Liangguang Columns had shifted to the area southwest of Xuzhou and, in concert with the CPFA

4th Column, were putting pressure on the city defenses from that direction and moving to cut the railroad between Xuzhou and Suxian. This left the mission of keeping pressure on Xuzhou from the northwest completely in the hands of the two Ji-Lu-Yu Divisions. Also on 12 November, the Yu-Wan-Su and Yu-Xi Divisions thrust deep into Nationalist territory to capture Guzhen and begin destroying the Xu-Beng Railroad between Guzhen and Suxian.[46] On 15 November, the Yu-Wan-Su Division joined the CPFA 9th Column to stop the Nationalist forces that had retaken Guzhen from continuing their advance toward Suxian.

During the next several weeks, the Yu-Wan-Su and Yu-Xi Divisions stayed on the southern front and supported the successful efforts of, first, the CPFA and, later, the ECFA columns in blocking the Nationalist Sixth and Eighth Armies in their attempt to reach Suxian and the Twelfth Army. On 25 November, the two Jiang-Huai Divisions assisted the ECFA 13th Column in a successful attack against Lingbi. On 7 December, these two divisions crossed the Huai River east of Bengbu for the purpose of destroying part of the Bengbu-Jiangpu Railroad. On 11 December, they attacked in the hilly country midway between Bengbu and Jiangpu and tore up some twenty-five miles of track.[47] Meanwhile, as these events were taking place in the south, in the northern part of the campaign area, around Xuzhou, the Ji-Lu-Yu Divisions were engaged in the efforts to keep the Nationalist Second, Thirteenth, and Sixteenth Armies bottled up in Xuzhou or in the Chenguanzhuang area after they broke out of Xuzhou. Also, during this period, the Southern Shaanxi Division was fighting with the CPFA 2d Column in the battle to destroy the Nationalist Twelfth Army at Shuangduiji.

The military district divisions (regional forces) accomplished much during the campaign, but they were not equipped to conduct positional warfare and needed the assistance of regular forces to attack cities and fortified defenses. But being lighter than the lightest regular PLA divisions, they were highly mobile. This made them ideal for deep thrusts against Nationalist LOCs. Often, familiarity with the local people and local terrain in a given area facilitated their movement on such missions. Probably many officers and soldiers in the Jiang-Huai divisions were pleased with the orders to destroy the Bengbu-Jiangpu Railroad in the southern part of the Jiang-Huai Military District because it gave them a chance to return to their home area.

The contributions of local country and subdistrict militia who did not leave their home areas during the campaign were also significant. They

provided a ready force to establish security in areas abandoned by the Nationalists, which they did in Haizhou on 7 November, Lianyungang on 8 November, and Huaiyin and Huaian on 9 December. They also provided a ready force to hinder the movement of Nationalist forces throughout their area. An important contribution to the success of the Huai Hai campaign was made by local forces in the Yu-Wan-Su Military District when they used every possible means to obstruct the movement of the Nationalist Twelfth Army from Queshan to Fuyang and Suxian. On 2 November, Chen Yi and Deng Xiaoping sent a message to the CMC telling them that they had already informed Liu Bocheng and the Yu-Wan-Su Military District authorities of the need to "resolutely hinder and slow the movement of the Twelfth Army."[48] That same day, Liu Bocheng informed the CMC of how he would deploy forces to do just that. In addition to ordering the CPFA 2d and 6th Columns to attack the rear of the Twelfth Army as it moved along, Liu Bocheng also ordered "the interrelated armed units in the Yu-Wan-Su District to destroy the bridges on the roads over which Twelfth Army would be moving and to make harassing attacks against it." [49] Harassment by the Yu-Wan-Su local forces coupled with unusually wet weather succeeded in slowing the Twelfth Army enough so that on 21 November, with the Twelfth Army in Mengcheng, elements of the CPFA's 6th Column were already moving into positions between Mengcheng and Suxian. When added to the CPFA main force, which was already situated in the Suxian area, these columns made it possible to block and surround the Twelfth Army. The efforts of the Yu-Wan-Su local forces had given the PLA time to create the conditions for phase two of the Huai Hai campaign—destruction of the Twelfth Army in the Shuangduiji area.

The Yu-Wan-Su Military District also made important contributions to the third phase of the campaign—the destruction of the Nationalist Second, Thirteenth, and Sixteenth Armies—after they broke out from Xuzhou on 30 November. In one case, the 3d Subdistrict of the Yu-Wan-Su District had an intelligence network in Xuzhou that learned of the plan to abandon Xuzhou on 30 November.[50] After this information was reported to the Huai Hai campaign's Front Committee Headquarters, the Front Committee directed the subdistrict to immediately prepare to protect the materiel in a large PLA supply depot at Yongcheng. In the words of Deng Xiaoping, "The central military stores depot at Yongcheng is very important. You must organize a good defense and absolutely not allow the enemy to capture it. You need to hold at Yongcheng for 2-3 days until [help] arrives."[51] Support for the

3d Subdistrict came quickly from the military district, when its commander led four regiments to the area. Also, several ECFA columns rushed to the area to block the Nationalist forces. But it was the 3d Subdistrict's local forces, in place on the ground, that made the first contributions to halting the enemy. They not only quickly built three defense lines but also moved the stores from the Yongcheng depot to other locations.[52] As a result, not one item of supply was lost to the Nationalists.

Another mission performed by the Yu-Wan-Su Military District during the chaotic days of early December was the apprehension of Nationalist stragglers and Nationalist officers and men trying to make their way south to Nationalist lines. The district issued orders to every local militia unit and even civilians to be on the lookout. Militia checkpoints were set up and patrols conducted. As a result, the 3d Subdistrict took more than 200 Nationalist soldiers prisoner, including the commander of the XLI Corps. For apprehending this officer, who at the time was walking along disguised as a peasant, a militia platoon commander named Wang Kejin was given a cow to till his fields.[53] Similar stories abound. Two militiamen fooled a tank crew into surrendering their tank. A peasant captured three Nationalist soldiers by threatening them with the hoe he was using to gather manure from the road. As they passed, he raised his hoe and shouted loudly, "Turn over your weapons and I won't kill you!" [54] Immediately, they knelt down on the ground, gave him their guns, and became his prisoners. This hoe, appropriately, is now in the Huai Hai Campaign Memorial Museum in Xuzhou.

The Huai Hai Campaign as Compound Warfare; The Huai Hai Campaign as People's War

Clearly, the Huai Hai campaign fits the definition of compound warfare used in this study. The three-tiered structure for developing and employing military power that Mao Zedong began using in the Jinggang Mountains some twenty years earlier was used very successfully. Regular, regional, and local militia forces, and even civilians, contributed to the great victory that was achieved. At the same time, Communist base areas made it possible to conduct and sustain the campaign.

But the same characteristics of the campaign that make it an example of compound warfare also make it an example of what the Chinese Communists call "people's war." "People's war" may, in fact, be a better analytical concept to use when examining Mao's military

thought and the conduct of the Huai Hai campaign than is the compound warfare model. This is because the concept of people's war addresses a key factor that is not part of the compound warfare model, namely, the depth of popular support for a cause and the level to which that popular support is developed and organized to fight a war on behalf of that cause. Compound warfare is impossible without a certain amount of popular support. This support is the source of the human and materiel resources with which such a war is fought. The compound warfare model simply assumes the existence of sufficient popular support to carry on a war. It does not deal with such matters as a war's justness or how those leading a war motivate and mobilize a population to fight and sacrifice for victory. When looked at from the perspective of people's war, the relevance of these important issues comes into sharper focus and the conduct and outcome of a war become more understandable.

The very term people's war implies that a war is a just struggle that will engender popular support. The *Great Chinese Encyclopedia* definition of this term says that a "people's war is a war fought by oppressed classes and nations who are striving for their own liberation," and that "all just wars which advance historical developments and promote social progress and have the support of the broad masses can be called people's wars." [55] In the words of a former professor at China's National Defense University, Wang Sanxin, "Its just character establishes the political foundation for carrying out people's war." [56]

But as Wang goes on to explain in his book, *Research into the Military Thought of Mao Zedong*, there are differing degrees of justness in people's wars, and this difference affects the level of popular support for a war effort. Wang established a spectrum of people's wars that extends from modest popular involvement in what he calls "ordinary" people's wars at one end of the spectrum or continuum to the virtually complete participation of all people at the other. Looking at the history of people's wars, he made the following assessment:

> [A discussion of] people's war includes the question of how much mass participation exists on top of the foundation created by the just war, for this is an indicator of how broadly and how intensely the people are joining the war effort. Ancient China and foreign countries have had people's wars. Engels described the early 19th century war of the Spanish people against Napoleonic aggression as a people's war. He also called China's war against English and French imperialistic aggression that began in 1851 . . . a people's war. . . .

> History also contains many slave rebellions and wars in which peasants rose up.
>
> . . . All of these wars, as far as their political nature was concerned, represented the interests of the people to a certain degree. The people also enthusiastically participated in these wars to a certain extent.
>
> I call these wars *ordinary* (italics mine) people's wars. They reflect the patterns of past and present wars, both Chinese and foreign. But these wars differ from a Communist-led people's war in principle because the limits imposed on the dominant class by class interests cause them to seek objectives that are in their own class interests and not in the interests of all the people. This limits the mobilization of people to participate in the war. It is impossible for the mobilization to be complete. [57]

In contrast to those people's wars that had inherent factors which limited mass mobilization, Wang argued that "the revolutionary wars led by the CCP were utterly and completely people's war."[58] In his view, because the CCP represented the interests of the broad peasant masses in rural China and adopted the correct principles, policies, and methods for organizing and leading them, these CCP-led wars had "more people participating with greater enthusiasm . . . than any other people's war in history."[59] Among the practices that led to Communist success, according to Wang, were the following: "organizing armed strength in a structure that integrated the three elements of field armies, regional forces and local militias into one system; the establishment of revolutionary base areas; the implementation of democratic government and improvements in the standard of living of the people; the mobilization, organization, and arming of the broad masses to support and join in the war; and the close coordination under centralized Communist Party leadership of the political, economic, cultural, and diplomatic fronts with the military main effort in a comprehensive all-out war."[60]

Comparing the level of popular support and participation in the Communist-led revolutionary wars in China with that in other people's wars is beyond the scope of this study. But even without such a comparison, Wang Sanxin's main point, that a high level of mass support and the thorough organization of the masses played a key role in the Communist victory, cannot be denied. Mao believed that "the deepest and most profound sources of war's mighty power is to be found among the masses,"[61] and he consistently sought to tap that

source of power and mobilize it to support his revolutionary struggle. From the period when he was in the Jinggang Mountains to the time of the Huai Hai campaign, he worked hard to establish an effective revolutionary program and a comprehensive organizational structure to promote it. The depth of Mao's organizational effort can be seen in the following discussion of people's war contained in his political report entitled "On Coalition Government" made to the 7th National Congress of the CCP in April 1945:

> [Our] army is powerful because all its members have a discipline based on political consciousness; they have come together and they fight not for the private interests of a few individuals or a narrow clique, but for the interests of the broad masses and of the whole nation. The sole purpose of this army is to stand firmly with the Chinese people and to serve them whole-heartedly. . . .
>
> Furthermore, this army is powerful because it has the people's self-defence corps and the militia—the vast armed organizations of the masses—fighting in co-ordination with it. In the Liberated Areas of China all men and women, from youth to middle age, are organized in the people's . . . self-defence corps on a voluntary and democratic basis and without giving up their work in production. The cream of the self-defence corps, except for those who join the army or the guerrilla units, is brought into the militia. Without the co-operation of these armed forces of the masses it would be impossible to defeat the enemy.
>
> Finally, this army is powerful because of its division into two parts, the main forces and the regional forces, with the former available for operations in any region whenever necessary and the latter concentrating on defending their own localities and attacking the enemy there in co-operation with the local militia and the self-defence corps. This division of labour has won the whole-hearted support of the people. Without this correct division of labor—if, for example, attention were paid only to the role of the main forces while that of the regional forces were neglected—it would likewise be impossible to defeat the enemy in the conditions obtaining in China's Liberated Areas. Under the regional forces, numerous armed working teams have been organized, which are well trained and hence better qualified for military, political and mass work; they penetrate into the rearmost areas behind the enemy lines, strike at the enemy and arouse the masses, . . . thus giving support to the frontal military operations of the various Liberated Areas. In all this they have achieved great success.
>
> Under the leadership of their democratic governments, all the . . . people in the Liberated Areas of China are called upon to join

> organizations of workers, peasants, youth and women, and cultural, professional and other organizations, which will whole-heartedly perform various tasks in support of he armed forces. These tasks are not limited to rallying the people to join the army, transporting grain for it, caring for soldiers' families and helping the troops in meeting their material needs. They also include mobilizing the guerrilla units, militia and self-defence corps to make widespread raids and lay land mines against the enemy, gather intelligence about him, comb out traitors and spies, transport and protect the wounded and take direct part in the army's operations. At the same time, the people in all the Liberated Areas are enthusiastically taking up various kinds of political, economic, cultural and health work. The most important thing in this connection is to mobilize everybody for the production of grain and other necessities and to ensure that all government institutions and schools, except in special cases, devote their free time to production for their own support in order to supplement the self-sufficiency production campaigns of the army and the people and thus help to create a great upsurge of production to sustain the . . . war. . . . Such is a real peoples war. [62]

The extensive network of military and civilian organizations described above and the high level of mass participation in, and support of, the armed struggle that this organizational network encouraged and directed produced the type of people's war that Wag Sanxin described as going beyond "ordinary" people's war to become "complete" people's war. Arousing and organizing the masses so that virtually every member of society was contributing to the war effort was Mao Zedong's way to create what he referred to as "real people's war." Looking at the Huai Hai campaign as an example of a Communist attempt to implement "real" or "complete" people's war helps explain why and how the campaign developed as it did.

This is not to say that examining the campaign as an example of compound warfare does not provide meaningful insights into what happened. As discussed earlier, the Communists made good use of main forces, regional forces, and local militia forces during the campaign. These different type forces worked together in complementary ways to defeat Nationalist units. But the Communist implementation of compound warfare was possible and was successful because it was part of a people's war. The recruitment, organization, replenishment, reconstitution, and effective employment of the forces engaged in the campaign were all dependent upon broad mass support and the mobilization of all available resources. Communist victory did not ultimately rest upon some multiplicative effect produced by the

coordinated use of regular and irregular forces. It rested instead upon an overwhelming numerical superiority. As noted by William Whitson, a retired U.S. Army colonel and the former Director of China Studies, Rand Corporation, the Communists overwhelmed the Nationalists in the Huai Hai campaign by mobilizing millions [of men] throughout the campaign area and surrounding provinces:

> While the campaign was a tribute to the professionalism of senior and junior Communist commanders alike, it must be recognized that the commissars [party representatives/political officers] played a crucial role in creating and maintaining a logistical system that never failed to support the military plan. All three Party bureaus— East China, Central China, and North China—were committed to the assembly, movement, and final distribution of supplies and manpower necessary to feed troops, evacuate wounded, dig fortifications, replace losses, maintain ammunition levels, and, perhaps most important, inspire the combat forces with the sacrifices and moral support of more than 2 million common peasants, who pushed their wheelbarrow-loads of fuel, ammunition, and food around the battlefields. In the sphere of propaganda, the commissars also brought long experience to bear. Pamphlets and leaflets were distributed about the battle area by political workers who assured the troops under attack that relief would come, that the battle was going well, and that popular support remained firm. . . . [63]

> The collaboration and division of labor between increasingly professional commanders and commissars was a crucial factor in the Communist victory at Huai-Hai. Commanders had exceptional freedom of movement, since they were confident that the commissars had arranged logistical, replacement, and intelligence support that could precede or follow them as necessary. Thus, it is probably more accurate to reckon the troop strengths at Huai-Hai in terms of total manpower committed to the battle area, rather than regular forces alone. *While the ratio of first-line Communist to Nationalist troops was about one to one, the total Communist commitment, including logistical and guerrilla support units, brought that ratio to about six to one. . . . The Huai-Hai Campaign was thus "people's war" carried out with professional excellence on a relatively limited battlefield*.[64] (italics mine).

Notes

1. The romanization system used to represent the pronunciation of Chinese characters in this study is basically the pin-yin system used in the People's Republic of China today. Thus, the name of the Chinese Communist leader appears as Mao Zedong, not Mao Tse-tung, as his name is romanized in the many works that use the Wade-Giles romanization system. One exception to the use of pin-yin romanization in the text is the use of the nonstandard romanization Chiang Kai-shek for the name of the Nationalist Party leader. This romanization has become so well known through long usage that it will be retained. A second exception is the use of the Wade-Giles romanization Kuomintang for the three characters (*K*uo-*M*in-*T*ang/National People's Party) that make up the name for what in English is called the Nationalist Party. KMT is used frequently in this study as shorthand for this party's name as is CCP for the Chinese Communist Party.

2. Stuart Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1966), 75.

3. Ibid., 90.

4. Ibid.

5. Mao Zedong, "The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, vol. 1* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 73 (hereafter referred to as *SWM*).

6. Mao Zedong, "Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist in China?" in *SWM*, vol. 1, 66.

7. Ibid., 84-85.

8. Ibid., 84.

9. Junshi kexueyuan junshi lishi yanjiubu (Academy of Military Science's Historical Research Department), ed., *Zhongguo Renmin Jiefangjun Zhanshi*, (A history of the Chinese People's Liberation Army's wars) vol. 1 (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1987), 1, 21 (hereafter referred to as *JFJZS*).

10. Mao Zedong, "The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains," in *SWM*, vol. 1, 85.

11. Ibid., 86-87.

12. Ibid., 101.

13. Mao Zedong, "Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist in China?" in *SWM*, vol. 1, 64-65.

14. Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China 1937-1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962), 74.

15. *JFJZS*, vol. 3, 232.

16. Ibid., 267

17. Ibid.

18. Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi ziliao zhengji weiyuanhui (Chinese Communist Party Central Committee's Committee for the Collection of Party Historical Material), ed., *Huai Hai Zhanyi* (The Huai Hai campaign), vol. 1 (Beijing: Communist Party Historical Material Publishing House, 1988), 42 (hereafter referred to as *HHZ*).

19. *JFJZS*, vol. 3, 234.

20. The Long-Hai Railroad was an east-west line running from the sea (*hai*) near Haizhou to Gansu (single character name: *Long*) Province. The Jinpu Railroad was a north-south line running from Tianjin in the north, through Jinan and Xuzhou, to Jiangpu, a small city on the north bank of the Yangtze River opposite the Chinese capital of Nanjing.

21. Zhongguo geming bowuguan laozhanshi shiwen jibian weiyuanhui (Museum of the Chinese Revolution's Committee for Collecting and Compiling the Writings of Old Warriors) ed., *Ming Jiang Su Yu* (The famous general Su Yu) (Beijing: New China Publishing House , 1986), 377 (hereafter referred to as *MJSY*).

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. *HHZ*, vol. 1, 52. This quote is from a CMC radio message that was also sent to the CPFA commander and others. The CMC's selection of 10 October as the day on which to start the campaign is interesting because that was China's National Day.

25. Ibid., 54-55.

26. Ibid., 68.

27. Ibid., 72.

28. Ibid., 103.

29. Ibid., 117-21.

30. Zhou Kaicheng, "Huai Hai Zhanyi zhong de dibajun" (The VIII Corps in the Huai Hai campaign), in *Huai Hai Zhanyi Qinliji: Yuan Guomindang Jiangling de Huiyi* (Personal experiences of the Huai Hai campaign: Reminiscences of former Nationalist generals), ed. by Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi quanguo weiyuanhui wenshih ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui *Huai Hai Zhanyi Qinliji* bianshenzu (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee's Historical Materials Research Committee's Editorial Committee for *Personal Experiences of the Huai Hai Campaign*,) (Beijing: Historical Material Publishing House, 1983), 243-44 (hereafter referred to as *HHZQ*).

31. Liao Tiejun, "Nianzhuangxu diqu zuozhan huiyi" (Reminiscences of the fighting in the Nianzhuangxu area), in *HHZQ*, 180.

32. Ibid., 181.

33. *HHZ*, vol. 2, 127.

34. Zhongguo renmin geming junshi bowuguan (Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution), ed., *Zhongguo Renmin Geming Zhanzheng Dituxuan* (Selected maps of the Chinese People's Revolutionary War (n.p., Map Publishing House, 1981), 70

35. Sanjun daxue zhanshi pianzuan weiyuanhui (Joint Staff College's Military History Compilation Committee), ed., *Xu-Beng Huizhan* (The Xu-Beng campaign) [Taipei, Taiwan]: Joint Staff College, n.d.), appendix table 1.(Hereinafter referred to as *XBH*.) The Nationalists call the fighting associated with the Huai Hai campaign the Xu-Beng campaign after the two cities of Xuzhou and Bengbu.

36. Harry H. Collier and Paul Chin-chih Lai, *Organizational Changes in the Chinese Army, 1895-1950* (Taipei, Taiwan: Office of the Military Historian, 1969), 257-58, 262, and 222.

37. Ibid.

38. *XBH,* 5-6.

39. *HHZ*, vol. 3, 359.

40. Huang Wei, "Di shier bingtuan beijian jiyao" (A summary of the destruction of the Twelfth Army), in *HHZQ*, 486.

41. HHZ, vol. 1, 42.

42. Ibid., 84.

43. Ibid., 85.

44. Ibid., 99.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid., 324.

47. Ibid., 330.

48. Ibid., 111.

49. Ibid., 112.

50. *HHZ*, vol. 2, 200.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., 202.

54. Ibid.

55. Zhongguo dabaikequanshu zong bianji weiyuanhui junshi bianji weiyuanhui (Military Editorial Committee of the Great Chinese Encyclopedia's General Editorial Committee), ed., Zhongguo dabaikequanshu, junshi (Great Chinese Encyclopedia, Military) vol. 2 (Beijing: Great Chinese Encyclopedia Press, 1989), 876 (hereafter referred to as *ZDJ*).

56. Wang Sanxin, *Mao Zedong junshi sixiang yanjiu* (Research into Mao Zedong's military thought) (Beijing: People's Liberation Army's National Defence University Press, 1988), 194. (Hereafter referred to as *MZJSY*.)

57. Ibid., 195-96.

58. Ibid., 196.

59. Ibid., 197.

60. Ibid., 196-97.

61. *ZDJ*, 877.

62. Mao Zedong, "On Coalition Government," in *SWM*, vol. 3, 214-17.

63. William W. Whitson with Chen-hsia Huang, *The Chinese High Command: A History of Communist Military Politics, 1927-71* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 186.

64. Ibid., 242-43.

Compound Warfare in the Vietnam War

Randall N. Briggs

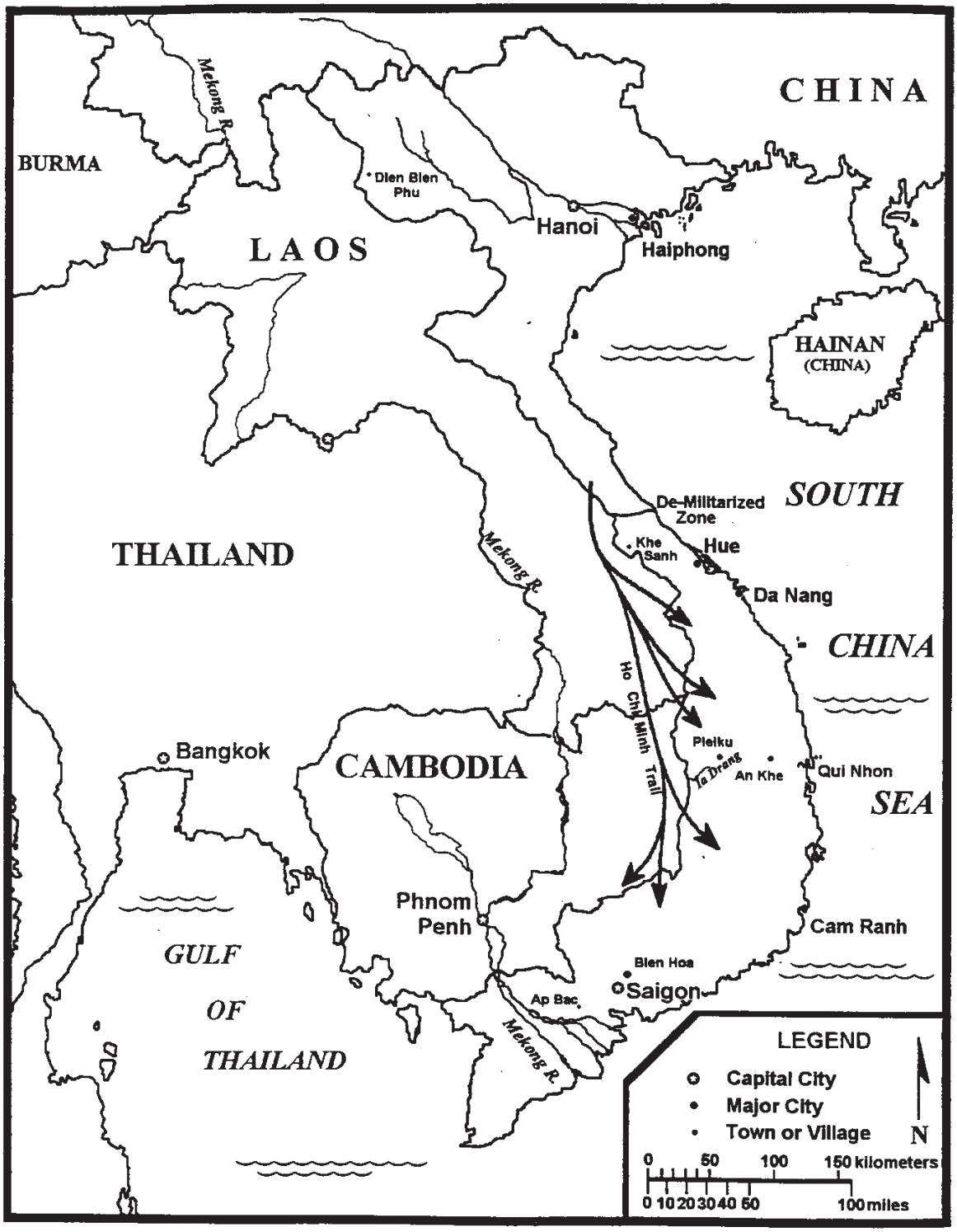
> War is the highest, most comprehensive test of a nation and its social system. War is a contest that not only tests the skill and strategy of the two adversaries, but also their strength and will. Victory goes to the side which has the correct military strategy, which makes the best use of the art of military science and which most successfully limits the war-making capacity of its adversary.
>
> —Senior General Van Tien Dung
> People's Army of Vietnam[1]

North Vietnam won the Vietnam War because it ruthlessly and systematically applied a version of fortified compound warfare. South Vietnam and its ally, the United States, lost because they were unable or unwilling either to counter this effort or institute their own version. With support from both the Soviet Union and China and with sanctuaries from American military might, the North Vietnamese conducted a guerrilla campaign that culminated in the 1968 Tet Offensive. This campaign confused, distracted, and wore down the South Vietnamese and drove the United States from the war. Then, the North Vietnamese employed a massive conventional campaign that unified the two nations.[2]

The United States found itself in the classic dilemma of the conventional operator in compound warfare; it faced an enemy that intelligently and ruthlessly combined main and guerrilla forces, utilized safe havens, and received support from powerful allies. The Americans and South Vietnamese, continually responding to the aspect of compound warfare that seemed predominant at any given time, tried a plethora of approaches until the American public lost its willingness to support the war. This "strategy of tactics" was ultimately a strategy for defeat.[3]

Background of the Conflict

Over the centuries, the Vietnamese have fought against their neighbors[4] and among themselves. Tensions between the northern and southern sections of Vietnam go back at least as far as the sixteenth century, when competing royal families divided the nation roughly


CHINA
BURMA
Mekong R.
Dien Bien Phu
Hanoi
Haiphong
LAOS
HAINAN (CHINA)
De-Militarized Zone
SOUTH
Khe Sanh
Hue
THAILAND
Mekong R.
Da Nang
CHINA
Ho Chi Minh Trail
Pleiku
Ia Drang
An Khe
Qui Nhon
Bangkok
CAMBODIA
SEA
Phnom Penh
Cam Ranh
GULF OF THAILAND
Bien Hoa
Saigon
Ap Bac
Mekong R.
LEGEND
Capital City
Major City
Town or Village
N
0 50 100 150 kilometers
0 10 20 30 40 50 100 miles

Map 1

along the seventeenth parallel, the same boundary that would exist from 1954 to 1975.[5] In 1858, the French invaded Vietnam, toppled the existing monarchy, and eventually incorporated all of Indochina into the French Empire. Nonetheless, the Vietnamese resisted, and after the Imperial court capitulated, talented amateur commanders fought a guerrilla war that lasted for decades. Ho Chi Minh, the man who became the nemesis of France as well as the United States, continued this resistance and founded the Indochinese Communist party in 1929 in Hong Kong. The following year, the party began developing a worker-peasant armed force that would eventually become the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN).[6]

The First Indochina War

France's defeat in Europe in 1940 and its reduction to a puppet of Nazi Germany provided Ho with a wonderful opportunity to advance the cause of Vietnamese independence. To this end, he formed a new, united-front organization, the Vietnam Independence League, or Vietminh, to expel the French. In 1944, the Communist party's military leader, Vo Nguyen Giap, began attacking French outposts with armed propaganda teams, demonstrating the importance of Ho's slogan: "political action is more important than military action; propaganda is more important than fighting." Obviously, political as well as military action was important. After Emperor Bao Dai abdicated as head of state, Ho Chi Minh proclaimed on 2 September 1945 that the nation was independent of France and would henceforth be called the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). Soon, armed rampages by French troops, Vietminh agents, and armed gang members initiated the First Indochina War (or the Vietminh War.) Early in the conflict, Ho warned a French visitor: "You can kill ten of my men for every one I kill of yours. But even at those odds, you will lose and I will win."[7]

In 1949, the French reinstalled Bao Dai as the emperor of a "united" Vietnam within the French union. For the next five years, while they fought the war against France, the Vietminh simultaneously waged a political struggle against Bao Dai's government.[8] Throughout the war, the Vietminh demonstrated ruthlessness, courage, tenacity, and cunning. By late 1953, despite commanding a force of over 500,000 French and Vietnamese troops and winning most of the battles, the French command had failed to secure control of the countryside. The bloody war culminated with the dramatic Vietminh victory at Dien Bien Phu on 7 May 1954.[9]

While the siege of Dien Bien Phu was under way, the United States considered intervening to salvage the French position. President Dwight D. Eisenhower attempted to persuade the British to participate in a multinational endeavor. Failing this, he directed the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to study the possibility of a unilateral American intervention. The JCS subsequently considered several options, including possible use of tactical atomic weapons. Army Chief of Staff General Matthew B. Ridgway and his chief of plans and operations, Lieutenant General James M. Gavin, effectively squashed this notion with the analysis that serious American entry into the conflict would, in the aftermath of the Korean War, likely result in another war with Communist China.[10] This fear of another war with China would affect American policies on Vietnam for another twenty years.

The Partition of Indochina

The Geneva Accords, signed on 20 July 1954 to conclude the First Indochina War, divided Indochina into four countries: Cambodia, Laos, and the two Vietnams—North and South, split along the seventeenth parallel. This division was to be temporary, pending nationwide elections. Ho Chi Minh led the northern state, while Bao Dai and the French controlled the south. The accords also established a 300-day regroupment process during which 900,000 refugees moved from northern to southern Vietnam. Meanwhile, about 80,000 Vietminh troops in the south moved north under Communist party orders, but 10,000 remained behind as a hedge against the failure of the scheduled elections. In 1960, most of these men would still be in the south to form the nucleus of the People's Liberation Army.[11]

Meanwhile, Bao Dai installed a Catholic mandarin, Ngo Dinh Diem, as his prime minister. Diem was a fervent nationalist who was also a dedicated anti-Communist and had been imprisoned by the Vietminh in 1945. In the spring of 1955, Diem deposed the emperor and appointed himself chief of a new state, the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). Diem also canceled nationwide elections, evicted the French, and replaced them with U.S. support.[12]

From the start, the RVN government had problems gaining the loyalty and support of its rural population. To the rural Vietnamese, the RVN represented the same urban elite interests that had benefited from French rule.[13] While Diem had initially inspired the hopes of nationalists within South Vietnam, it soon became clear that he was more interested in consolidating his own power than in correcting the inequities inherited from the French. In 1957, Diem canceled his

previously announced land reform program, and the following year, he launched an "urban redevelopment" plan that merely displaced the poor peasants to sampans or shanty villages. Both actions served to increase their resentment against Diem's government and his U.S. sponsors. Such policies, along with the widespread (though false) perception that "the Americans were steering the boat and Diem [was] doing the rowing," gave many nationalists little choice but to oppose Diem.[14]

In American eyes, the peasants who made up the overwhelming majority of the South Vietnamese population were largely apolitical, despite their obvious widespread support for the Communists and other anti-Diem resistance groups. In this view, the peasants, except for a small minority who had specific grievances with the regime, would follow whichever side was locally stronger. The truth was more troubling: most peasants saw the resistance movement as the heir of the heroic Vietminh, with whom they had sympathized. Thus, Diem, by returning landlords to their status of the French era, was viewed by the peasants as destroying their dignity and livelihood.[15]

By 1960, peasants had four major grievances against the officials of Diem's government: (1) they stole national funds and commodities, (2) they extorted and stole from private individuals (principally through the secret police and soldiers), (3) they tortured prisoners, (4) and they falsified elections.[16]

Early Communist Insurgency and American Involvement

John F. Kennedy, an ambitious young American politician, had visited Vietnam in 1951. In 1956, as a U.S. Senator, Kennedy noted: "What we must offer [the Vietnamese people] is a revolution—a political, economic, and social revolution far superior to anything the Communists can offer—far more peaceful, far more democratic, and far more locally controlled."[17] Later, as president, Kennedy would attempt to implement such a policy. But neither he nor his successors grasped that this solution—a political, economic, and social revolution—was not achievable with a primarily military approach.

The leaders of the DRV had not immediately utilized compound warfare against the RVN. It was not necessary, as the RVN did not have the significant American military support that would have required it. Instead, Hanoi sought first to unify North and South Vietnam under its control by attacking Diem's regime from within rather than without.[18] The Communists planned to overthrow Diem through a three-phase

insurgency. During Phase One, they would establish their political organization and build a base of support among the population. Phase Two would advance to guerrilla warfare—small-scale military attacks on selected targets, with the aid of the previously established base of support. Phase Three would feature compound warfare, combining conventional, main force operations with guerrilla operations.[19]

By the end of 1956, the Communist party began Phase One of the insurgency with an "extermination of traitors" program, wherein party assassins murdered secret police (Cong An) agents, influential anti-Communist teachers, and honest, effective local government officials. Corrupt, inefficient officials were left in place to advertise the evils of the Diem government.[20]

By 1959, as the level of Communist assassinations continued to rise, Diem convinced the Americans that the insurgent activity was the "last gasp" of a movement already politically defeated. In May 1959, Diem published Law 10/59, providing harsh punishment for virtually any antigovernment activity.[21] In response, the Communist party announced the formation in the south of the National Liberation Front (NLF), with representatives from several non-Communist opposition factions. In February 1961, the Front established the People's Liberation Army (PLA) as its military wing. The following January, the party established the People's Revolutionary party (PRP) as the nominally independent Communist movement of South Vietnam within the umbrella organization of the NLF. (In reality, the DRV, working through the PRP, controlled the Front.) The Diem regime called the new organization the "Vietcong," for "Vietnamese Communists," and it was as the Viet Cong, or "VC," that the United States would know the NLF.[22]

Forming the NLF was a brilliant stroke for Hanoi. With the Front as a nominally non-Communist organization, it became easier for South Vietnamese reformers, as well as liberals in the West, to support it than it would have been had its control by Hanoi been overt. The seemingly independent existence of the NLF would prove to be an enduring thorn in the side of Western anti-Communists.[23]

American advisers repeatedly emphasized to Diem the necessity of social and economic reforms if he were to gain and maintain the loyalty of the peasant population. Diem occasionally took actions to mollify these advisers. In February 1959, for instance, he launched the Agglomeration Centers Plan, through which he housed suspected Communist-sympathizer families with loyal families. The plan was an immediate failure. In June of the same year, Diem tried again with a

rural consolidation plan called the Agroville Program, promising to create eighty large Agrovilles and 400 Agrohamlets by 1963. The program was harsh and corrupt, and the rural population hated it. Work halted with the program only 25 percent complete, when the Communist party began its armed-struggle phase in early 1961.[24]

American Commitment

In America, John Kennedy became president in 1961. He seemed to embody a new spirit in America and a new determination to use American power in pursuit of positive goals. In his inaugural address, he proclaimed that his generation had been given the task of defending freedom and declared that America would "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to ensure the survival and the success of liberty."[25] However, Kennedy fumbled his early diplomatic engagements with the Soviet Union, which left him needing to demonstrate American credibility and looking for an opportunity to do so. In Vietnam, he found that opportunity.[26] In Kennedy's mind, the choice was simple: he must either halt communism in Southeast Asia or retreat to "Fortress America." Thus, Vietnam's situation was analyzed in the context of the Cold-War confrontation with international Communism. Kennedy and most of his advisers rejected the idea of withdrawing U.S. support from Vietnam, even though problems there seemed to be mounting.[27] The stage was set for an escalation of the anticommunist effort that would result in America losing its first war.

Soon there would be additional complaints. As the PLA increased its military activity, Diem's measures to fight the guerrillas escalated. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and the Vietnam Air Force (VNAF) used artillery and air strikes to attack hamlets suspected of housing PLA soldiers. These attacks were effective mainly in destroying hamlets and further alienating the rural population.[28] One study estimated that while there may have been only 5,000 active guerrillas opposing the government in early 1961, a year later there were 16,000 of them, actively supported by 100,000 sympathizers within the general population.[29]

The Agglomeration Center and Agroville projects, both designed to win the loyalty of the rural populace, had the opposite effect. Diem's next attempt, the Strategic Hamlet Program, was equally unsuccessful. Villagers disliked it for many reasons: they had to surrender their bamboo crops for construction, those working on construction could not grow their own cash crops, forced labor was reminiscent of coercive

French practices, and they had no way to express their discontent because all "antigovernment" criticism was forbidden. In short, the increased security was not worth the cost. The villagers saw the program as a means by the government to control their actions, not to protect them from an external threat. In the words of one NLF propagandist, "People don't like to be looked on and treated as VC." For these reasons, 60 to 70 percent of Strategic Hamlet residents would eventually cooperate with the NLF.[30]

Opposition to Saigon did not automatically translate into support for the NLF. The Communist cadres had to work diligently to win the support of the rural population and to convince them that the NLF was the legitimate government of South Vietnam. Of course, it helped their cause that the elements of South Vietnamese society suppressed by Diem and his successors had few alternatives but to support the Front.[31]

The Communist strategy was to consolidate the allegiance of the peasants and fragment and win over the landlords. The NLF proclaimed that despite the Saigon regime's attempts to reimpose the authority of the landlords, the land belonged to the peasants. (The party, however, was evasive in its descriptions of who would actually own the land and how ownership would be implemented once the peasants were collectivized.) A key element of this strategy was for the PLA to assume control of the local government and replace the governmental tax system with a "progressive" one under its own auspices. Under Communist rule, the peasants had land, saw their standard of living improve, and willingly paid taxes.[32]

As it worked to transform rural discontent into outright support for the revolution, the party attempted to match words with deeds. A visible difference existed between the self-sacrificing rural PLA cadres and the Saigon government appointees, who came largely from the urban elite. Another contrast was the consistent courtesy of the Front cadres versus the often-arrogant behavior of ARVN troops. Simply put, under "Vietcong" control, peasants had status and power. The Front, moreover, provided hope for advancement for intelligent peasants and their children. Many peasants, therefore, were willing to fight to prevent the return of government control, under which they saw no hope of a better life.[33]

Meanwhile, the PLA continued its effective terror campaign. Assassins murdered very bad officials to gain the villagers' support. They also killed honest, efficient, and loyal officials to earn the villagers' fear. As part of this policy, the party encouraged mediocre and dishonest administration by government officials. The PLA further

intimidated the rural population by executing noncooperative peasants. The NLF, as a whole, conducted a successful disinformation campaign that further alienated peasants from the Saigon government and the Americans. For their part, the guerrillas, when occupying a hamlet, would force villagers to destroy their government-issued ID cards. This, of course, put the villagers in danger of arrest if they ventured into government-controlled areas.[34]

The Saigon government inadvertently aided the Front through its repressive tactics, destroying the possibility of moral outrage that the PLA's use of terror might otherwise have aroused. The government routinely tortured even non-Communist NLF members. Many, perhaps most, of the guerrillas were not ideologically committed. Nevertheless, the government insisted that all of its opponents must be considered Communists. Article 4 of the RVN Constitution excluded Communists from the protection of the law. Thus, for one to express dissatisfaction with the government meant risking imprisonment, torture, or death.[35]

Encouraging anti-Communist nationalism was the key to long-term RVN success, but this would not be possible without a complete transformation of the Saigon government. The regime had to become responsive to the needs and desires of the rural population. As American adviser John Paul Vann said later: "If I were a lad of eighteen faced with the same choice—whether to support the [government] or the NLF—and a member of a rural community, I would surely choose the NLF."[36]

By 1963, the NLF's campaign to gain the support of the rural population had succeeded. General Duong Van ("Big") Minh frankly acknowledged to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge in September of that year that more people supported the NLF than the government.[37]

The North's Compound Warfare Plans

While it was the grievances of the rural South Vietnamese that nourished the NLF, and while the revolution in South Vietnam was not necessarily dependent on DRV support, the direction of the overall insurgent effort always lay in the hands of the North Vietnamese. The DRV began infiltrating Communist cadres into South Vietnam in 1956. By the time the NLF announced its existence in 1960, Hanoi had already organized its military force, the PLA (later People's Liberation Armed Forces [PLAF]). Indeed, when Hanoi publicly announced support for the NLF, it signaled that political agitation would soon escalate to armed conflict, Phase Two of the insurrection.[38]

The PLA was organized on two levels: (1) full military (main force) units and (2) paramilitary, guerrilla force units of two types: (a) regional, or territorial, guerrillas and (b) local guerrillas.[39] The PLA included a command and control headquarters (Nam Bo, later called COSVN, for "Central Office in South Vietnam") and logistical support groups operating in Laos and along the coastline. But while the DRV pulled the strings, it also ensured that its forces in South Vietnam operated according to a key principle of "people's war": the armed force must be self-supporting and self-contained. Thus, until 1968, Hanoi limited its support to the PLA. Key technicians and the top leadership came from the North Vietnamese, but most of the troops were either South Vietnamese or individuals from the south who had moved to the north during the 1954 regroupment process.[40]

To support and reinforce the guerrillas in South Vietnam, Hanoi needed an overland supply route. The construction of this route, what would become the Ho Chi Minh Trail, had begun in 1959. To hide its involvement, Hanoi, at considerable logistical difficulty, required that its soldiers infiltrating into South Vietnam not wear or carry anything traceable to the DRV. Generally, soldiers would exchange their clothing and equipment at the Laotian border. The journey down the trail was a grueling one. Despite way stations along the trail, the infiltrators endured illnesses, injuries, and shortages of food and medicines. In addition, they risked interception by ARVN ranger patrols.[41]

Hanoi also directed actions to undermine the Saigon regime from within. It had agents within Diem's government at least as early as 1956. It formed the nominally independent PRP to convince city people, intellectuals, and Westerners that opposition leadership came from a broad spectrum of South Vietnamese society. Meanwhile, from 1961 on, a Communist agent named Albert Thao established a network of connections within the highest RVN government and military circles. Thao served as deputy director of the Strategic Hamlet Program and ran it at breakneck speed to encourage resentment among the forcibly resettled peasants. He also worked to instigate plots and coup attempts until his exposure and execution in 1965.[42]

At the same time, Communist efforts in South Vietnam received outside support from several quarters and on many different levels. The guerrillas fighting in South Vietnam had, of course, the covert, and later overt, assistance of the Hanoi regime. The DRV had sufficient military power of its own to seemingly threaten conventional invasion—introducing the dynamics of compound warfare—even as

Saigon attempted to control the insurgency. Later, and at a higher level, Hanoi needed a powerful ally to avoid being overwhelmed by American military power. Here, Ho had the assistance of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, enabling him to wage the fortified variety of compound warfare.[43]

In late 1949, Mao Zedong's Communists had triumphed in the civil war with the Nationalists. Thereafter, the presence of a Communist regime on Vietnam's northern border provided Ho with a physical link to the worldwide Communist camp. Mao provided Ho with training camps in China and with advisers. In addition, he massed 200,000 troops on the border in a show of support. But the relationship between the Chinese and Vietnamese Communists was an uncomfortable one from the start. The Vietnamese recalled centuries of conflict with China and resented the fact that Mao's government did not support Ho's claims at Geneva in 1954. The Chinese, meanwhile, were determined to continue the struggle against the United States, but they were sobered by their heavy losses in the Korean War and wanted to use Ho as a cheap, safe proxy.[44]

Ho's relationship with the Soviet Union was similarly complex. The USSR disappointed Ho when it failed to recognize his newly proclaimed government in 1945, not doing so until January 1950 in conjunction with China. For the USSR, Vietnam was always secondary to calculations concerning its own requirements. In 1953, after the death of Stalin in March and the Korean armistice in July, the Soviets declared their desire for "peaceful coexistence" with the West, and pressured Ho to settle the conflict with France. Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov brokered the 1954 Geneva agreement between the DRV and France that resulted in the "temporary" partitioning of the country and the plan for national elections within two years. This left Ho receiving less at the peace table than he had won on the battlefield. To make matters worse for Ho, after Diem canceled the scheduled 1956 elections, the Soviet Union proposed a permanent partition of Vietnam (the United States rejected that proposal). Nonetheless, Ho had to depend on this less-than-reliable helpmate, as his choices for a powerful ally were few.[45]

The South's Response

Diem needed more than pseudo-reform packages; he needed the best and brightest rural youth of South Vietnam to willingly risk their lives to defend the state. Instead, these young people typically joined the insurgents. In the absence of committed youth, the South Vietnamese

government had to rely on the ARVN. Unfortunately for Diem, the ARVN was a weak reed, a force with no military tradition prior to 1954, which also had the negative heritage of succeeding the French-controlled Vietnamese National Army.[46]

After first proposing a police-type force capable of fighting Communist guerrillas and infiltrators, the American advisers (MAAG, the Military Assistance and Advisory Group) designed a conventional Western-style army, organized into divisions and corps and heavily mechanized by Asian standards. Diem was enthusiastic; he wanted a powerful army with officers loyal to him. As 80 percent of the U.S. aid to the RVN was going into military development, the army's escalating costs were not major concerns for him.[47]

At issue in the organization of the ARVN was its basic mission. A "light" force would have been better for fighting guerrillas and could have conducted the dismounted patrols necessary to know and secure the countryside. But in American eyes, the ARVN had to be ready at all times to defend against a conventional invasion such as the Communist had used to start the Korean War. Thus, the ARVN was deliberately designed to be "heavy." The Cong An (secret police) and local security forces were to fight the guerrillas. In any event, while it was not optimally designed for counter-guerrilla warfare, the ARVN faced a bigger problem in developing good leadership and motivation.[48]

Under the guidance of MAAG, the government organized local security forces to fight guerrillas. But the reality did not match the concept. The main function of the provincial militia (also called the Bao An, or Civil Guard) proved to be the protection of provincial administrators, reinforcing the perception of Diem as a fearful dictator with no support in the countryside. And the village militia (Dan Ve, or People's Self-defense Forces) were miserably equipped and trained and got tied down in the defense of pitifully weak fortifications. These soldiers also frequently lost their weapons, either through inadequate security measures or by being captured or killed. Thus, they served as an unwitting source of supply for the PLA.[49]

A typical ARVN operation of this period was the attack on the village of Binh Hoa on 21 January 1962. Operating on five-day-old intelligence, four infantry battalions moved by boats to positions in the nearby river the night before the attack. B-26 bombers then mistakenly bombed a village across the Cambodian border instead of the suspected Viet Cong encampment, killing and wounding several civilians. B-26s and T-28 fighter-bombers next attacked a suspected enemy battalion and munitions plant next to the drop zone, after which the

pre-positioned units moved into blocking positions. Finally, an ARVN airborne battalion dropped in to assault the PLA. What enemy guerrillas had been present had left an hour prior to the air strike, which killed five civilians and wounded eleven. Among the dead were three children. The net gain in the propaganda war was to the PLA.[50]

The enemy did not always run away, however. In October 1962, the ARVN 7th Division, operating in the Mekong Delta, had an entire platoon of rangers killed by a PLA unit that chose to stand and fight. This was an ominous sign of the increasing strength and aggressiveness of the enemy. Even worse, though, was Diem's reaction. He personally rebuked the division commander, ordering him to be less offensive-minded in the future. The division, thereafter, conducted operations only in areas known to be free of the PLA.[51]

Why was the ARVN so ineffective? There were several reasons. Senior commanders, who had been given little responsibility within the French system, were inexperienced, and the troops were not highly motivated. Moreover, officers frequently disobeyed orders that did not suit them. Diem also misused ARVN units, ordering them to avoid decisive contact with the guerrillas and reserving the best units for "palace guard" assignments in Saigon.[52]

Worse, still, was the fact that the ARVN did not understand the nature of the enemy it was fighting. PLA units were successful in large part because they had the overwhelming support of the rural people. Moreover, the ARVN's battle tactics, emphasizing air and artillery attacks on "enemy" hamlets, only exacerbated the situation, further alienating the rural population. The prevailing concept was to kill, rather than win over, the rural population sympathetic to the guerrillas.[53] Supported by the U.S. Air Force, the conventional-oriented MAAG commander, General Paul Harkins, continued to support air strikes, the use of artillery, and "harassment and interdiction" ("H&I") fire, not just against known targets but at random, "suspected" targets. From January to August 1962, air-strike tonnage quadrupled. The ARVN established "free-bombing zones," "free-strike zones," and "free-fire zones." The theory was to eliminate the sea of people in which the guerrilla "fish" swam. The reality was that this created tens of thousands of demoralized refugees hostile to the Saigon government.[54] Still another way in which the ARVN helped the Communist cause was by serving as a weapons supply service, similar to the way in which the village militias did. In 1963, when the PLA expanded to regiment and division size, it did so using American weapons captured from the ARVN.[55]

What could have been a turning point in U.S. perceptions of ARVN operations against the guerrillas came with the Battle of Ap Bac in January 1963. In this operation, a PLA force mauled an ARVN division despite the fact that the ARVN force outnumbered its enemy at least four to one and had air support, helicopters, artillery, and armored personnel carriers (APCs). The ARVN unit lost sixty-one men killed and a hundred wounded. In addition, five U.S. helicopters supporting the operation were shot down, with three Americans killed. Known PLA casualties were three killed. It was a military catastrophe. As the officers responsible for the debacle were mostly Diem appointees, the disaster clearly reflected poorly on Diem's leadership. Several American reporters witnessed the battle and were astonished and disgusted when Diem, as well as General Harkins at the newly named Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), proclaimed it a victory.[56] Ap Bac provided America an opportunity to reexamine the premises of its aid to the Diem regime, and a U.S. military commission investigated the disaster. However, despite the testimony of U.S. advisers on the spot and scathing after-action reports, the commission concluded that Diem was an effective leader and that the war was progressing well.[57]

America and Guerrilla Warfare

From beginning to end, the U.S. Army faced a guerrilla war in Vietnam. It should have been well prepared for such a conflict, for its own history contained vast experience both in fighting as guerrillas and in combating them. From the earliest colonial times, Americans fought irregular wars against Indian tribes of the Atlantic seaboard. They continued to fight guerrilla or counterguerrilla campaigns during the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the Seminole War, the Civil War, the Indian wars of the Great Plains and the desert Southwest, the Philippine Insurrection, and World War II. The U.S. Army had also prepared for guerrilla operations under the rubric of "unconventional warfare" during and after the Korean War (although the concentration on a nuclear battlefield implicit in Eisenhower's "massive retaliation" doctrine later caused this interest to wane). Thus, the U.S. Army entered the Vietnam War with a history of guerrilla and counterguerrilla operations that matched any country in the world.[58]

When John F. Kennedy became president in 1961, he fully subscribed to the theory of containment that had been the foundation of American foreign policy for over a decade. However, he rejected Eisenhower's "massive retaliation" doctrine in favor of a concept that

retired General Maxwell Taylor termed "flexible response." Along with this, Kennedy was fascinated with the idea of "counterinsurgency." In his view, it was the obvious approach to take in Vietnam. In fact, one of the newly inaugurated president's first questions to his military aides was, "What are we doing about guerrilla warfare?"[59]

At this point, counterguerrilla expert Edward Landsdale brought the administration news of the deteriorating situation in Vietnam. Landsdale proposed that American officers and NCOs be sent as advisers to ARVN units to improve their combat effectiveness. While Landsdale recommended that the advisers be given long-term assignments, the Pentagon, with bureaucratic shortsightedness, refused to accept this deviation from normal assignment policies. Kennedy, nonetheless, endorsed Landsdale's concept.[60]

Later that spring, presidential aide Walt W. Rostow gave a speech to the U.S. Army Special Forces School. He noted that the history of insurgencies in the Philippines and Malaya indicated that ten to twenty troops might be necessary to contain each guerrilla. Men such as Rostow and Roger Hilsman, head of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and a witness to the January 1962 Binh Hoa debacle previously discussed, understood clearly many of the basic requirements of counterguerrilla warfare.[61]

Along with the British counterguerrilla expert Sir Robert Thompson, Hilsman analyzed the mission in Vietnam in terms of five military tasks: (1) enforcing static defense of vital installations; (2) initiating "clear and hold" operations that pushed the PLA out of given areas, allowing civic action cadres to work and provide security for the time it would take to turn an area into a solid bloc of secure strategic hamlets; (3) reinforcing of strategic hamlets or civil guard units under attack and the setting up ambushes on PLA escape routes; (4) maintaining pressure against PLA main force units to keep them off-balance; and (5) conducting guerrilla operations against enemy infiltration routes.[62]

But Rostow, Hilsman, and Thompson all failed to understand a salient fact: the South Vietnamese government did not have the support of its own people. Thus, thinking that focused on "providing security" and "tracking the guerrilla to his sanctuaries" missed the essence of the problem. Nowhere in their assessments was there the recognition that fundamental reforms of the Saigon regime were a prerequisite to gaining support of the rural population.[63] At Kennedy's request, Hilsman wrote the proposals up into a document titled "A Strategic Concept for Vietnam." To Hilsman's assertion that it would never be

possible to completely cut infiltration trails, Kennedy noted: "Those trails are a built-in excuse for failure, and a built-in argument for escalation."[64]

By the end of 1961, it was clear to all observers that the PLA was ascendant; by this time, Vietnam was a priority problem for the Kennedy administration. Two themes emerged for the first, but not the last, time: the tendency of American planners to view problems faced by the RVN and the United States in terms of defective organization (e.g., the lack of coordination between the ARVN and the provincial militia), and the question of to what degree, if any, Washington should exercise sovereignty over the internal affairs of the RVN.[65] Meanwhile, Kennedy searched for a "first-rate back-stop man" to coordinate all Vietnam support operations from Washington. Landsdale might have been the proper man, but he had too many enemies in the Defense and State Departments. Ultimately, no one had both the credentials and the bureaucratic support, so the position was never developed.[66]

In October 1961, Maxwell Taylor and a party of experts visited Vietnam for two weeks. Taylor returned with three sets of recommendations. First, the Diem government should implement political, governmental, and administrative reforms. Second, the United States should provide material aid and advisers for a broad-based antiguerrilla campaign of economic measures and village-level civic, social, and political action. The United States should also provide arms and equipment for self-defense forces, as well as specialized equipment (e.g., three battalions of helicopters) to provide the ARVN sufficient mobility to abandon static defense and seek out guerrillas "in their own territory." (Of course, "their own territory" was most of the RVN.) This recommendation also included the "Farmgate" squadrons of T-28s and B-26s to provide air support against the guerrillas. Third was a totally new proposal that the United States increase its advisers to the 10,000-man level and contemplate the introduction of up to six U.S. divisions to preclude a Korea-type attack from the DRV. Taylor dismissed the possibility that the DRV might respond to this buildup with one of its own by claiming that the DRV was extremely vulnerable to a bombing campaign.

Kennedy did not like the last proposal, perhaps remembering his 1951 assessment that nationalism, not military force, was the key to securing Southeast Asia against Communism. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and the JCS also rejected it as inadequate. Yet no one in the administration had an alternative proposal. Kennedy

approved all the recommendations except the introduction of combat troops.[67]

American enthusiasm for counterinsurgency warfare continued. The January 1962 issue of the *Marine Corps Gazette* was entirely devoted to guerrilla warfare and included the texts of speeches by Hilsman and Rostow to the Special Forces Center.[68] On 6 June 1962, Kennedy spoke to the West Point graduating class, saying: "This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origin—war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins, war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression; seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. . . . It requires in those situations where we must counter it a whole new type of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training."[69] Meanwhile, in May, McNamara had visited Vietnam for a personal assessment. In forty-eight hours, he reviewed all the numbers and pronounced "that we are winning the war." In his fascination with quantitative measurement, he completely missed the qualitative dimension not easily reducible to statistics.[70]

Not satisfied with the Pentagon's response to his counterinsurgency proposals, Kennedy decided to upgrade the Special Forces training program at Fort Bragg and to provide more support to General William P. Yarborough, its commander. But institutional resistance to the ideas of counterinsurgency continued. On 18 April 1961, General Lyman Lemnitzer, chairman of the JCS, recently returned from a trip to Vietnam, was quoted in the press as saying that the administration was "oversold" on the importance of guerrilla warfare. Lemnitzer warned that overconcentration by the ARVN on counterguerrilla operations would leave it vulnerable to a conventional attack from the north. On 7 November 1962, moreover, in a speech at Fordham University, soon-to-be Army Chief of Staff and later chairman of the JCS General Earle G. Wheeler declared that "Despite the fact that the conflict is conducted as guerrilla warfare, it is nonetheless a military action. . . . It is fashionable in some quarters to say that the problems in Southeast Asia are primarily political and economic rather than military. I do not agree. The essence of the problem in Vietnam is military."[71]

This conflict between conventional military theory and counterinsurgency (COIN) theory was evident early on in American operations in Vietnam. In March 1962, Hilsman returned to the RVN and queried General Harkins about the negative political ramifications of using napalm on villages. In response, Harkins claimed that napalm

"really puts the fear of God into the Viet Cong. And that is what counts." There was also controversy over bombing. Both the Army and the Air Force agreed that close air support (CAS) was good, but the Air Force wanted to concentrate on the interdiction bombing that was the heart of its doctrine. Everyone agreed that such bombing would turn the villagers toward the NLF, but neither the United States nor the RVN military were willing to sacrifice it. The resulting policy was possibly the worst of both worlds: interdiction bombing with tight controls, and neither the Army nor the Air Force satisfied.[72]

Many U.S. advisers in the field thought that U.S. policy missed the point. John Paul Vann noted: "This is a political war and it calls for discrimination in killing. The best weapon for killing would be a knife, but I'm afraid we can't do it that way. The worst is an airplane. The next worst is artillery. Barring a knife, the best is a rifle—you know who you're killing."[73] Despite this analysis, the United States would continue to emphasize the use of artillery and airpower as the answer to the Communist insurgency.

The Critical Year: 1963

The year 1963 was critical for the United States in Vietnam. Despite ample evidence to the contrary, such as the ARVN debacle at Ap Bac, MACV kept insisting that the ARVN was winning the war. Marine General "Brute" Krulak, in a report for the JCS, concluded similarly: "We are winning slowly on the present thrust, and . . . there is no compelling reason to change."[74] The truth was that the Communists were growing increasingly strong, and the RVN was on the verge of total collapse. In November 1963, a cabal of disgruntled generals, with covert assistance from Maxwell Taylor and Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, overthrew and murdered President Diem. This initiated a succession of unstable military governments, and the country plunged into chaos.[75] Less than three weeks after Diem's ouster, President Kennedy was assassinated. His foreign policy legacy was one of an expanded commitment to South Vietnam as an experiment in counterinsurgency. Meanwhile, having colluded in deposing Diem, the United States was forced to support his successors.[76]

In the aftermath of the coup, Ambassador Lodge reported that the change of regime would improve morale and shorten the war. However, some indicators predicted otherwise, such as a dramatic increase in VC activity, the exposure of the failure of the Strategic Hamlet Program, and no evidence of a successor to Diem strong enough to take charge of the RVN government.[77]

Post-Diem, a dizzying succession of governments attempted to rule South Vietnam. Amid the chaos, the United States imposed the Hop Tac ("cooperation") Program, the latest version of the so-called "oil spot" concept previously proposed by Ambassador Lodge. Despite official pronouncements of partial success, in less than a year the program was recognized as another total failure.[78]

For the United States, there was a smooth transition in policy making from Kennedy to the new president, Lyndon B. Johnson. The new administration determined that the U.S. objective in South Vietnam remained that of assisting "the people and the Government of the country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy." As had all previous U.S. assessments, this missed the point that internal conditions drove the fundamental support of the NLF and that Hanoi would not cease its support and direction.[79]

America's Point of No Return

President Johnson moved quickly to increase the American effort in the spring of 1964. The administration adopted a policy of graduated pressure, rooted in Taylor's strategy of flexible response, as its strategic concept for the war. This meant that, rather than attempting to administer a knockout blow against either the DRV or the NLF, the United States would gradually increase its level of military operations until the Communists ceased their attempt to defeat the RVN.[80]

By August, Ambassador Taylor submitted a pessimistic but accurate assessment of the new Saigon government of General Nguyen Kanh, noting war weariness, lack of experience, high-level jealousies, a confused and apathetic population, and a high desertion rate in the ARVN. However, Taylor failed to note that the PLA was having no trouble replacing its losses, while the ARVN was. He also failed to appreciate that the RVN's social and economic system, not its political process, was the grievance that provided recruits to the NLF.[81]

That same month, the Gulf of Tonkin "incident" led to Johnson launching air strikes against the North Vietnamese and increasing the American role from advice and support to direct military action. The Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, giving Johnson carte blanche to escalate the war. The president spent the next several months downplaying Vietnam in order to push his legislative agenda through the Congress and to avoid an unpleasant issue in his campaign for reelection.[82]

Throughout 1964, however, the PLA continued to grow stronger. By 1965, it challenged more heavily armed ARVN units in several major battles, scoring impressive victories. That spring, the ARVN suffered catastrophic defeats, culminating in the 9-10 June Battle of Dong Xoai. The PLA took the position with heavy casualties even with the ARVN force firing artillery on the enemy units preparing to attack.[83]

Beginning in December 1964, the United States conducted a surreptitious bombing campaign called Operation BARREL ROLL against North Vietnamese infiltration routes in Laos. The JCS viewed this as setting the stage for an upcoming air campaign against North Vietnam itself, a campaign that would quickly end the war.[84] On 7 February 1965, PLA sappers struck the American advisers' compound at Pleiku in the Central Highlands, killing 8 Americans, wounding 109, and destroying or damaging twenty aircraft. Johnson, now safely elected president in his own right, considered this attack to be the final straw. He quickly ordered retaliatory air strikes, this time called Operation FLAMING DART. This was succeeded by the systematic ROLLING THUNDER campaign of attacks against North Vietnam. In addition, Johnson decided to commit U.S. ground forces to the war. Johnson gave the ground troops who began deploying to Vietnam that spring the mission of "killing Viet Cong."[85]

The American Search for a Strategy

By May 1965, MACV was forced to assess the danger that the increasing U.S. involvement might undermine the RVN government's legitimacy by making it appear to be an American puppet. General William C. Westmoreland, now commanding MACV, asserted that the danger was minimal. At the same time, it was difficult for the United States to develop any policy that recognized the RVN government as "corrupt, rotten, and basically responsible for the conditions that led to the insurgency." Therefore, American planners concentrated on the ever-increasing bombing campaign and on various efforts to reorganize the floundering pacification campaign. When Washington planners discussed using American aid as leverage to force fundamental reforms on the Saigon regime, the U.S. Embassy and MACV objected, desiring no conditions on U.S. assistance.[86] Nonetheless, some U.S. officials, and even some South Vietnamese, believed that the insurgency was a direct result of RVN policies. They were willing, therefore, to risk U.S. direct intervention in internal South Vietnamese affairs, and to endure the United States being called "imperialists" and the RVN government

"puppets," especially since they both were already being called that anyway. However, the United States never took such steps.[87]

By June 1965, it was becoming apparent that victory was not at hand. The RVN governmental chaos continued, and ARVN units were suffering defeat everywhere on the battlefield. Westmoreland viewed the deteriorating situation with alarm. He appealed to Johnson to provide more U.S. troops quickly, to bring the total to 180,000, including a South Korean division funded by the United States. He envisioned increasing the level another 100,000 in 1966 and warned: "We are in for the long pull. I see no likelihood of achieving a quick, favorable end to the war."[88]

Other observers were even less optimistic than Westmoreland. Johnson's United Nations ambassador, George Ball, privately predicted nothing but a gloomy future, foreseeing an "investment trap," in which American soldiers would "take heavy casualties in a war they are ill-equipped to fight in a noncooperative if not downright hostile countryside." This, of course, in Ball's logic, would require that America send still more troops to accomplish the desired mission. Eventually, the commitment would become so great that the United States would risk national humiliation if it pulled out.[89]

During the week of 21–27 July 1965, Johnson met with his National Security Council, the JCS, and others to discuss war options. The discussion was limited to three options: McNamara's limited escalation; evacuating the country; or maintaining the present force of 80,000 troops and losing slowly. Virtually no discussion occurred concerning how any additional troops might be used or of Westmoreland's proposed "search-and-destroy" strategy. NSC head McGeorge Bundy presented all the questions Congress would probably ask (which actually constituted an articulate critique of the war strategy), but there was no discussion of the actual criticisms other than how to counter them in Congressional testimony. Throughout, Johnson kept in mind the need to deceive Congress about the cost of the war—to, as Bundy later put it, "protect his legislative program."[90]

After all this, despite the landing of U.S. Marines in March, the arrival of the first U.S. Army combat troops in April, the escalating American bombing campaign against the DRV, and U.S. superiority in numbers and firepower, the ARVN was on its way toward complete collapse.[91]

The American Dilemma

It may have been that even as Johnson decided to intervene, the war was for all practical purposes unwinnable. Because of the structure of the RVN government and the nature of the U.S. armed forces, the actual options available to the Americans were few. At least four major difficulties, each virtually beyond solution, stood in the way of any American military or political policy in Vietnam. First, the RVN government lacked legitimacy. It never had the support of the majority of peasants, and they were the class that counted. Aloof, corrupt, and inefficient, it represented a continuation of the structure established by French colonial administrations. Second, the NLF had tremendous strength in rural areas. As the direct descendant of the Vietminh, its existence and legitimacy predated and superseded that of the RVN. Bright young peasants saw a better future joining the NLF than government organizations. NLF leaders, moreover, were generally superior to RVN leaders in their commitment, determination, and morale. Third, weakening the Front did not equate to strengthening the government. The United States recognized the importance of the political struggle in the countryside, and made great efforts during every phase of the war to improve the government position there. But most "progress" was coercive and obtained only through negative processes. Finally, military force, largely American, was the only force available to combat the Front. Until PLA military units were defeated, nation building would be impossible. But it was almost impossible for the U.S. Army to fight the necessary military campaign without causing great destruction and loss of innocent life. At best, it was terribly difficult to distinguish friend from foe. In addition, PLA units often provoked U.S. fire into populated areas. Heavy casualties could shake the NLF badly, but at the same time, the very violence necessary to inflict such casualties would undermine U.S. political support.[92]

An example of how difficult it was for American troops to "win the hearts and minds" of the rural people is seen in the account of Marine William Erhart. His unit conducted "cordon-and-search" missions in the region around Danang.

> We would go through a village before dawn, rousting [*sic*] everybody out of bed, and kicking down doors and dragging them out if they didn't move fast enough. They all had underground bunkers inside their huts to protect themselves against bombing and shelling. But to us the bunkers were Vietcong hiding places, and we'd blow them up with dynamite—and blow up the huts too. If we spotted extra

rice lying around, we'd confiscate it to keep them from giving it to the Vietcong.

> [As the peasants emerged, they were] herded like cattle into a barbed wire compound, and left to sit there in the hot sun for the rest of the day, with no shade. . . . If they had the wrong identity card, or if the police held a grudge against them, they'd be beaten pretty badly, maybe tortured. Or they might be hauled off to jail, and God knows what happened to them. At the end of the day, the villagers would be turned loose. Their homes had been wrecked, their chickens killed, their rice confiscated—and if they weren't pro-Vietcong before we got there, they sure as hell were by the time we left.[93]

Hanoi's Response to the American Intervention

As the American buildup accelerated in the last half of 1965, the key issue for Hanoi and the NLF was whether to match the American escalation or to continue the successful unconventional war. The big battles initiated by the PLA in 1965 were the result of a controversial decision by General Nguyen Chi Thanh, the Communist commander in South Vietnam, to move to Phase Three of the insurgency. Thanh intended to engage the ARVN and the Americans when they arrived, in conventional, large-unit confrontations. This would, presumably, destroy the ARVN and encourage an American withdrawal. This plan ultimately led to a series of bloody losses for PLA main force units.[94]

Meanwhile, General Westmoreland was determined that the inbound U.S. troops would kill Communists until the North Vietnamese quit. Westmoreland and his staff were euphoric that "the American soldier has come."[95] Westmoreland and his J3, Major General William E. Depuy, had developed simple plans for employing the inbound troops. The intervention would have three phases. In Phase One, U.S. troops would protect logistical bases and occasionally serve as "fire brigades." During Phase Two, the Americans would gain the initiative, then penetrate and eliminate the enemy's base camps and sanctuaries. Phase Three would see American troops move into sustained ground combat and either mop up the last of the main forces and guerrillas or push them back across the frontiers. This strategy, to destroy the PLA in a war of attrition, was essentially a repeat of General Harkins' ideas from the MAAG era, with the exception that ARVN troops were to be replaced with U.S. forces.[96]

The first large-unit fight for American ground troops was the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley in November 1965. Near the Cambodian border, the Third Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, fought a meeting engagement

with three PAVN regiments, inflicting an estimated 3,561 killed while losing 305 American dead. But when the North Vietnamese retreated into Cambodia, the Americans, prohibited by political restrictions, did not pursue them. Moreover, when the Americans helicoptered out of the valley, the North Vietnamese retook possession of the field.[97]

Both sides learned lessons from the encounter. The PAVN learned that it could fight the best U.S. troops and "win"—by its definition. General Giap concluded that the Americans seemed to have merely a "strategy of tactics," and that it would take very decisive tactics to produce a strategic victory. The PAVN, on the other hand, had a strategy to unite Vietnam under Communist rule. Therefore, if the Communists could defeat American tactics—and American helicopters—they could win the war. The PAVN also learned that it had a sanctuary in Cambodia.[98] This battle forced a reassessment of strategy upon the Communists. Throughout 1966 and into 1967, they would continue to engage the Americans in large, conventional fights. However, by the time that General Thanh was killed (supposedly in a B-52 attack in mid-1967), the DRV's leaders realized that a victory over the Americans in a conventional military campaign was highly unlikely.[99]

American Delusions

The Americans saw the near 12:1 "kill ratio" of the Ia Drang battle as proof that they could bleed the enemy to death in a war of attrition. Lieutenant Colonel Harold G. Moore, whose battalion was decisively engaged during the battle, briefed McNamara on the discipline, determination, and numbers of the PAVN. McNamara responded: "It will be a long war."[100]

Despite such favorable kill ratios, Westmoreland's attrition strategy was flawed, as it ignored the views, and ultimately the will, of the American people. Most Americans refused to equate the lives of their sons with those of the enemy, so it was likely that public opinion would eventually reject increasing casualties no matter how many Communists were killed. Westmoreland's determination to pursue main force units and force big battles was also doomed to failure, as PAVN and PLA units could rarely be engaged unless they chose to stand and fight. One U.S. officer said later that it was like "Primo Carnera going after Willie Pep in a pigsty ten miles square."[101]

Although the victory along the Ia Drang forestalled conventional military defeat in South Vietnam, it did not win the war. McNamara

advised Johnson that the proposed additional troops for 1966 would only maintain the status quo. In his opinion, the United States had only two options: seek a compromise solution or greatly increase the level of commitment and continue to try to win the war. This would mean a greatly expanded air campaign against the DRV, an increase in U.S. strength to 400,000 combat troops by the end of 1966, and a possible increase to 600,000 the following year. And it might cost 1,000 American dead each month. The definition of what sort of victory this effort might attain was becoming increasingly problematic. Johnson himself avoided decisions on the subject, admitting in February 1966, "I want to put it off as long as I can, having to make these crucial decisions."[102]

Concurrent with the increasing U.S. ground and air effort in South Vietnam was an intensifying air campaign against North Vietnam. From March 1965 until November 1968, Operation ROLLING THUNDER (originally designed to end the war within eight weeks) dropped one million tons of bombs, roughly eight hundred tons a day for three and a half years. Within a month of the start of ROLLING THUNDER, General Wheeler, chairman of the JCS, informed McNamara that the strikes were not reducing North Vietnam's military capabilities "in any major way." In August 1966, Westmoreland conceded that he saw "no indication that the resolve of the leadership in Hanoi has been reduced." A year later, McNamara admitted the same thing to a secret session of the Senate Armed Services Committee.[103]

One reason that ROLLING THUNDER did not succeed was that North Vietnam was prepared to defend against it. In November 1964, DRV Premier Pham Van Dong visited Moscow to meet with Soviet leaders. Anticipating an American air campaign, he requested materiel and technical assistance to build a modern air-defense system. Shortly thereafter, the DRV received modern jet interceptors, and Soviet technicians began setting up surface-to-air missiles and a sophisticated radar-control system—the most capable air-defense complex seen in any nation since World War II.[104]

Another reason for the American failure was that the United States did not understand the nature of compound warfare and did not understand Hanoi's role in the war. Hanoi was not just supporting the war effort in the south, it was directing it. Once the United States intervened, the conventional war became one between the United States and the DRV. But the United States limited itself in its strikes against North Vietnam. Despite its impressive statistics in terms of tons of bombs dropped, the air campaign left many vital targets untouched.

For example, the dikes along the Red River upstream from Hanoi were never bombed. Destroying them would have unleashed floodwaters and killed hundreds of thousands of North Vietnamese. Similarly, the DRV's major cities of Hanoi and Haiphong never received the devastating "carpet bombing" that had destroyed the urban areas of Hitler's Reich a generation earlier.[105]

This self-imposed limitation was due to American fear that China would enter the war. For the same reason, the Johnson administration decided to limit ground fighting to South Vietnam alone. Not only was the DRV off-limits, so were its supply lines and staging bases in Laos and Cambodia. Thus did the North Vietnamese have the great-power ally and the sanctuaries necessary to conduct fortified compound war. American strategy did not account for these factors. Senior South Vietnamese leaders wondered why the United States poured, in the words of ARVN General Tran Van Don, "more and more men into the country without some clearly defined plan for military victory. . . ."[106]

The air raids not only failed to sufficiently hurt North Vietnam, but also failed to cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail. In 1966, Communist units in South Vietnam needed only fifteen tons of supplies a day from the DRV. By this time, the Soviet Union and China were furnishing Hanoi with over 6,000 tons of supplies a day; only a trickle of this largess had to reach South Vietnam for the logistical effort to succeed. Meanwhile, American air power advocates consistently oversold their ability to interdict this flow. They argued that they could cut the supply lines to South Vietnam, despite America's previous failures to interdict enemy supply lines in Italy and Korea and despite the problems inherent in trading $3 million airplanes for $6,000 trucks. By late 1967, the air attacks had inflicted $300 million in damage on North Vietnam, but they had cost more than seven hundred aircraft worth $900 million to do so. Indeed, the bombing of North Vietnam was actually counterproductive. Instead of forcing Hanoi to capitulate, it rekindled the nationalistic zeal of the North Vietnamese, even those who originally had been opposed to the Communist regime.[107]

America's Concentration on Conventional War

Two operations in late 1966 typified how the U.S. Army applied the "lessons" of the Ia Drang fight. One was Operation PAUL REVERE IV, a fight by the 4th Infantry Division along the Cambodian border in November. The other, Operation ATTLEBORO, conducted from mid-September to late November of the same year, was a series of troop movements, patrols, firefights, and full-blown battles in Tay Ninh

province northwest of Saigon involving the 196th Infantry Brigade, a battalion of the 25th Infantry Division, and eventually most of the 1st Infantry Division. In both cases, the enemy initiated the overwhelming majority of contacts, sucking one American unit after another into ambushes. In both cases, the American command proclaimed victory, but good performances by U.S. units were few. When the 1st Infantry Division took over ATTLEBORO, its commanding general, William DePuy, ordered Rome plows to destroy the entire area. This operation used twelve tons of ordnance from fighter-bombers, 35,000 artillery rounds, and eleven B-52 strikes. The cost was 155 Americans killed and 741 wounded. The enemy supposedly lost 1,106 killed, but only 141 weapons were found, so these figures, like so many of the statistics of this war, are suspect. It is likely that many of the Vietnamese killed were civilians.[108]

The U.S. Army continued to expend more and more effort searching out the enemy and more and more firepower to destroy him, seeking to recreate the success of the 1st Cavalry Division in the Ia Drang. Meanwhile, the PLA had pulled back into an economy of force mode, making contact when and where it desired.[109] Outsiders questioned the American high-firepower approach to fighting guerrillas. In late 1966, Moshe Dayan, soon to become famous as the architect of Israel's victory in the Six-Day War, noted with amazement that in one operation, resulting in a claim of 200 enemy killed, an American unit had expended more artillery ammunition than the Israeli Army used in the entire 1956 Sinai campaign. These methods were not merely failing on the battlefield, they were destroying the rural Vietnamese society as well as the countryside.[110]

Part of the inability of Americans to understand the guerrilla war being waged against the RVN government was their tendency to believe that the war in South Vietnam was dependent on infiltration of military forces from North Vietnam. Thus, the United States command repeatedly emphasized "cutting" the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Actually, the Communist "people's war" strategy did not require outside forces until Phase Three, the move to conventional battle. This move, of course, began in 1965. Still, the Communists were not critically dependent upon using PAVN forces until after the Tet Offensive of 1968 resulted in the near-annihilation of the PLA.[111]

By the time of PAUL REVERE IV and ATTLEBORO, the U.S. Army conducted operations from huge "base camps." Lieutenant Colonel David Hackworth, who during this period toured Vietnam with the famed military author S. L. A. Marshall, later described a visit to the 1st

Cavalry Division's headquarters at An Khe. He found that it contained a general's mess with black soldiers in white livery acting as waiters. The base was so large that one brigade, one-third of the division's strength, was necessary to guard it at all times. Frequently, the presence of these camps actually attracted an enemy presence where there had been none before. According to Hackworth, the general officers lived lives of relative luxury, removed from the day-to-day realities of the war their troops were fighting, and seemed unconcerned about any revealing combat deficiencies. The assistant division commander of the 1st Infantry Division, Brigadier General Bernard Rogers (later supreme military commander of NATO forces in Europe), emerged each morning from his air-conditioned bungalow in pajamas and a bathrobe.[112]

Meanwhile, MACV provided U.S. and ARVN units with huge amounts of war materiel—guns, ammunition, oil, spare parts, etc. But they also flooded South Vietnam with luxuries for the American military. Even troops in remote artillery fire bases received cigarettes and cold beer, flown in by helicopter. Rear-echelon troops (who constituted most of the American presence) shopped at clubs, snack bars, and post exchanges, some of which were huge even by American standards. Inevitably, much of the merchandise filtered into the RVN black market, unbalancing South Vietnam's economic system.[113]

The PLA and PAVN units learned how to fight the Americans during this period. One PLA soldier later stated that "Americans fought better than the ARVN. But you can't fight really well without hatred." Chinese advisers, based on their Korean War experience, predicted that the PLA would need one division to destroy one U.S. battalion. But PLA commanders believed that they could fight on equal terms. There was a tremendous difference in tactics between the PLA and the Americans. The PLA fought close in; the Americans fought at long range with air and artillery. Even when Americans tried to surround the PLA to destroy them with firepower, PLA forces could usually break contact because they knew the terrain better. The PLA leaders believed that their superiority lay in their hatred of their enemy, their devotion to the cause of "liberating" South Vietnam, and their faith in the ultimate success of their cause. These beliefs were constantly reinforced by effective propaganda.[114]

A Critique of the Conventional War

During 1966, U.S. adviser Vann submitted a policy critique opposed to the official viewpoint. Official policy held that the U.S. bombing of

North Vietnam and intervention in the ground war were justifiable responses to North Vietnamese aggression against a sovereign state. The insurgency was a creature of the DRV, and PAVN units in the RVN justified U.S. participation in the ground war. The success of the insurgency, they believed, was due to the cynical manipulation of a simple population by Communist cadres, direct aid from the DRV, and a ruthless terror campaign. Thus, although the RVN government was flawed, its problems stemmed largely from the insurgency and could be fixed once the insurgency was defeated.

Vann argued otherwise. He believed that the insurgency was a symptom of the crisis facing the RVN government rather than a cause of that crisis. In his view, the major problem of the RVN was its structural inability to adapt to the genuine social revolution that had been under way in Vietnam for decades. Nothing could be accomplished unless the government had "leaders who come from, think like, and are responsive to the majority." Communism was not the answer; the peasants were hostile to socialism and its official atheism. But the NLF was strong because RVN policies forced virtually all non-Communist progressives into an alliance with the Communist party. Thus, Vann argued that U.S. policies were counterproductive. With the countryside as the theater of war, the American firepower-intensive tactics and overreliance on technology turned apathetic villagers into NLF supporters.[115]

Such on-the-record dissents were rare. Officially, all was going well. U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Harold K. Johnson disputed the notion that the Vietnam conflict was fundamentally any different from previous wars. However, an anonymous Pentagon wit during this period observed that "Although we have redoubled our efforts, we have lost sight of our objective."[116]

The American Conventional Campaign Continues

By this time, the U.S. military in Vietnam had come to resemble anything but a force designed to win a dirty, difficult counterguerrilla war. Visitors to high headquarters received standard briefings from spit-shined officers in air-conditioned buildings. Everywhere, the claim was the same—the war was being won.[117] Similar problems were evident in the field, even in the Army's veteran units. An observer noted that even in the elite 173d Airborne Brigade, officers and NCOs did not take care of the small things that make a unit effective in combat. The observer noted one soldier returning from patrol listening to Jimi Hendrix on a portable radio.[118]

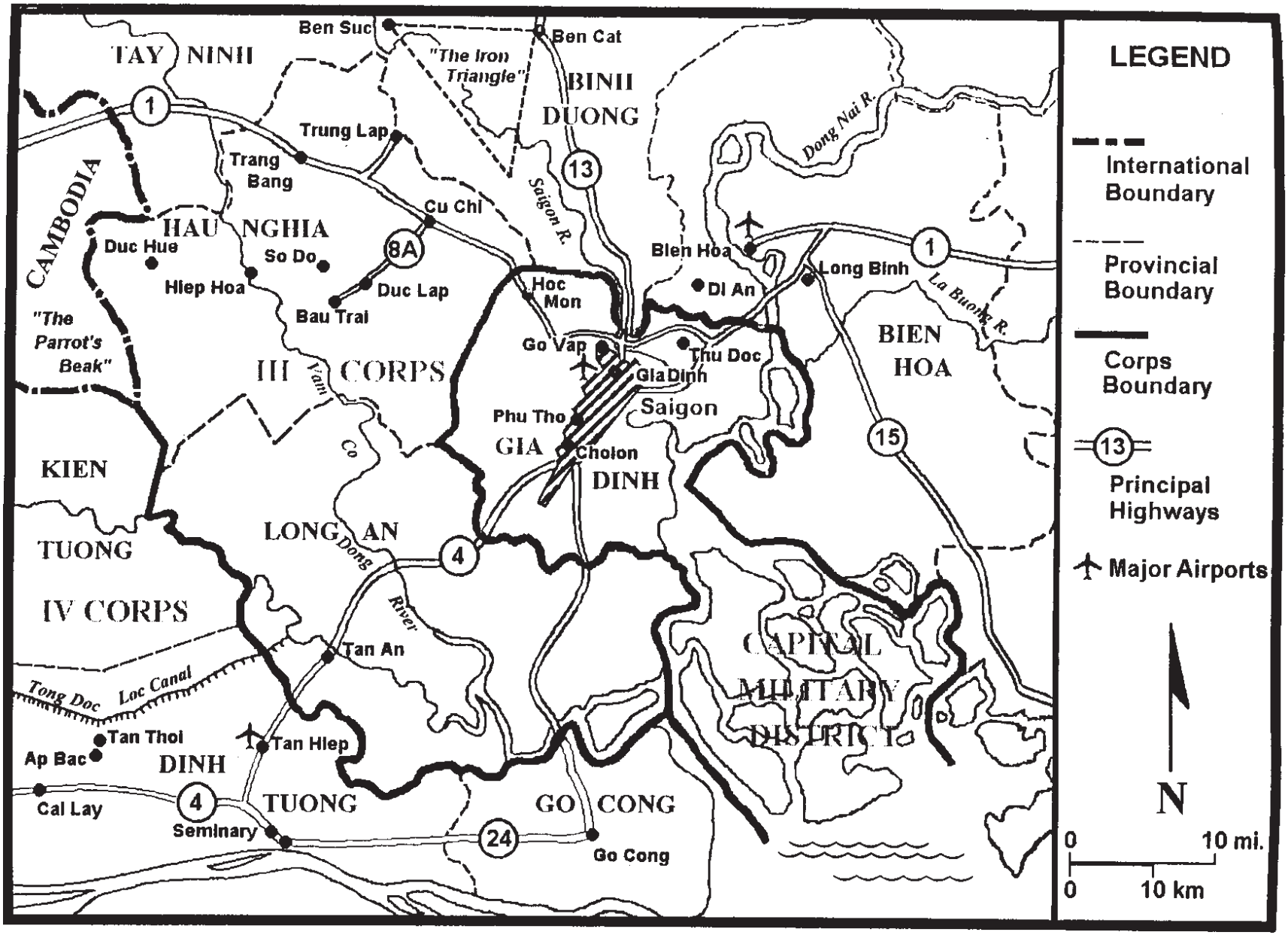
Some units were better than others, however. The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, avoided using helicopters and "harassment and interdiction" artillery fire. It concentrated on night operations, patrols, and ambushes. One of its battalions caught 100 PAVN soldiers in a box ambush, killing 41 and capturing 36. A squad from the same brigade killed 19 PAVN soldiers, captured 1, and captured 18 weapons. This was part of Operation GERONIMO I, which inflicted 149 KIA, captured 76 POWs, and secured 143 weapons. But such performances were the exception rather than the rule.[119]

More typical was CEDAR FALLS, the January 1967 operation to clear the Iron Triangle north of Saigon. Earlier efforts by the ARVN in late 1964 and the U.S. 173d Airborne Brigade in late 1965 had failed. This time, the U.S. 1st Infantry Division, 25th Infantry Division, 173d Airborne Brigade, and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment attacked the enemy logistical center. But, forewarned, the PLA evacuated the area prior to the operation. The U.S. units, nonetheless, engaged in a massive effort to destroy tunnel complexes and logistical facilities and converted 7,000 civilians into refugees at the cost of 72 U.S. killed. But as soon as the Americans left the area, the PLA reoccupied it. One year later the Iron Triangle served as the major staging area for PLA attacks on Saigon during the Tet Offensive.[120]

In early 1967, Bernard Fall, the veteran French observer of Indochina, discussed the war with visiting American officers in Vietnam. His thesis was that the United States could no more win the war than France could have. While the United States might win militarily (firepower and mobility might prove decisive), such a military victory would be irrelevant because the Vietnam War was, first and foremost, a political war. The Americans, like the French, did not understand this and would therefore lose. Fall claimed that the United States dropped more bombs every day than the French did in the six-month siege of Dien Bien Phu. Bombing the enemy back to the stone age was not the solution, however. Social reform was.[121]

Interviews with enemy POWs in this period revealed the determination of the Communists to prevail. Almost unanimously, they declared that they were prepared to fight ten or fifteen or twenty years to win. Some would ask, "Are the Americans ready to fight that long?"[122] Robert Thompson later described the U.S. dilemma, "In a People's Revolutionary War, if you are not winning you are losing, because the enemy can always sit out a stalemate without making concessions."[123]

MACV, however, was encouraged in the latter half of 1967 by a series of engagements with aggressive PLA and PAVN units in the


LEGEND
International Boundary
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Corps Boundary
Principal Highways
Major Airports
N
0 10 mi.
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TAY NINH
BINH DUONG
BIEN HOA
HAU NGHIA
LONG AN
KIEN TUONG
TUONG DINH
GIA DINH
GO CONG
CAPITAL MILITARY DISTRICT
III CORPS
IV CORPS
CAMBODIA
"The Parrot's Beak"
"The Iron Triangle"
Saigon
Ben Suc
Ben Cat
Trung Lap
Trang Bang
Cu Chi
Duc Hue
So Do
Hiep Hoa
Duc Lap
Bau Trai
Hoc Mon
Go Vap
Phu Tho
Cholon
Bien Hoa
Di An
Long Binh
Thu Duc
Gia Dinh
Tan An
Tan Thoi
Ap Bac
Tan Hiep
Cai Lay
Seminary
Go Cong
Saigon R.
Dong Nai R.
La Buong R.
Vam Co
Dong River
Tong Doc Loc Canal
1
13
8A
4
15
24

Map 2

Central Highlands. The Communist soldiers carried new Soviet weapons and equipment and were deployed in regimental and even division strength. This time, the United States was able to bring its awesome firepower effectively to bear on the enemy. At Conthien, a small Marine outpost just south of the 17th Parallel, nearly eight hundred B-52 sorties dropped 22,000 tons of bombs, while fighter-bombers and warships in the South China Sea also bombed and shelled the area. Communist losses were staggering; MACV estimated that the enemy had suffered 90,000 killed in action during the year.[124]

Thus, by the end of 1967, MACV's faith in its attrition strategy was unshaken. The only question that Westmoreland had concerned time. If speedier results were desired, then more American troops would have to come to Vietnam, and it would be necessary to remove the political restrictions on the war. While the U.S. military had not achieved victory, it had not suffered any significant defeats on the battlefield either. The Communist Tet Offensive of 1968 would change this sort of thinking on the part of the American people and of the Johnson administration, but not that of the military leaders.[125]

Tet 1968

On 30 January 1968, the NLF drastically shifted the focus of the war. Nearly 70,000 PLA soldiers launched a surprise offensive against more than one hundred cities and towns, including Saigon, violating the Tet lunar new year holiday that the Communists had pledged to observe. PLA soldiers fought stubbornly, ferociously, and blindly, frequently abandoning flexible tactics in favor of direct assaults. They demonstrated, moreover, unprecedented brutality, murdering minor government officials, schoolteachers, foreign doctors, and missionaries. In addition, they attacked U.S. and ARVN supply dumps and headquarters. They also seized the U.S. Embassy compound in Saigon, holding it for more than six hours. What is more, they held the provincial capital of Hue for twenty-five days, committing horrendous atrocities against the local population.[126]

In many places, U.S. and government troops crushed the attackers with overwhelming force. But the Communist feat, displayed to the world on television screens, stunned U.S. public opinion. One of the most vivid and horrible images of the entire war was that of General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, head of the national police, executing a PLA captive with a revolver to the head. An Associated Press photographer and a National Broadcasting Corporation cameraman recorded the scene and showed it to the world.[127]

Contributing to American unpreparedness was the ongoing battle for Khe Sanh, a small U.S. Marine outpost near the Laotian border. In an effort to divert American attention from the PLA's preparations for the Tet Offensive, Communist forces began converging on Khe Sanh in late December 1967, and a two-month siege ensued. Eventually, the Communists were crushed by U.S. air power and artillery fire and suffered perhaps ten thousand dead, while killing fewer than five hundred Marines. But the siege grasped the attention of both MACV and the White House, resurrecting the specter of the French debacle at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and haunting President Johnson. Westmoreland perceived the siege of Khe Sanh to be part of a Communist offensive to seize the RVN's northern provinces prior to proposing a peace settlement, and he deployed the majority of U.S. combat forces to the Central Highlands to prevent such an occurrence. This, of course, helped ensure that U.S. forces were distant from the South Vietnamese urban areas when the Tet Offensive began.[128]

The Tet Offensive was the end result of a reconsidered Communist strategy. In September 1967, General Giap appraised the current situation and conceded that the situation was deadlocked on the battlefield. In his estimate, the impasse favored the Communists. Considering all their other global commitments, as well as Lyndon Johnson's domestic social programs, the Americans could not escalate the conflict without overextending themselves. Therefore, Giap's continuing strategy would be to bleed the United States until it agreed to a settlement on Hanoi's terms. Giap also saw an opportunity to drive a wedge between the United States and the RVN. One objective of the upcoming offensive would be to demonstrate that the Americans were vulnerable despite their immense military power, thus encouraging the RVN's urban administrators to turn against the United States. At the same time, the rural population was to begin an uprising.

Significant internal conflicts existed between the Communist military and political leaders before and during the offensive, especially within South Vietnam. PLA leaders, with first-hand experience in dealing with the rural population, did not believe that the people as a whole would actively support the offensive. Party leaders, more attuned to policy decisions in Hanoi, asserted that the people would certainly revolt and overthrow the Saigon government.[129]

Militarily, the net result was a disaster for the Communists. The Allied response to the offensive devastated PLA main force units. In its aftermath, Communist morale reached all time lows, and PLA soldiers denounced their political leaders for "grievous miscalculations."

Young men in North Vietnam began attempting to avoid service in South Vietnam, and many had to be assigned to labor and transport units rather than to combat commands. In addition, the loss of so many guerrilla leaders meant that they would be replaced by men from North Vietnam, foreigners to many South Vietnamese.[130]

But in compound warfare, battlefield results are not all that counts, and politically, the result was different. The American high command—from MACV, to the JCS, to the White House—was stunned that the Communists had been able to achieve near-total surprise for their massive attack. While Westmoreland and Johnson did their best to demonstrate calm confidence, the gap between the optimistic, official American assessments and reality had never before loomed quite so large. American public support for the war, which had been ebbing since early 1966, reacted adversely to Tet and began an even steeper decline than before.[131]

The American political reaction was an unexpected result, and for the Communists a fortunate one. Just as the military strength of the PLA was virtually destroyed and the NLF's political strength in the countryside was revealed to be less than claimed, the landscape of U.S. domestic politics shifted. In Washington, Robert McNamara began indicating that he had doubts about American strategy and was eased out of office. At the end of February, the chairman of the JCS, General Earle Wheeler, submitted to President Johnson a report that encapsulated the American and RVN difficulty. It discussed the classic dilemma any conventional power faces when attempting to fight a compound warfare operator with a powerful ally and political or geographical safe havens. The ARVN had to secure key points to maintain the government and the security of military installations. However, the concentration of forces necessary for this effort ceded control of the countryside to the Communists. In light of this situation, Wheeler asserted that MACV's strategy must be to secure Saigon and the provincial capitals. Again, U.S. leadership missed the key point: it was control of the countryside, not of key installations, that mattered in the long run. Faced with this report and a request for 200,000 more troops, Johnson assigned his newly designated Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford (a past proponent of a tough war policy), to conduct a meticulous review of U.S. strategy.[132]

In addition to more troops, Westmoreland and the JCS were requesting the mobilization of U.S. reserves and permission to attack PLA sanctuaries in Cambodia and Laos. Clifford, guided by input from disillusioned civilians within the Defense Department, asked tough

questions of the service chiefs and did not get the answers he wanted. The chiefs reluctantly conceded that they did not know how long it would take to win the war, how many more troops it might take to do so, whether the Communists might be able to match any American buildup, or whether there was any alternative to the attrition strategy being followed.[133]

Clifford reported to Johnson that there was no reason to believe that 200,000 additional troops or even two or three times that number would succeed in defeating the Communists. Implicitly ruling out the prospect of victory, he proposed that Westmoreland reduce the scope of his operations and, further, that the United States put the Saigon regime on notice that continued American assistance would depend on improved ARVN performance.[134]

While a somber Johnson considered this report, Congressional opposition to the war mounted. In response to rumors of a JCS request for more troops, many heretofore allies of the president took to the floor of the House and Senate to question the direction of the war. Suddenly, as the presidential primary season began, Johnson faced stiff opposition from antiwar senators Eugene McCarthy and Robert F. Kennedy. On 31 March 1968, in a television address to the American public, Johnson announced that he was halting the bombing of North Vietnam north of the 20th Parallel as a gesture to induce the DRV to consider peace negotiations. Then, he announced dramatically that he would not run for another term in office.[135]

Six weeks later, on 10 May, U.S. and DRV diplomats met in Paris to begin peace negotiations. Hopes ran so high on the U.S. side that the team chose to live in hotel rooms, thinking that a settlement was near at hand. Within weeks, however, the talks were at an impasse. The United States insisted that the DRV pull all its forces out of South Vietnam, and the Communists, on their part, insisted that the Saigon regime must be reformed in a manner that included NLF representation. Neither side would concede, and the negotiations continued for another five years.[136]

Meanwhile, the war in the South Vietnamese countryside persisted. While the Americans sought large-unit battles, the Communists reverted to small-scale operations as they attempted to rebuild in the aftermath of Tet. In addition, the PAVN now took up the burden of military operations. One method of avoiding American advantages in mobility and air power was to use infiltrators and sappers to attack U.S. fixed positions. This was an expensive process for both sides. Many sappers were lost, caught in booby traps or in artillery protective fires.

Frequently, in such cases, the bodies of the PAVN dead could not be recovered. However, on the receiving end, sappers were a constant threat and seemed to cause damage and inflict casualties out of proportion to their own losses.[137]

In the United States, the political turmoil continued throughout 1968. The Democratic party's convention in Chicago in August was a disaster; police efforts to control violent antiwar protestors escalated into a riot. With the public's dissatisfaction with the conduct of the war a major issue, Republican Richard M. Nixon won the presidential election in November. Nixon recognized that the United States could not obtain a military victory, but he still believed that he could achieve a diplomatic settlement favorable to American interests. One of his earliest decisions was to appoint Henry Kissinger, an academic foreign policy expert, as his national security adviser.[138]

Another appointment was that of Melvin Laird as Secretary of Defense. Laird recognized that the United States would no longer offer South Vietnam open-ended support, that it would be necessary for the RVN to assume more of the burden of the war. He coined the term "Vietnamization" to describe the process of replacing U.S. troops (who numbered 540,000 by the end of 1968) with ARVN soldiers.[139]

Nixon Changes American Strategy

Nixon became president in January 1969. By this time, eight years after John F. Kennedy declared that America would "pay any price, bear any burden," it was becoming evident to friends and foes alike that the United States was not committed to victory in Vietnam. Within the U.S. military establishment, especially within the units in Vietnam, morale plummeted as this realization sank in.

Nixon had inherited a bad situation, but he was determined to do his utmost to change the dynamic of the war while he still had sufficient public support to prosecute it. Nixon seemed to have understood the nature of compound warfare far more clearly than had Johnson. He decided to attack the Communist effort by severing the guerrillas from their safe havens and the support they received from outside allies. In March 1969, with the tacit approval of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the United States began secretly bombing the Communist headquarters in Cambodia. This so-called "hot pursuit" operation would last fourteen months and achieve some noteworthy results but would ultimately fail to deter PAVN operations through Cambodia.[140]

The other part of Nixon's plan was to disrupt the support the North Vietnamese received from the Soviet Union and China. Starting in early 1969, Nixon and Kissinger attempted to use the Soviets to put diplomatic pressure on the DRV. Described as "linkage," this attempt came to nothing in the near term. The Soviet relationship with China was chilly in the aftermath of Mao's Cultural Revolution and the Soviet's own 1969 invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Soviets feared that any pressure they put on the DRV would merely cause Hanoi to seek closer relations with China.[141]

While Nixon and Kissinger pursued diplomatic solutions, the killing war went on. A battle that seemed to typify American frustrations occurred in May. A battalion of the 101st Airborne Division assaulted a PAVN position on Apbia mountain in the A Shau Valley eleven times over a period of ten days. In support, the Air Force dropped 500 tons of high explosives and seventy-six tons of napalm. When the Americans finally took the hill, they counted over five hundred enemy dead. But they had suffered 476 casualties themselves, including fifty killed. Apbia Mountain had acquired a new name—"Hamburger Hill." Press reports were extremely critical, as were the reactions of many within the U.S. Congress. In an incredible indicator of how far American soldier morale had fallen, the GI protest newspaper, *GI Says*, offered a $10,000 bounty on Lieutenant Colonel Weldon Honeycutt, the commander of the attacking battalion.[142]

America's war of attrition had come home to roost. Westmoreland, by then serving in Washington as Army Chief of Staff, defended the utility of such actions as the Hamburger Hill fight. He asserted that fighting large battles in the unpopulated hinterlands was to the Americans' advantage, as their superior mobility meant that units could deploy for battle, fight and win, then move back to the populated areas to protect Vietnamese civilians. In addition, by fighting in remote regions, U.S. units could destroy the enemy with minimal damage to populated areas. Furthermore, the Hamburger Hill operation was in accordance with the U.S. strategy of attrition warfare. While relocating the population might be harsh, in the long run, it was for the good of the rural population. Westmoreland was aware of the My Lai massacre (although the public, as yet, was not) and later cited it as an example of what could happen when U.S. troops operated with the peasants left in place. Finally, according to Westmoreland, there was nothing wrong with attrition warfare. While attrition had gotten a bad name at the Somme and Verdun, the war in Vietnam was not against "Asian hordes" but against an enemy with relatively limited manpower. As the

United States killed more and more enemy and the RVN government gained control of more and more of the countryside (as Westmoreland asserted it was doing), the PLA would have to turn to the North Vietnamese to replace its losses. Meanwhile, the United States was buying time to build up the ARVN and "enable the government to solidify its position in the countryside." Also, given the political restrictions and limits on troop strength, there was, in any case, little choice for an alternative strategy.[143]

Despite such official optimism, however, Westmoreland's successor in Saigon, General Creighton Abrams, received orders to scale down future military operations to avoid such heavy casualties.[144] While attempting to disrupt the DRV's compound warfare effort, President Nixon was simultaneously attempting to scale back U.S. involvement in the war, as he had promised to do in his presidential campaign. In June, he met with RVN President Nguyen Van Thieu at Midway and announced a 25,000-man troop withdrawal, with 40,000 more to follow in September. Secretary of Defense Laird pressed Nixon to commit to further reductions to reach a level of 206,000 troops by the end of 1971.[145]

Thus, at the same time that the United States went on the diplomatic offensive and, at the tactical level, the military offensive, it began a strategic withdrawal from the war. In the midst of this activity, on 2 September 1969, Ho Chi Minh died at the age of seventy-nine. He had earlier retired from day-to-day management of national affairs in favor of a collective leadership headed by Le Duan, the senior member of the Politburo, Pham Van Dong, the prime minister of the DRV, and Vo Nguyen Giap, head of the armed forces. Any hopes the Americans had that Ho's death might derail the DRV's war effort were quickly dashed. Ho's successors were determined to carry forward his goal of unifying Vietnam regardless of U.S. threats.[146]

Later that month, in what must have seemed to the DRV leadership a further demonstration of the lack of American staying power, Nixon announced the second round of U.S. troop withdrawals as well as a reduction in draft calls. This did not have the desired effect of placating his domestic opposition, however. Many senators urged that all U.S. troops be home by the end of 1970.[147]

Further undermining Nixon's ability to extend the war, the American people, in November 1969, learned of the My Lai massacre. In March of the previous year, U.S. soldiers had committed an atrocity that seemed reminiscent of the actions of the Nazis or the Japanese in World War II. Soldiers of the Americal Division had murdered scores,

perhaps hundreds, of Vietnamese civilians at a small village in Quang Ngai province. It had been a methodical operation that went on all day, with the soldiers even stopping to eat lunch before resuming the butchery.[148]

Amidst all the gloom, there was one American initiative that was succeeding—the Phoenix Program to infiltrate the PLA rural apparatus and "neutralize" Communist leaders. This was the only government military operation based on the recognition that the Vietnam conflict differed radically from conventional war. Phoenix was an attempt to "break the cycle" of Communist domination of the countryside by creating an environment wherein friendly political structures could survive but the enemy's structures could not.[149]

Phoenix had many shortcomings. While its goals were to be accomplished from a spectrum of actions, from friendly persuasion to assassination, many agents apparently thought that this made them "honorary participants in Murder, Inc."[150] Phoenix was also corrupt. Often "Viet Cong" were arrested on the basis of anonymous denunciations received by the police. Worse still, large numbers of suspects were arrested in connection with the efforts of each provincial security agency to fulfill the quota assigned to it, regardless of a suspect's political affiliation. It was not unknown for province chiefs or police chiefs to seek to exceed their quotas each month to demonstrate their competence. The Phoenix Program often turned into a money-making scheme through which a villager's release could be obtained for the payment of a bribe, usually about $25 to $50.[151] Furthermore, Phoenix was never a high priority for the Saigon government. The manpower devoted to it never reached even 5 percent of that devoted to the war effort as a whole.[152]

Nonetheless, the Phoenix Program was effective. It frightened the Communists. Their leaders after the war admitted that it had created tremendous difficulties for their operations in the countryside, forcing Communist units to withdraw to sanctuaries in Cambodia.[153]

These Cambodian sanctuaries would lead Nixon into a serious misstep. In March 1970, while in Moscow attempting to gain support for the eviction of DRV troops from Cambodia, Prince Norodom Sihanouk was overthrown by his defense minister, Lon Nol. In May, with Lon Nol's approval, U.S. and ARVN troops invaded Cambodia in an attempt to destroy Communist staging areas. While they destroyed a large amount of foodstuffs and other supplies and reduced Communist military pressure against the Saigon region, the triumph was only a temporary one. The Communists were able to replace their losses with

new supplies from the Soviet Union and China, and they merely shifted their operations to a new area, the northern provinces of the RVN.[154]

Back in America, antiwar protests reached a crescendo in response to this action, which seemed to contradict Nixon's stated policy of deescalating the war. At Kent State University in Ohio, nervous National Guardsmen fired on angry demonstrators, killing four of them. Across the nation, many middle-class students staged strikes, shutting down over 400 colleges and universities. Congress responded to the clamor, attaching to an appropriation bill an amendment that prohibited U.S. ground troops from operating in Laos or Cambodia.[155]

In Vietnam, U.S. troop strength stood at 280,000 at the end of 1970. The morale of those soldiers remaining continued to plummet. In many units, discipline broke down completely. A large percentage of American troops turned to drug and alcohol abuse, racial conflict escalated, and the heretofore rare practice of "fragging" (killing) unpopular officers became commonplace. To make matters worse, the Vietnamization policy received a major setback early the following year. President Nixon and his advisers foresaw a major Communist offensive in 1972 designed to, if nothing else, influence the U.S. presidential election. To disrupt this, in February 1971, the ARVN launched Operation LAM SON 719 to cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Without U.S. advisers present, the South Vietnamese conducted an offensive across the border into Laos. The operation was a disaster. As Communist resistance mounted, ARVN units began to fall apart, and their subsequent withdrawal became a near rout.[156]

President Nixon now returned to his effort to disrupt the compound warfare dynamics favoring the DRV. Recognizing that anything resembling victory would only be possible by separating North Vietnam from its powerful sponsors, he renewed an intensified diplomatic offensive in conjunction with a stepped-up bombing campaign against North Vietnam. In February 1972, he visited Mao Tse-tung in China, where the two great antagonists exchanged toasts. Then, in May, Nixon visited Moscow, where Soviet party leader Leonid Brezhnev welcomed him despite the increased bombing of the DRV.[157]

The cordial receptions Nixon received in Beijing and Moscow demoralized North Vietnam's leaders, but they did not halt their efforts to demonstrate their strength, show that Vietnamization was a failure, and improve their military position while negotiations in Paris continued. On 31 March 1972, Hanoi launched its long-awaited attack.[158] This so-called "Easter Offensive" was a massive,

coordinated, conventional operation—the type of fight the Americans had warned about and prepared for since 1956. The Communist strategists believed that the 65,000 U.S. troops remaining in Vietnam (only 6,000 of whom were in combat units) could not intervene effectively and that the U.S. political situation would not allow commitment of any additional troops. The PAVN objectives were to achieve a resounding victory to humiliate President Nixon, destroy his war policy, and prevent his reelection; to destroy as many ARVN forces as possible and to occupy key terrain threatening Saigon and the viability of the Thieu government; to discredit the ongoing Vietnamization and pacification programs; to cause U.S. troop withdrawals to accelerate; and, ultimately, to seize control of South Vietnam. One of the highlights of this offensive was the siege of An Loc from April through June 1972. This operation illustrated in microcosm both the successes and the failures of Vietnamization. The stakes in the battle were high for both sides, as President Thieu virtually challenged the PAVN to take the city.[159]

During the two-month siege, three PAVN divisions reinforced with tanks subjected An Loc to heavy shelling unprecedented in the war. But in doing so, they fought a set-piece battle and exposed themselves to massive American air power. In the words of a senior U.S. adviser, "hold them and I'll kill them with air power; give me something to bomb and I'll win." B-52 "Arc Light" strikes saved the day countless times at An Loc. Indeed, the primary task of the ARVN's U.S. advisers was to coordinate air strikes.[160]

The siege was lifted on 18 June, and the battle proper ended on 20 July. An Loc received an estimated 78,000 rounds of enemy shellfire over a three-month period, and 15,000 refugees were forced from their homes. Meanwhile, the ARVN defenders took 5,400 casualties. American air strikes certainly made the difference. The U.S. Air Force flew 262 Arc Light missions, and the USAF and VNAF provided 9,203 tactical air strikes. Estimated PAVN casualties were 10,000 killed, 15,000 wounded, and more than eighty tanks and other vehicles destroyed.[161]

Seen in another light, these figures were less reassuring. At an average of fifty pounds each, the 78,000 PAVN shells meant that An Loc received 1,950 tons of enemy artillery fire. By contrast, the 262 Arc Light strikes alone dropped 42,444 tons of bombs. This is a better than 20 to 1 firepower advantage for the ARVN and does not even include tactical air sorties, AH-1 Cobra gunship fires, or the six 105mm howitzers fired by the ARVN defenders. Casualty figures were also

unedifying. The total strength of participating PAVN units prior to the battle was 35,000. Somehow, these units absorbed 25,000 casualties (assuming the U.S. estimates were correct), a rate greater than 70 percent, and they still continued to press the attack. In contrast, the ARVN defenders, absorbing about 40 percent casualties, were on the verge of rout at several points.

President Nixon proclaimed that An Loc was proof of the success of Vietnamization, but the ARVN "victory" was more accurately an avoidance of defeat. Even this achievement would not have been possible without U.S. advisers and massive U.S. air power. With some exceptions, ARVN leadership was mediocre and discipline poor. This boded ill for the ARVN's future should U.S. support disappear. On the other side of the ledger, the PAVN demonstrated how ruthlessly it would operate in order to win. On several occasions, the Communists attacked refugees attempting to flee An Loc, and a PAVN T-54 tank killed 100 civilians inside a Catholic church.[162]

The Communist leadership made a mistake in 1972, abandoning its previously successful compound warfare tactics to conduct conventional assaults, such as at An Loc. This gave the advantage to the United States, which had been trying unsuccessfully for years to force the PLAF and PAVN to wage a stand-up fight. As such, it was a tactical victory for the American way of war, but one with adverse consequences. A serious examination of An Loc and other ARVN operations, such as LAM SON 719, should have demonstrated clearly that the ARVN was not ready to take over the war. It still suffered from the same weaknesses that it had exhibited in 1960: politicized commanders, inept leadership, and tactical incompetence at higher levels of command. This would become painfully evident in 1975 when the PAVN would destroy South Vietnam's army in fifty-five days.[163]

Richard Nixon decisively defeated the antiwar candidate, Senator George McGovern, in the 1972 election. During his campaign, Nixon proclaimed that his war policies had been successful and that, for all practical purposes, peace was at hand. However, with U.S. troops continuing to withdraw, he had few remaining weapons in his arsenal to persuade Hanoi to accept that this was indeed so. What he did have left was air power, and on Christmas Day 1972, Nixon ordered the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong to force the DRV to agree to a settlement. The bombing was heavy and destructive, but it was aimed at military targets and civilian casualties were relatively light. Finally, on 27 January 1973, in Paris, the United States, RVN, DRV, and PRV (see NLF)

signed a cease-fire agreement. A comprehensive political settlement was to follow.

The Failure of Nixon's Strategy

The last American soldiers left Vietnam on 29 March 1973. Three days later, American prisoners of war were released in Hanoi. For America, the war was over.[164] But Nixon could not fulfill his promises to continue to support the RVN government with U.S. aid and air power, for his administration began unraveling that summer. As Congressional inquiries into the secret bombing of Cambodia and into the emerging Watergate scandal intensified, the Communists resumed their offensive military operations in South Vietnam.[165]

By January 1974, Thieu announced that the war had begun again. But whatever help he might have wanted to provide, Nixon's hands were tied. Impeachment hearings began in May, and in August, he resigned his office, to be replaced by the new president, Gerald R. Ford. Meanwhile, the DRV planned a final offensive for the coming dry season.[166] In January 1975, the Communist offensive began. The ARVN, on whom the Americans had lavished so much effort since 1956, collapsed, and PAVN forces captured one city after another, finally seizing Saigon on 30 April 1975. The war was over, and the United States' long effort in Vietnam had failed.[167]

Conclusion

Analysts have expended much effort in examining how and why the United States failed in Vietnam. Colonel Harry Summers (U.S. Army, Retired) observed that the United States never established a "polarity" with the Communists in its war efforts. That is, the United States never had the will to match the enemy's will, and it limited its efforts to what it thought was reasonable, while the Communists devoted their entire national effort to the war. While nothing is inherently wrong with limiting the means of war, it is self-defeating to do so unless the enemy is bound by similar limits. Because of its fear of nuclear war and its unwillingness to fight a land war against China, the United States never developed effective counters to the DRV's strengths. This is an example of the fundamental asymmetry of compound warfare. While most warfare is asymmetrical to some degree (e.g., British radar and fighters versus German bombers in the Battle of Britain), a clever compound operator makes the asymmetry work in his favor. In the case of the Vietnam War, the DRV fought a political war, using military force as only one of its tools or means. It also skillfully and ruthlessly

employed political agitation, propaganda, terrorism, and international diplomacy. Meanwhile, the United States emphasized a military war and pursued battlefield successes even as its political situation crumbled.[168]

Additionally, many critics have denounced the ARVN, as it was formed by the Americans, as too "heavy" a force. In their view, to defeat guerrillas, the RVN government needed primarily light infantry forces. Such troops needed to have been mobile on the ground in order to patrol the populated areas intensively to keep guerrilla bands off-guard and away from the people. Light infantry forces, organized and trained for counterinsurgency, would have avoided the tendency, fostered by conventional doctrine, to cluster their strength in large units. Only in Phase 3 of the guerrilla offensive did friendly forces need large, conventional units.[169]

The United States' principal problem in Vietnam was its inability to effectively combat the enemy's use of compound warfare dynamics. The Americans were unable to combat guerrillas effectively while simultaneously maintaining the ability to fight large conventional battles. Moreover, a large part of America's difficulty in applying military force directly to North Vietnam, the sponsor of the guerrilla warfare, was its reluctance or inability to attack the supply lines from China and the Soviet Union or the Communist sanctuaries in Laos and Cambodia.

And no matter what force structure or strategy the Americans might have adopted, they still faced an implacable enemy—time. This, too, is part of the compound warfare dynamic. As analyst Walter Krepinevitch notes: "Time is an ally of the insurgent. . . . [T]he longer the insurgency continues, the greater the sense of futility and frustration on the government's part, a frustration that can lead to ill-advised shortcuts."[170]

In large part, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam succeeded in winning its war by utilizing all the classical elements of fortified compound warfare: a conventional force, a guerrilla force, safe havens, and a major-power alliance. Throughout much of the war, the DRV directed a conventional campaign with largely southern personnel and, at the same time, maintained the threat of a conventional invasion from North Vietnam. Initially, the DRV sponsored a guerrilla movement within the RVN composed largely of southerners. After the southern guerrillas were nearly annihilated in the Tet Offensive, the DRV renewed the irregular campaign with infiltrators from North Vietnam and shifted the burden of the conventional campaign from the mostly

southern PLA to its own PAVN units. Meanwhile, throughout most of the war, Communist units retained the capability of withdrawing to sanctuaries in North Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia to escape pressure from U.S. and ARVN operations. The DRV established a supply and infiltration route, the Ho Chi Minh Trail, to supply these men; the United States never succeeded in cutting this logistical artery. At the same time, until it was too late for the Americans to reverse the course of the war, the DRV had powerful allies in the Soviet Union and China. When Richard Nixon became president of the United States, and at least partly recognized a way out of the dilemma, the American public no longer provided sufficient support for what still promised to be a long, grinding war effort. Nixon scored diplomatic successes with the Soviet Union and China, but these occurred too late to enable America to reverse the course of events and win the war. It was a near-perfect demonstration of the strength of fortified compound warfare when employed by an intelligent operator.

Perhaps the classic example of fortified compound warfare is Wellington's campaign against Napoleon in Spain. Britain, the great power, utilized Spanish guerrillas to fix, attrit, and demoralize the French in an economical and ultimately successful effort. Hanoi's campaign was similar in many respects and clearly utilized the principles of fortified compound warfare. But the success of the Hanoi regime in its thirty-year effort to gain independence from France and to unify Vietnam under its rule also can be contrasted with Wellington's campaign. In Vietnam, the "compound operator" was neither the Soviet Union nor China—the two great powers involved on the Communist side—but the DRV. Neither of those great powers successfully exploited the North Vietnamese in the struggle against the West. Instead, Ho Chi Minh and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam used both the Soviets and Chinese, as well as the National Liberation Front, as means of obtaining uniquely North Vietnamese ends.

Hanoi's ends demonstrate another dissimilarity to Wellington's campaign in Spain. North Vietnam's enemy was not primarily the United States but the government of South Vietnam. North Vietnam's primary goal was not to defeat the United States but to unify Vietnam under Hanoi's rule. America's inability to see the DRV's war effort through Hanoi's eyes meant that, even when it recognized the dynamics of compound warfare, it was fatally hindered by its ignorance of its enemy.

Glossary

A Shau Valley	PLA stronghold. Site of the 101st Airborne Division's assault on Apbia Mountain ("Hamburger Hill") in May 1969.
Abrams, General Creighton W., Jr.	Commander of MACV after 1968.
Agglomeration Centers Plan	The 1959 attempt by Diem to neutralize Communist sympathizers by housing them with families known to be loyal. It was an immediate failure.
Agroville Program	The 1959 attempt by Diem to concentrate loyal peasants in controlled, protected villages and hamlets. Only 25 percent complete, it was deemed a failure by 1961.
An Loc	Village in South Vietnam. Site of PAVN siege of ARVN units from April through June 1972.
Ap Bac	Village in South Vietnam. Site of a disastrous January 1963 attack by the ARVN.
Arc Light	U.S. Air Force technique. On each mission, three B-52 strategic bombers dropped conventional bombs in tactical support of ground troops.
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam. The South Vietnamese army.
Bao Dai	Emperor of Vietnam under French rule. Abdicated in 1945, reinstalled by the French in 1954, and deposed in 1955.
Binh Hoa	Village in South Vietnam. Site of a flawed January 1962 attack by the ARVN.
Cong An	RVN secret police.
COSVN	Central Office, South Vietnam. The command and control headquarters of the PLA.
Diem, Ngo Dinh	Last prime minister for Bao Dai, first president of South Vietnam, overthrown and murdered in November 1963.
Dien Bien Phu	A village in northwestern Vietnam, site of the decisive 1954 battle of the Vietminh War.

DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Communist state of North Vietnam.
Easter Offensive	The DRV's March 1972 attack.
Eisenhower, Dwight D.	U.S. president, 1953-61. Refused to intervene militarily to save the French position in Indochina in 1954. Later, committed U.S. advisers to aid South Vietnam.
Farmgate	Program whereby VNAF attack squadrons were equipped with American aircraft and secretly manned by U.S. crew members.
French Union	The French equivalent to the British Commonwealth, established after World War II.
Geneva Accords	The 1954 agreement ending the Vietminh War.
Giap, Vo Nguyen	Military leader of the Indochinese Communist party and, later, of North Vietnam.
Gulf of Tonkin Incident	The August 1963 encounter between U.S. naval vessels and DRV patrol boats that resulted in a greatly expanded American commitment to South Vietnam.
Hanoi	Capital of North Vietnam.
Harkins, General Paul D.	Commander of MAAG at the time it grew into MACV.
Hilsman, Roger	U.S. State Department official charged with observing and analyzing U.S. assistance to South Vietnam.
Ho Chi Minh	The founder of the Indochinese Communist party and the leader of North Vietnam until his death in 1969.
Ho Chi Minh Trail	The logistical supply route from North Vietnam, through Laos and Cambodia, into South Vietnam. Used to supply essentials to the PLA.
Ia Drang	Small river near the RVN-Cambodia border. Site of the first major ground battle fought by U.S. forces, November 1965.
Iron Triangle	Area north of Saigon containing major PLA supply caches and command headquarters.

Johnson, Lyndon B.	U.S. president, 1963-69. Increased U.S. role in Vietnam to include major combat forces.
JCS	The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the U.S. military planning and coordinating body composed of the chiefs of the armed services and headed by a chairman designated by the president.
Kennedy, John F.	U.S. president, 1961-63. Committed the United States to an expanded advisory and combat role in South Vietnam.
Khe Sanh	Site of a small U.S. Marine outpost near the Laotian border. Assaulted and besieged by the PLA beginning December 1967.
LAM SON 719	The February 1971 ARVN invasion of Laos.
Landsdale, Edward	U.S. counterguerrilla authority.
Lodge, Henry Cabot	U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam at the time of Diem's ouster.
McNamara, Robert S.	U.S. Secretary of Defense, 1961-68.
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. The command and control headquarters for the U.S. Military effort in South Vietnam.
main force	Full-time military units of the PLA.
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group, early headquarters for U.S. Assistance to South Vietnam.
Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung)	Founder and leader of Communist China.
My Lai	Village in South Vietnam. Site of U.S. troops' massacre of civilians in March 1968.
Nam Bo	Early name for the command and control headquarters of the PLA. Later called COSVN.
Nixon, Richard M.	U.S. president, 1969–74. Began "Vietnamization" program; ultimately reached a peace agreement with the DRV.
NLF	National Liberation Front. The umbrella organization containing representatives from several factions opposing the RVN government. In

	reality, controlled by the Communist party.
NVA	North Vietnamese Army.
PAVN	People's Army of (North) Vietnam. The armed forces of North Vietnam.
Phoenix Program	Covert program to infiltrate the PLA and assassinate Communist leaders.
PLA/PLAF	People's Liberation Army (PLA). The armed forces of the NLF, later, the People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF).
PRP	People's Revolutionary party. The nominally independent Communist party of South Vietnam.
regroupment	The 300-day process established by the Geneva Accords during which refugees could move freely between the northern and southern partitioned areas of Vietnam.
ROLLING THUNDER	The systematic series of U.S. Air Force attacks against North Vietnam beginning in 1965.
Rostow, Walter	Aide to President Kennedy and national security adviser to President Johnson.
RVN	Republic of Vietnam. The pro-American state of South Vietnam.
Saigon	Capital of South Vietnam.
Sihanouk, Prince Norodom	Ruler of Cambodia, 1940-71.
Strategic Hamlet Program	Successor to the Agroville Program. An expanded attempt to consolidate rural peasants into villages and hamlets for self-protection and control.
Taylor, Maxwell D.	Retired Army general recalled to active duty by President Kennedy to become chairman of the JCS, 1962-64. Ambassador to South Vietnam, 1964-65.
Tet Offensive	The series of major PLA attacks launched in January 1968 at the time of the Buddhist lunar New Year's celebration.
Thieu, Nguyen Van	President of South Vietnam, 1967-75.
Thompson, Sir Robert	British counterguerrilla expert. Credited with developing the successful strategy the British

	employed to defeat insurgents in Malaya.
VC	Viet Cong. The pejorative name given the NLF by the RVN government.
Vietminh	The Vietnam Independence League, the united-front organization founded by Ho Chi Minh in 1940.
Vietminh War	The conflict between followers of Ho Chi Minh and French Union forces from 1945 to 1954.
VNAF	South Vietnamese Air Force.
Westmoreland, General William C.	Commander of MACV, 1964-68.

Notes

1. Douglas Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), v.

2. Harold G. Moore, and Joseph L. Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young* (New York: Random House, 1992), 338-39.

3. Moore and Galloway, 339.

4. Pike, 9-13.

5. Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: The Viking Press, 1983), 106.

6. Karnow, 69-78, 110-25; Pike, 17.

7. Pike, 22, 25, 29-34; Karnow, 126-27, 142, 146-47, 149, 183.

8. Pike, 34-35, Karnow, 173-78.

9. Pike, 39-41; Bernard Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1967, 408-11; Cecil B. Currey ("Cincinattus"), *Self-Destruction: The Disintegration and Decay of the United States Army During the Vietnam Era* (New York: Norton, 1981), 9-11.

10. Karnow, 196-99; Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1995), 98-100.

11. Andrew F. Krepinevitch, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins, 1986; Johns Hopkins, 1988), 19; Pike, 41; Karnow, 213-19.

12. Karnow, 215-16, 218-23.

13. Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An: Revolutionary Conflict in a Vietnamese Province* (Berkely, CA: University of California, 1972; University of California, 1973), 66.

14. Truong Nhu Tang, with David Chanoff and Doan Van Toai, *A Viet Cong Memoir* (New York: Random House, 1985; Vintage, 1986), 30-40, 44, 63-69.

15. Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988), 67-68; Truong, 28; Eric M. Bergerud, *The Dynamics of Defeat: The Vietnam War in Hau Ngia Province* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991; Westview, 1993), 56.

16. Race, 66.

17. Robert B. Asprey, *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History*, Vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 977.

18. Pike, 42-43.

19. Krepinevitch, 7-10.

20. Pike, 42-43; Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 423; Bergerud, 18-19.

21. Bergerud, 19.

22. Ibid., 27.

23. Sheehan, 195-96.

24. Bergerud, 19-20, 49-51, 70-80.

25. Kennedy quoted in Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 857.

26. Karnow, 248-49. After a grueling conference with Soviet Premier Nikita Kruschev in Vienna, Kennedy told journalist James Reston: "Now we have a problem in making our power credible, and Vietnam is the place." Also see Bernard Fall, *Street Without Joy*, 381. The neutralization of Laos was a strategic defeat for the United States, for it meant that Laos did not join the Free World's defense system.

27. Karnow, 249; Asprey, 981. When George Ball dissented, predicting the American involvement might eventually reach 300,000 troops, Kennedy responded: "you're crazier than hell."

28. Sheehan, 67-68; Truong, 28; Bergerud, 56.

29. Currey, 26.

30. Bergerud, 49-51, 53, 56-61; Karnow, 256. The Strategic Hamlet Program was a "vast and expensive enterprise." It was the idea of Robert G. K. Thompson (head of the British Advisory Mission), a British counterinsurgency specialist who had succeeded against Communist guerrillas in Malaya. But Vietnam was not Malaya, where the guerrillas had been ethnic Chinese, hated by the Malays, and where there was a shortage of rice so that the guerrillas could be starved into submission. See also Hilsman, 429.

31. Truong, 85-86, 91.

32. Truong, 45-46; Race, 125-29. The Party evaded the issue of ultimate ownership of land. Earlier Party difficulties with collectivization in North Vietnam, after they had told peasants that the land was "theirs," were no doubt on their minds. See also Bergerud, 56-61.

33. Bergerud, 61-64; Race, 129-30; Sheehan, 552; David Chanoff and Doan Van Toai, "*Vietnam": A Portrait of its People at War* (New York: I. B. Tauris & Co., 1996), 115-16.

34. Bergerud, 67-68; Race, 124; Chanoff and Doan, 103-6.

35. Truong, 109, 111-13.

36. Sheehan, 524.

37. *Pentagon Papers*, 208-10.

38. Race, 107; Truong, 68, 72-73.

39. Pike, 48-49. The PLA reached a peak strength of 400,000 by early 1968, then declined from combat losses. By 1972, North Vietnam's army, the PAVN, accounted for 90 percent of the day-to-day combat troops in South Vietnam.

40. Truong, 45-46; Pike, 44-47, Race, 123.

41. Chanoff and Doan, 147-48, 152-54.

42. Truong, 45-81; Race, 123; Karnow, 256-57. The American military and diplomatic corps was also taken in by Albert Thao, as evidenced in several cables from Ambassador Lodge and General Harkins, although Harkins in one cable mentions that some do not trust him because of his "VC background." See *Pentagon Papers*, 202, 210; the formation of the PRP and other propaganda efforts had the desired effect on Americans and other Western intellectuals. Among those influential individuals, public support for the NLF and DRV was widespread as early as 1961. See Chanoff and Doan, 81.

43. Karnow, 171-75. In early 1950, after his negotiations with the French had broken down, Ho had obtained Soviet and Chinese recognition of his government. This had rendered him instantly suspect to American observers, who had previously regarded him as an able nationalist.

44. Karnow, 169, 185-86, 193, 327-28.

45. Ibid., 152, 169, 191-93; 202, 204, 224.

46. Bergerud, 23-24; Krepinevitch, 21.

47. Bergerud, 24. In reorganizing the ARVN, the United Stares overrode RVN wishes. It forced a size reduction to emphasize retaining conventional forces rather than light infantry units. Over 6,000 veteran NCOs were hastily discharged. The United States standardized ARVN units along American lines—basically translating U.S. Army organizational documents into Vietnamese. The Americans emphasized training exercises oriented towards regimental and division maneuvers. See Krepinevitch, 20-26.

48. Bergerud, 24-26; Krepinevitch, 11-12.

49. Bergerud, 26-27.

50. Hilsman, 437-38. Hilsman witnessed the operation. The B-26s and T-28s were supplied by the United States for "Farmgate," a semi-covert program with mixed USAF and VNAF aircrews, with planes painted with VNAF markings. Afterward, villagers said that perhaps two hundred guerrillas had been in the village earlier.

51. Ibid., 446-47.

52. Sheehan, 75-79, 90-91.

53. Ibid., 106-9.

54. Ibid., 110-14, 540-41.

55. Ibid., 308-9.

56. Karnow, 259-62; Hilsman, 447-49.

57. Sheehan, 298-302.

58. Currey, 13-17; Robert A. Doughty, *The Evolution of US Army Tactical Doctrine*, 1946-76, Leavenworth Papers No. 1 (Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1979), 25.

59. Karnow, 247-50; Hilsman, 413-14.

60. Hilsman, 419; Bergerud, 105-6. Kennedy initially decided to send Landsdale as ambassador to Vietnam but then bowed to objections from the Pentagon that he had become too political.

61. Hilsman, 421-25, 428-35. Regarding Rostow's estimate of ten to twenty troops for every guerrilla, the RVN had a population of approximately 14 million. If only 0.1 percent were guerrillas—a conservative estimate—that would be

14,000 guerrillas. The U.S. estimate in January 1962 was actually 16,000 guerrillas (later revised to 23,000), just over 0.1 percent of the population. This would require 160,000 to 320,000 troops just to combat the guerrillas, to say nothing of guarding against the conventional threat from the DRV. In addition, due to the lack of ethnic differences between the guerrillas and the bulk of the population, Vietnam was a far more difficult case than Malaya had been.

62. Ibid., 435-36.

63. Ibid., 421-35. Hilsman presents a clear analysis of guerrilla warfare, with a discussion of Robert Thompson's success in Malaya and ideas for Vietnam—that is, until he gets to the basics of how to defeat guerrillas by depriving them of support from the population. Here, instead of solving the fundamental social and economic problems that caused the peasants to support the NLF, he discusses providing physical security to the peasants, as if the only reason the peasants joined or supported the NLF was out of fear. This type of misconception led to programs such as Strategic Hamlets, with all its bureaucratic impedimenta, such as plastic ID cards, etc. Drawing on his OSS experience in fighting the Japanese in World War II, Hilsman refers to the guerrillas' "mountain and jungle fastnesses." In reality, the guerrillas were largely village people. Hilsman does see clearly that "the way to fight guerrillas is to adopt the tactics of the guerrilla." He discusses establishing a grid of squares thirty to fifty miles on a side. Within each square, one counterguerrilla patrol would operate to ambush guerrilla bands. This would wear down the guerrillas using their own tactics.

64. Ibid., 438-39.

65. Bergerud, 28-30.

66. Asprey, 979-80; Bergerud, 28.

67. Karnow, 251-53. Taylor's party also included Landsdale, but instead of dealing with the declining political situation, he was put to work estimating the number of troops required to "seal off" the RVNs land border to halt infiltration. Rusk sent no high-ranking representative from State, despite his recent efforts to have responsibility for the Vietnam Task Force moved to his department. He thought that Vietnam was primarily a military problem. The party also included Walt Rostow, from the White House staff, who concentrated on border-sealing issues and ultimately recommended bombing the DRV. See Hilsman, 422-24. At the same time he approved the Taylor recommendations, Kennedy authorized Ambassador Nolting to demand reforms from Diem, primarily for the sake of world and U.S. opinion, not because they might be essential for winning the war. He indicated that the United States was ready to share in joint sovereignty

in South Vietnam. Diem naturally rejected this demand and began an anti-U.S. press campaign. Already, two diametrically opposed schools of thought on Vietnam were evident in the United States. The first position, advocated by Landsdale and Nolting, was that the war, by definition, must be fought and won by the South Vietnamese. Saigon's fundamental difficulties were the result of a perfidious enemy rather than to structural problems in society. Eventually, most of the State Department and the CIA (and in-country advisers such as Vann and Daniel Elsberg) were opposed, arguing that the Saigon regime was fundamentally unsound and that direct American intervention in RVN affairs was required for the war effort. Many Americans would begin carrying out this policy independent of government channels (e.g., U.S. Army Special Forces units tacitly encouraged Montagnard revolts against the government in 1964). Of course, this latter view, whatever its merits, made the Vietnamese people and their government just a means to an American end. See also Bergerud, 31-33.

68. Hilsman, 53, 427.

69. Ibid., 415.

70. Karnow, 254.

71. Hilsman, 426-27. In 1961, Kennedy had the opportunity to change the direction of the U.S. commitment by appointing a counterinsurgency expert. But instead of choosing for the head of MAAG someone like General Yarborough, the Special Forces commander, the president accepted General Taylor's recommendation of the very conventional General Paul D. Harkins.

72. Ibid., 442-43. The Army's heel-dragging was not the only institutional difficulty the counterinsurgency concept encountered. From the start, CI had been the victim of bureaucratic inertia and ineptitude. Kennedy established a "Special Group, Counterinsurgency" (SGCI), but its members were all conventional thinkers. Maxwell Taylor was primarily interested in limited war; Walt Rostow wanted to seek out the "ultimate source of aggression"; Attorney General Robert Kennedy knew nothing on the subject; Roswell Gilpatric, the Defense Department's representative, had an Air Force background irrelevant to CI; U. Alexis Johnson, from the State Department, "[got] things done," but knew nothing about CI; Edward R. Murrow of the U.S. Information Agency, John McCone of the CIA, and McGeorge Bundy represented key agencies but had no particular expertise on the subject; and General Lemnitzer of the JCS was entirely unenthusiastic. See also Krepinevitch, 31-35.

73. Sheehan, 317.

74. Ibid., 303-5, 307-8, 344. A positive indication was that, for the first time, in late 1962, the ARVN had captured more enemy weapons than it lost. See Hilsman, 445. A bad indicator was the circulation among the U.S. advisers of the anonymously composed "Ballad of Ap Bac," lampooning the war effort. See Sheehan, 306. For MACV's suppression of unwelcome intelligence reports, see Ibid., 323-24. Krulak's report, delivered to a meeting of the National Security Council on 31 August 1963, typified U.S. preoccupation with "the war," as opposed to the social and economic conditions that swelled support for the NLF. Hilsman wondered how much repression the United States could afford to support, in light of its attempts to reform other regimes (e.g., the ROK). State Department official Paul Kattenburg provided a key dissent to Krulak's report and a recognition of the key role of the Vietnamese people. He predicted that if they stayed with Diem, the United States would be forced out of Vietnam within six months. Taylor, McNamara, and Rusk rebutted Kattenburg. As late as October 1963, a high level of official optimism continued. McNamara and Taylor submitted another report on 2 October. They were very optimistic about the military situation ("[the] military program in Vietnam . . . is sound in principle"). They emphasized tactical security needs for strategic hamlets, envisioned turning over ever-more missions to the ARVN, and the withdrawal of the bulk of U.S. troops by the end of 1965. General Harkins cabled a report to Taylor on 30 October 1963. He was optimistic about the military situation. He did not believe RVN Vice-President Tho's negative assessment of RVN support in the countryside. He insisted that he (Harkins) knew better. He disbelieved the "few rumors" that ARVN generals were being paid off with money and flashy cars; he reported that he had seen "few if any" flashy cars. He disputed all reports that the NLF was gaining. See *Pentagon Papers*, 174, 202-5, 210-13, 219-24.

75. H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, The Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 324.

76. Ibid.

77. *Pentagon Papers*, 189.

78. Bergerud, 38-43.

79. *Pentagon Papers*, 189 (extract from NSAM 273, 26 November 1963), 232-33.

80. McMaster, 324.

81. *Pentagon Papers*, 292-93. Karnow, 679. Kanh seized power in a January 1964 coup but allowed Minh to remain as figurehead chief of state.

82. McMaster, 324-25.

83. Bergerud, 42.

84. Dave R. Palmer, *Summons of the Trumpet: U.S.—Vietnam in Retrospective* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio, 1978), 75.

85. Palmer, 71-72; McMaster, 324-25.

86. Bergerud, 112-13.

87. Ibid., 113.

88. Karnow, 421-22.

89. Ibid., 422.

90. McMaster, 312-15, 319.

91. Chanoff and Doan, 159-61. Johnson's United Nations Ambassador, George Ball, sounded a note of caution. On 1 July 1965, he warned against converting an Asian war to an American war. See also *Pentagon Papers*, 449.

92. Bergerud, 3-5.

93. Karnow, 467-68.

94. Chanoff and Doan, 158, Karnow, 454.

95. Sheehan, 554.

96. William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 145; Sheehan, 567-68; Paul H. Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5,* Operations, Leavenworth Papers Number 16 (Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1988), 19-20.

97. Moore and Galloway, 338-39.

98. Ibid.

99. Palmer, 113; Chanoff and Doan, 161.

100. Moore and Galloway, 338-41; Karnow, 481-82. McNamara flew to Saigon within days of the Ia Drang battle to consult with MACV commanders. See Palmer, 107-8.

101. Karnow, 480-82.

102. Palmer, 107-9.

103. Karnow, 415-54.

104. Palmer, 74-75.

105. Karnow, 415; Palmer, 109-10.

106. Palmer, 110.

107. Karnow, 454-58; Sheehan, 675-81. For an account of a teenager in the DRV, see, Chanoff and Doan, 127-28.

108. David H. Hackworth and Julie Sherman, *About Face: The Odyssey of an American Warrior* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989; Touchstone, 1990), 557-61; 569-71; George L. MacGarrigle, *Taking the Offensive: October 1966 to October 1967*, in the series, *United States Army in Vietnam: Combat Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1998), 31-59. While General DePuy claimed that, as a result of ATTLEBORO, one PLA regiment had been rendered ineffective and two others were badly hurt, captured enemy documents later revealed that only one regiment had taken heavy casualties. DePuy used the results to reinforce his assertions that the army should conduct large-scale offensives rather than attempting to comb the jungles with riflemen.

109. Hackworth, 554.

110. Hackworth, 549-52; Sheehan, 621-28.

111. Krepinevitch, 9-10.

112. Hackworth, 554-57.

113. Karnow, 437-38. The main post exchange outside Saigon was almost as large as New York's Bloomingdale's department store.

114. Chanoff and Doan, 155-56.

115. Bergerud, 107-9.

116. Hackworth, 549-52; Moore and Galloway, 344.

117. Hackworth, 552.

118. Ibid., 565.

119. Ibid., 565-67. This was an extraordinarily high ratio of weapons captured to enemy casualties claimed—1:1.6. A 1:4 ratio was considered excellent, and 1:10 or worse ratios were common (casting doubt on the validity of many battle claims of enemy casualties).

120. Palmer, 135-39; Karnow, 439, 463.

121. Hackworth, 579-80. Fall was killed two weeks later by a mine.

122. Ibid., 575.

123. Palmer, 114.

124. Karnow, 538-39.

125. Krepinevitch, 237.

126. Karnow, 523-27.

127. Ibid., 525-29.

128. Ibid., 540-42.

129. Chanoff and Doan, 156-57.

130. Chanoff and Doan, 157; Sheehan, 724.

131. Karnow, 540-49.

132. Sheehan, 707-22; Karnow, 548-50.

133. *Pentagon Papers*, 615-21; Karnow, 550-55.

134. Karnow, 555-56.

135. Ibid., 558-66.

136. Ibid., 566.

137. Charnoff, 161-68.

138. Karnow, 577-85.

139. Ibid., 587, 595-96, 682.

140. Ibid., 590-92.

141. Ibid., 592-93, 637.

142. Maclear, 270; Westmoreland, 151-52. Honeycutt was a former aide to Westmoreland.

143. Westmoreland, 151-53. Westmoreland implicitly conceded his belief that American soldiers, operating among the rural population, would commit atrocities if not kept away searching for the elusive enemy forces in the highlands. The issue of "protecting" the population was more involved than Westmoreland admitted. Successful protection would require some degree of control, as much of the danger the population faced was from PLA members in its midst, as opposed to external aggressors.

144. Karnow, 601.

145. Ibid., 595.

146. Ibid., 597-98.

147. Ibid., 598.

148. Westmoreland, 375-80.

149. Race, 237.

150. Currey, 120.

151. Allen E. Goodman, "The Political Implications of Rural Problems," *Asian Survey* (August 1970): 677-78.

152. Race, 238-39.

153. Karnow, 601-2.

154. Ibid., 603-10.

155. Ibid., 610-12, 629.

156. Ibid., 629-32, 683.

157. Ibid., 638-646.

158. Ibid., 639-41.

159. James H. Willbanks, *Thiet Gap! The Battle of An Loc, April 1972* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1993), 3, 21; Karnow, 642.

160. Willbanks, 13, 21-24, 30-31, 33.

161. Ibid., 58-60.

162. Ibid., 30, 41-42, 60-62.

163. Ibid., 75-77.

164. Karnow, 684.

165. Ibid.

166. Ibid., 684-85.

167. Ibid., 685.

168. Summers, 69. However, Summers also misses the point of revolutionary warfare in Vietnam. Contrary to his analysis, guerrilla operations were not a "smoke screen." They were just a part of the war, as were the conventional attacks of 1972 and 1975. He protests that the VC were "just a means to an end," but in warfare, what weapons and forces are not? Summers, 96-97.

169. Krepinevitch, 11-12.

170. Ibid., 8.

Compound War Case Study: The Soviets in Afghanistan

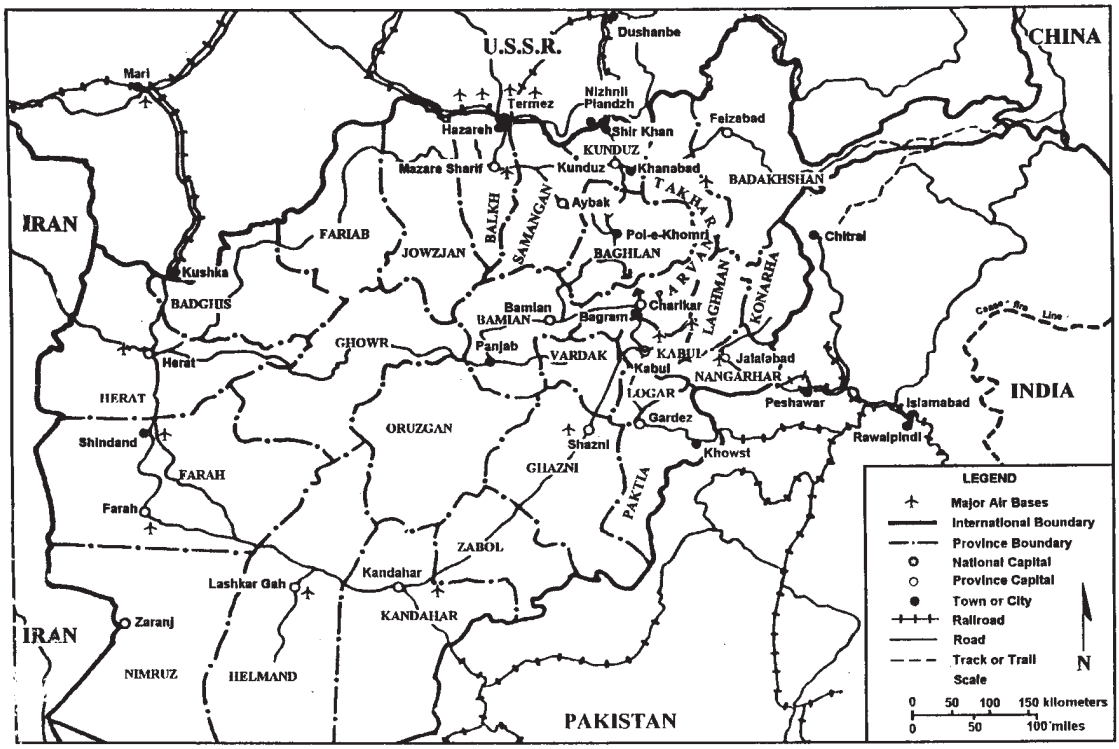
Robert F. Baumann

When on 24-25 December 1979 Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan, they intended to conduct a neat, surgical intervention to stabilize a client regime on which they had lavished years of attention and aid. The immediate military objectives were to secure the capital, Kabul, and the main lines of communication, especially those leading back to the Soviet border (see map l on next page). According to the plan, the small intervention force would complete its mission and assume a low profile while the Soviet client army of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan restored government authority in the outlying provinces.

At the time, most Western political and military observers believed that, sooner or later, the mighty Soviet Army would subdue any and all resistance in Afghanistan. They would succeed, most calculated, because the Soviet Army would prosecute its war unconstrained by those factors that fatally crippled America's efforts in Vietnam. Accordingly, domestic public support of the war in the USSR would never fade because its totalitarian regime enjoyed comprehensive control of the press, would ruthlessly stifle any manifestations of dissent, and would never be compelled to negotiate with the resistance.[1] Moreover, the observers maintained that the USSR, its political course governed by a clear and ruthless sense of purpose, would remain steadfastly indifferent to international opinion. Thus, the unleashed firepower of a technologically advanced military would make short work of poorly organized, undisciplined third world guerrillas.

What followed, of course, belied predictions. After nearly a decade of futility in Afghanistan, Soviet forces withdrew. Their losses transcended the subsequent loss of a client state and the resultant international embarrassment. The anguish of the war in Afghanistan deepened emerging fissures in Soviet society and contributed to its eventual disintegration.

In its general contours, the Afghan War fits within the elastic theoretical model of compound war, although it exhibited many distinctive features of its own as well. In this light, this essay will establish the ways in which the Soviet misadventure in Afghanistan


U.S.S.R.
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Hazareh
Shir Khan
Feizabad
KUNDUZ
Mazare Sharif
Kunduz
Khanabad
BADAKHSHAN
IRAN
Aybak
TAKHAR
FARIAB
JOWZJAN
BALKH
SAMANGAN
Pol-e-Khomri
BAGHLAN
Chitral
Kushka
BADGHIS
PARWAN
LAGHMAN
KONARHA
Bamian
BAMIAN
Bagram
Charikar
Panjab
GHOWR
VARDAK
KABUL
Jalalabad
Herat
Kabul
NANGARHAR
LOGAR
Peshawar
Islamabad
INDIA
HERAT
Gardez
ORUZGAN
Shindand
Shazni
Khowst
Rawalpindi
GHAZNI
FARAH
PAKTIA
Farah
ZABOL
Kandahar
Lashkar Gah
KANDAHAR
Zaranj
IRAN
NIMRUZ
HELMAND
PAKISTAN
LEGEND
Major Air Bases
International Boundary
Province Boundary
National Capital
Province Capital
Town or City
Railroad
Road
Track or Trail
Scale
N
0 50 100 150 kilometers
0 50 100 miles

Map 1

adhered to the definition of compound war as summarized in the introduction of this volume. At the same time, it will demonstrate that the advantageous effects of compound war can manifest themselves in various forms.

A principal strength of compound war theory is that it does not purport to explain everything or presume unerring predictive capability. The outcome in war, including compound war, is seldom if ever inevitable. The dynamism of the Clausewitzian trinity as summarized in *On War*—the interplay of reason, violent passion, and chance—cannot be overlooked. In particular, it would be dangerous (and all too easy) to dismiss the roles of chance and passion.

In any case, the analytical model of compound war facilitates a deeper understanding of the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Much to their surprise, the Soviets confronted the classic dilemma posed by an elusive, intensely motivated, *irregular* enemy that enjoyed, as a consequence of the larger political context of the struggle, the support of a powerful ally possessing a formidable *regular* force. Although this ally never entered the war directly, the weight of its might nevertheless influenced the strategic situation in profound ways. In addition, due to the presence of lesser allies, the Mujahideen enjoyed vital sanctuaries that the Soviets felt compelled to respect for larger diplomatic reasons. Faced with these complications—which they might have anticipated but did not—the Soviets met with frustration and defeat.

Background

The Soviet military intervention aimed to restore a deteriorating political situation in Afghanistan as evidenced by emboldened and aggressive popular resistance to the DRA (Democratic Republic of Afghanistan) regime in Kabul. Having invested its money and influence in Afghanistan for twenty-five years, the Soviet Union was not about to watch idly while a client state on its southern doorstep collapsed. Since a 1956 accord providing for the reequipping of the Afghan Army by the USSR, Russia steadily insinuated its influence into Afghan politics. Subsequent military collaboration included the education of Afghan cadets and officers in the Soviet Union and the arrival of Soviet officers as military advisers. Symbols of the Soviet presence included numerous economic programs and construction projects. However, the relationship reached a new and critical stage with Afghanistan's so-called 1978 "April Revolution" that consolidated the power of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan or PDPA. The proclamation of the Democratic Republic

of Afghanistan and signing of a friendship pact with the Soviet Union marked an advanced stage of the assimilation of that country into Moscow's bloc of "socialist" states.

In reality, this apparent achievement in Soviet foreign policy was less than it seemed. In the first place, no regime in Kabul had ever effectively controlled the independent-minded clans and villages of rural Afghanistan. In one particularly trenchant assessment, Western scholar Anthony Arnold appropriately likened the country to 25,000 village states.[2] Furthermore, the construction of Soviet-style socialism was antithetical to the cultural values most revered by the majority of Afghans, whose outlook was based on village traditions intertwined with religion and a historic xenophobia. Moreover, the legendary warrior ethic of male Afghans, whatever their ethnicity, had been amply demonstrated by a history of ferocious resistance to foreign intrusion.

Somehow oblivious to these facts, the PDPA undertook an ambitious, Soviet-style modernization program that threatened the authority of the Islamic clergy, exhibited strong centralizing tendencies, and sought to reshape the educational system. Land reform proposals, redefinition of the societal role of women, and the conspicuous presence of foreign (Russian) experts and advisers particularly offended the clergy and other traditionalists. Popular discontent erupted in March 1979 when angry Afghan mobs in Herat openly defied Kabul's authority and murdered a group of Russian technicians. This event prompted the Soviets to rush Mi-24 helicopters (which had proved effective against Eritrean rebels in Ethiopia) to the scene and increase their contingent of military advisers to 3,000.[3] At the same time, bitter political infighting between the Khalq and Parcham factions of the PDPA also troubled Soviet observers. In September 1979, a smoldering dispute at the top of the Afghan regime came to a head when Hafizullah Amin assumed the presidency following the assassination of his rival, Nur Mohammed Taraki. A peculiar political minuet followed in which Amin, on multiple occasions, apparently requested Soviet military assistance to quell domestic resistance only to meet with polite but firm refusals.[4] When Soviet troops finally did arrive on 24-25 December 1979, Amin, perceived in Moscow to be part of the problem, was targeted for removal and became one of the first casualties of the military intervention.

At first glance, the Soviets' skillfully executed surprise incursion seemed to achieve its objectives: a change of regime, capture of Kabul, and control of the principal lines of communication. Forces inserted by

air paralyzed the capital while a conventional column of about 15,000 approached the country along the main road from the Soviet frontier. The strike was complete within hours. In the view of the government of General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, this lightning success ought to have stabilized the situation in Afghanistan. However, it was only a matter of days before a hostile reaction began, both within and outside of Afghanistan. Though at first lacking any sort of cohesion, popular guerrilla resistance mounted across the country with the benefit of international support—initially moral and diplomatic but before long material as well. By February 1980, Soviet forces left their garrisons to confront mushrooming opposition. Soviet calculations, shaped by a preoccupation with conventional war, failed to account for the possibility that the resistance might resort to the tactics and strategy of unconventional war.[5] This seemingly inexplicable neglect occurred in spite of the extensive historical experience of Russian and Soviet forces in waging unconventional wars in the Caucasus and Central Asia against tribes similar to those in Afghanistan.

Later, in the aftermath of Soviet failure in Afghanistan, none of those still alive who played a prominent part in the war claimed responsibility for the decision to invade or the strategy that followed. Soviet Army General V. I. Varennikov, former chief of the Supreme Operations Administration, asserted that his office had advised that Soviet forces in Afghanistan remain in garrison. He attributed the decision to have Soviet forces take the lead in conducting the war to the insistence of newly appointed (by the Soviets) Afghan President Babrak Karmal. Karmal subsequently noted that he was not even in office when the initial decisions were made and that later he asked to resign out of disagreement with Soviet prosecution of the war.[6] Virtually by acclamation after the war, it was expedient to blame the dead—Communist party chief Brezhnev, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, KGB Chief Iurii Andropov (later general secretary), Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov, and so forth—who had been best positioned to make policy decisions.

That the war in Afghanistan would end so miserably and be so widely disowned would not have been predicted at the beginning. In the wake of the seizure of Kabul, Soviet forces conducted their first major offensive operation of the war in the Kunar Valley in February March 1980. The Soviet effort employed about 5,000 soldiers, liberally endowed with air support and modern armor. A pattern immediately emerged that would in large measure define the war in Afghanistan.

The Soviet force swept aside the guerrilla resistance, superior firepower devastating villages controlled by the opposition. Again, however, the result was deceptive. The Afghan guerrillas or Mujahideen, as they were soon widely known, withdrew to avoid the heaviest blows and suffered only modest losses. Furthermore, thousands of villagers were abruptly transformed into refugees, now more steadfastly hostile to the new regime than ever. After a brief stay—because Soviet forces were in no position logistically to occupy the Kanur Valley—they soon withdrew. This foreshadowed what became a pervasive pattern: tactical successes did not add up to tangible, strategic gains.

Still, it appeared that Soviet combat power would eventually bludgeon the Mujahideen and their supporters into submission. Undeterred by the limited success of initial operations, however, the Soviets pursued the persistent strategy of deep offensives into Mujahideen strongholds. Operations in 1981 focused heavily on the Panjshir Valley northeast of Kabul. About seventy miles in length, this fertile valley rests on a perch roughly 7,000 feet above sea level, with precipitous, rocky slopes along its flanks and slender defiles and valleys radiating out in all directions. At the start of the war, the valley's inhabitants numbered perhaps as many as 100,000.[7] By May and August 1982, the Soviets campaigned in the Panjshir Valley for the fifth and sixth times. Their aim was to crush the power of Ahmad Shah Masoud, a Tajik commander of about 3,000 resistance fighters, whose organizational talent, charisma, and resilience were rapidly making him a near-mythical figure. Meanwhile, Masoud's resistance front trained fighters from among the local population and assigned administrative and political responsibilities among the villages that sustained his movement. Masoud separated his combatants into mobile units (about seventy-five men in strength) and local defense elements, dividing the Panjshir Valley into seven operational areas.[8]

The May operation, rather typical of the larger Soviet offensives in Afghanistan, employed about 15,000 Soviet and DRA Army troops equipped with armored personnel carriers and tanks and supported by artillery and Mi-24 helicopter gun ships. Still, over six weeks of combat, the firepower-intensive attack lacked decisive effect, and the Soviets suffered up to 3,000 casualties. Even more disturbing was the pattern of defections, possibly as many as 1,000 in this operation alone, that plagued the official Afghan Army.[9] Tactically, by this time, the rebels had become skilled at setting ambushes for Soviet armored columns. In addition, thanks in part to foreign assistance, the

Mujahideen were increasingly well armed with mortars, RPG-7 rocket launchers, and an assortment of antiaircraft guns. They also became accomplished at laying mines along all major routes supporting vehicular movement, thus impeding Soviet communications.[10] Above all, their superior mobility on foot in the rugged, often impassible terrain afforded the resistance the edge that enabled their survival.

In 1983, Masoud and the Soviets both utilized a new tactic—delay—and agreed to a six-month truce in the Panjshir Valley. Neither even remotely anticipated an end to hostilities. Rather, each hoped to gain some near-term advantage. The Soviets, on their part, gained the opportunity to concentrate more of their effort in other locations, such as Herat and Kandahar. Masoud, in turn, found time to rest his forces and solicit additional outside support.

This episode highlighted another crucial aspect of the war—the fragmented character of the guerrilla resistance. Various ethnic groups, in particular Pushtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkomans, Hazara, and Baluchis, played significant roles. Still, the most important divisions corresponded to local and clan ties among the prewar population of 15 million. Political representation of the resistance to the international community embraced at one time or another not less than ten major factions. Oddly, this very lack of cohesion denied the Soviets a true focal point or center of gravity for political and military operations in Afghanistan.

In any case, it is doubtful that the Soviets ever possessed the combat doctrine, concentration of forces, or political will to meet the exorbitant price of success in Afghanistan. But having staked their prestige on their Afghan adventure, the Soviets could not comfortably withdraw. To be sure, the Soviets made many adjustments in their modus operandi once it became clear that no ready political or military solution was at hand. Still, their greatest error was already perhaps beyond remedy. By virtue of their obtrusive presence, heavy-handed methods, and belated diagnosis of real conditions in Afghanistan, Soviet decision makers placed the Soviet Army in a position, almost from the war's beginning, where it had to fight not only scattered bands of guerrillas but also virtually the entire Afghan population.[11] Or, as Karmal put it, "If sending in the troops was a mistake, it was caused by a failure to understand Afghanistan—by a poor knowledge of the country and the Afghan character."[12]

Nevertheless, the Soviet regime would not abandon its goal to establish control over Afghanistan. Thus, the key military-political

problem from the Soviet point of view was to defeat or, at the very least, marginalize the Mujahideen soldiers in a holy war.

Both in terms of doctrine and training, the Soviets entered the war unprepared to wage unconventional war.[13] Moreover, in their haste to act in the late fall of 1979, the Soviets neglected the opportunity to conduct a war game or staff exercise based on the anticipated Afghan scenario.[14] To address their increasingly apparent tactical deficiencies, Soviet professional military publications, almost from the start of the war, reflected a new emphasis on physical conditioning for mountain warfare and stressed the importance of initiative among lower-level commanders in small-unit combat. Ambush tactics, reconnaissance, and communications in severe terrain at high altitudes also drew extensive comment.[15] Soviet adaptations included increasing reliance on specially trained air assault and spetsnaz (or special operations) forces. Such belated wisdom could not, however, reverse the course of the war or compensate for the Soviets' flawed strategy.

Compound War

Analysis of the conflict in Afghanistan as a compound war necessarily begins with the Mujahideen, the *irregular force,* whose diffuse but nearly ubiquitous presence across the country left powerful Soviet conventional forces without an appropriate target against which to mass their power. Reflecting the social and cultural makeup of Afghanistan, where village and clan ties were the primary bases of loyalty, the Mujahideen lacked strong coherent political and military direction. In fact, local rivalries were so fierce that, even after the Soviet invasion, resistance factions often skirmished among themselves. For the most part, however, they temporarily put aside their animosities to focus on the outside intruder. This was necessary both to fight the Soviets more effectively and to form a more or less united diplomatic front in search of assistance from foreign powers.

As guerrilla fighters, the Afghans possessed many virtues. Their formidable warrior tradition is legendary in Central Asia. Perhaps the best known illustration of this fact is the series of disastrous campaigns conducted by the British during the nineteenth century. Warrior status in Afghan society is a source of individual prestige for young men and spiritually affirmed by the Islamic concept of martyrdom. Superbly adapted to the rugged terrain and severe climate of their homeland, the Mujahideen could strike suddenly almost anywhere or stage ambushes and then melt away into the mountains or scattered villages. Above all, drawing enormous moral strength from their defense of their homes

and way of life, they provided a supreme example of the power of motive force (Clausewitz's violent passion) in warfare.

Still, the Mujahideen were no less vulnerable to bullets and bombing than soldiers in any other army. The trick for the Soviet Army and its junior partner, the Army of the DRA, was to reach them with their superior firepower. Unfortunately for the Soviets, the Mujahideen were remarkably well-schooled in the Soviet style of warfare. Many Afghan resistance fighters were former officers in the Afghan Army who had even received military schooling in the USSR. Their resultant knowledge of Soviet doctrine and equipment capabilities was invaluable, allowing the resistance on occasion to parry what otherwise might have been devastating thrusts.

Reduced to its essence, Soviet strategy for victory in Afghanistan rested on fulfillment of five crucial objectives, all of which focused in large part on overcoming the *irregular* opposition.[16] First, they needed to control the principal population centers and lines of communication. In this respect, the Soviets achieved tenuous control of Kabul, the capital and largest population center at the outset of the war. With the installation of "their man" Babrak Karmal as president, the Soviets were in a position to manipulate all essential government ministries and organs. Had Afghanistan been more cohesive as a state to begin with, the advantage derived might have been considerable. In most developed states, for example, occupation of the capital would carry great symbolic importance. Earlier Soviet invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 firmly established the effectiveness of this modus operandi. Such was not the case, however, in Afghanistan. Unlike Budapest or Prague, Kabul did not represent the psychological center of gravity of the country. At every step, government authority required the support of military force. Consequently, the domestic legitimacy of the regime was minimal.

To accomplish their first objective, Soviet forces quickly positioned themselves along the few major roads of Afghanistan. Almost in anticipation of future events, the Soviets had in the 1960s constructed Afghanistan's major highway, forming a ring linking the cities of Kabul, Kandahar, Heart, and Mazare Sharif. The road's principal spur connected it with the Soviet border to the north. Built to withstand tank traffic, the road validated Soviet foresight. Yet the road also proved to be an important staging area for Mujahideen ambushes against government convoys and military columns. The resistance acquired considerable skill in laying mines along frequently used lines of communication. Ultimately, the maintenance of some degree of

security along the highway, around Kabul and near key Soviet bases, tied down one-third of the Soviet's manpower.

As essential as security was, it was essentially a passive, troop-intensive occupation mission that exacted a high toll on the morale and efficiency of typical Soviet motor-rifle units. Living in miserable conditions amidst a hostile populace, many Soviet soldiers saw little purpose in their presence and grew disillusioned with the war. Indeed, defections from Soviet units, especially among the Central Asian contingent, reflected pervasive discouragement.[17] Eventually, drug use and the illegal sale of weapons and other equipment became a problem. In general, numbing tedium, occasionally punctuated by skirmishes with an unseen enemy or the explosion of a mine, became the normal lot of the roughly 110,000 Soviet soldiers stationed in Afghanistan at any given time.[18]

Soviet forces initially included large numbers of reservists from the Central Asian Military District. Though probably employed due to the convenience of their proximity to the Afghan theater, their use also was intended, perhaps, to make the Soviet presence seem less invasive, less foreign. Although the evidence remains unclear on this point, some Soviet leaders apparently expected that Soviet Central Asians would exercise a beneficial or soothing influence on their cousins across the border. If anything, the influence ultimately seemed to flow in the other direction, as the Afghans swayed the attitudes of their linguistic and ethnic cousins in Soviet uniforms. Whatever the case, employment of large numbers of Soviet Central Asian reservists ceased not long after the invasion.[19] In general, as Soviet soldiers discovered, the war was far different than advertised; they perceived quickly that they were not helping the Afghan people defend their sacred revolution against American and Chinese mercenaries and their local, reactionary pawns. Learning this, Soviet soldiers rapidly lost enthusiasm for the war.

Meanwhile, a minority of Soviet forces were available to pursue the second Soviet operational objective: the conduct of large-scale (in the Afghan context) offensive operations to secure the countryside and wrest the initiative from the resistance. From 1980 through 1987, at least a few times per year, the Soviets conducted army-level operations employing up to two motor-rifle divisions complemented by engineers, air assault forces, and air support. Rarely were more than 10–15,000 men involved. More common were conventional division- or regiment-level operations that were always tethered to roads and supply bases. According to M.A. Gareev, deputy chief of the Main Operations Directorate of the Soviet Army during the war, Soviet

forces executed 416 planned operations against the most powerful resistance groups.[20]

Generally, the lavish use of Soviet firepower masked the relatively modest results of most operations. Although the Soviets repeatedly demonstrated their ability to obliterate villages and drive the resistance into remote recesses of the countryside, they never had any intention of occupying areas where logistical support was nearly impossible to obtain and the inhabitants had largely fled. Indeed, the exodus of the population from many areas subjected to ground and air attacks led one scholar to describe Soviet strategy as "migratory genocide."[21] Although estimates of the migration varied, up to five million Afghans sought refuge in Pakistan or Iran.

Though spectacular in its immediate effect, the typical Soviet offensive was counterproductive in practical terms. On the one hand, the Mujahideen often suffered many casualties, and the populace could hardly fail to be impressed by the might of the invader. On the other hand, these operations primed the pump of the Mujahideen replacement pool. For example, a general Soviet disregard for civilian casualties, not to mention the destruction of villages, prompted the displacement of many Afghans to refugee camps outside Afghanistan. There, Mujahideen recruiters and trainers harnessed their anger and incorporated them into the growing war effort.

Thus, the availability of sanctuaries to the resistance was not merely helpful, it was indispensable. Due to the fragile nature of the agricultural economy in many rural areas, villages were vulnerable targets for Soviet air power. Subsistence was entirely dependent on scarce water sources. As one knowledgeable observer put it, "Let one canal break or simply be poorly maintained, and a village dies."[22] In other words, even if Soviet military might could not directly strike at small resistance bands away from the capital, it could render their sustainment difficult, if not impossible, by systematically depopulating whole areas. If the traditional formula for victory against guerrillas is to "drain the water" so as to defeat "the fish," the Soviets might well have succeeded in Afghanistan had they been able to envelop the country and seal the borders.

In the absence of such an envelopment, Afghanistan's frontiers remained porous and, amidst the vast refugee camps of Pakistan, in particular, Mujahideen organizers nurtured the hatred of the fugitives for the Soviets and their client government in Afghanistan. Trainers and weapons were liberally available courtesy of the government of Pakistan, which enjoyed the financial backing of the United States,

Saudi Arabia, and China, among others states who brought their wealth to bear on the task of thwarting the Soviet Union. In sum, the very Soviet offensive actions aimed at neutralizing the resistance often had the effect of strengthening it.

Logically, therefore, the partially successful conduct of offensive operations generated the third military objective: closing the Afghan frontier with Pakistan. This posed a particularly thorny problem. To avoid further aggravating international opinion, which was broadly hostile to the Soviet adventure in Afghanistan anyway, as well as the possible political and military complications of widening the war, Soviet forces did not, as a rule, wantonly trespass onto Pakistani soil or violate its air space. They consequently endured a most frustrating situation, not at all unlike the dilemma posed by the Ho Chi Minh Trail to American forces in the Vietnam War. Although the Mujahideen could cross back and forth into Afghanistan with virtual impunity, Soviet forces could not reciprocate. Soviet columns and aircraft were denied the opportunity to strike at Mujahideen training camps or supply bases from which armed men and supplies trickled steadily into Afghanistan. Moreover, as the war dragged on, the Mujahideen acquired advanced weaponry—which eventually included Stinger missiles—with an unmistakable impact on the Soviet conduct of tactical operations.

The arrival of antiaircraft systems is a significant case in point. At the start of the war, the Mujahideen possessed virtually nothing but small arms with which to combat Soviet aircraft. This weakness proved acute as the Soviets began to exploit their air capabilities fully. Bombing assumed huge proportions and helicopters facilitated the rapid movement of troops and equipment, thereby compensating for the limited mobility of ground columns in mountainous defiles and valleys. Meanwhile, to prevent ambushes and to gain the initiative in combat, the Soviets learned to land troops along the commanding heights overlooking routes of movement. By the midpoint of the war, if not sooner, reports from Afghanistan noted the employment of not only Swiss-made Oerlikon antiaircraft guns but also British blowpipe and American Stinger antiaircraft missiles. The latter, especially, proved to be extremely lethal and forced the Soviets to operate with far more caution. Subsequently, Soviet Tu-16 intermediate-range bombers, as well as Su-24 and Su-25 attack aircraft, largely abandoned low-altitude bombing and had to release their ordnance from above 10,000 feet, with a significant corresponding loss of accuracy. In turn, Mi-24 and Mi-25 helicopter pilots could no longer linger over target areas but had to

engage in quick runs and rely on nap-of-the-earth flying to avoid premature detection and destruction.[23] The tactical consequences were no less dramatic for ground columns, which forfeited much of their air support and once again became more vulnerable to ambushes from heights and ridges along the roads.

Thus, the limits of military success accentuated the importance of the fourth and fifth Soviet objectives (which did not directly involve combat missions): to rebuild the DRA government and army and to organize an effective propaganda campaign. If, as in their own experience in the conquest of Central Asia in the 1920s, they could reach accommodation with a significant share of the population, the military stalemate might find resolution.

Fixing the government, however, required a Herculean effort as well as an intellectual exercise in wishful thinking. The Soviets could scarcely have done more at the beginning of the war to discredit the very regime upon whose legitimacy their mission would later depend. The installation of the relatively little known Babrak Karmal, following the assassination of President Amin by Soviet forces, left a void at the top that neither he nor any other Soviet-appointed leader could expect to fill. At first, the Soviets doubtless hoped that he would gain legitimacy as Soviet forces gained ever-increasing control of the country. However, no mutually reinforcing linkages between military and political efforts ever materialized, a result that Gareev later deemed the "main factor" in the failure of Soviet and DRA military operations to influence the popular mood in Afghanistan. He noted, for example, that twelve major operations over ten years more than once cleared the Panjshir Valley of rebel forces but achieved no strengthening of state authority.[24]

In the absence of either decisive military or political successes, Karmal appeared to be both a stooge of the godless foreigners and effectively powerless. The installation of Dr. Nadjibullah as president in 1986 indicated recognition of this dilemma but could do little to change it. In short, as long as the official regime lacked even a semblance of popularity, it could do little to neutralize the appeals of the Mujahideen for the loyalty of the populace.

Beneath the presidential level, neither the government apparatus nor the army could rely on the loyalty of its own members. Defections among both were rampant throughout the war, and ample numbers of those who remained operated as informants for the resistance. One estimate held that the numerical strength of the Afghan Army eroded from about 80,000 in 1978 to as low as 25,000 by the end of 1980. The

manpower drain correlated closely with the loss of weapons that defectors took with them. The situation became so severe that the Soviet Army withheld antiaircraft and antitank weapons from most Afghan Army units and often concealed war plans until operations commenced. At the same time, the DRA regime compensated for defections by resorting to sweeps of neighborhoods in Kabul or whole villages in the hinterland to impress eligible young men into military service.[25] According to retired general Alexander Lebed, such recruits normally "turned out to be extremely unreliable."[26] Or as one Western commentator, Oliver Roy, put it, "The army grew on paper but shrank on the ground."[27]

Neither the government nor the army was able to demonstrate its effectiveness to the population. Moreover, in many regions, the Mujahideen operated a "parallel government" that executed such functions as tax collection and formed militias virtually without interference from Kabul. Under such circumstances, the DRA could hardly make a strong case for legitimacy.

To be sure, the Soviets employed a variety of means to change this situation. Even before the replacement of Karmal, the Afghan government enthusiastically announced the opening of its National Reconciliation Campaign, which was purported to broaden the popular base of the regime by including alienated populations in assemblies and other organizations. In addition, the regime sought to depict itself as a friend and sponsor of Islam through the funding of religious schools, radio programs, and so on. None of this made much difference, however. As one Soviet veteran of Afghanistan observed, "We didn't see any friendly Afghans anywhere . . . . When the propagandists would go out to solicit support for Soviet rule, so to speak, they would take along a company of men and tanks."[28]

In the meantime, the Soviets sought to promote the army by helping it prove itself in combat. Especially in the later years of the war, the Soviet Army made an effort to put the more reliable Afghan military units in a position to succeed during operations in disputed valleys and near besieged government outposts. This attempt, in some measure, resembled the efforts of the United States to facilitate the success of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam during the early 1970s. In each case, lavish official praise concealed a serious problem beneath the surface. Success in operations enjoying the full support of an outside superpower scarcely was a reliable indicator of what would happen when the client army had to depend on its own initiative and resources. To be fair, the Afghan Army improved (almost as much, perhaps, as its

South Vietnamese counterpart), but it was never up to the challenges to come. In any event, no Afghan Army could be stronger than the popular base that supported it.

The final Soviet objective, the retrieval of at least a modest but stable level of support for the client regime, was virtually unachievable from the start. First, given the nature of Afghan culture, there necessarily existed an inverse relationship between the magnitude of the Soviet presence and the perceived legitimacy of the DRA. Second, the very population group upon whom the Soviets most depended for support was culturally estranged from the vast masses of Afghans, irrespective of their region or ethnicity.

Largely Soviet-educated, this small social stratum consisted principally of government bureaucrats, teachers, students, and technical specialists who, Marxist or not, aimed to modernize their country. Unfortunately, their world view, typically communicated in radical terminology about the working class, capitalism, revolution, and so forth, had almost nothing in common with the perceptions and convictions of their traditional brethren. Scripted in such alien language, the message they carried had virtually no appeal for the average Afghan.[29] In the words of Russian observer Gennady Bocharov, "To the peasants the revolutionary government was as remote and incomprehensible as a government on another planet."[30]

Accordingly, numerous Soviet-sponsored attempts to enlist popular support foundered. In 1981, the government announced formation of the National Fatherland Front, conceived as a coalition reaching out beyond the ranks of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan to village and tribal leaders. By 1986, official claims asserted a total membership of over a million, although the support was entirely illusory and its impact minimal. Other visible attempts to mobilize support entailed land reform, construction projects, literacy campaigns, and the promotion of greater civil equality for women. None of these initiatives, not even land reform, achieved much progress. Failure to resuscitate the Afghan economy, an important component for improving popular perceptions of the regime, also hampered the Soviets. In fact, the war—as evidenced by the effects of massive bombing—crippled development prospects by exacerbating agricultural shortages and driving up prices.[31] As asserted in a retrospective analysis by General Gareev, deputy chief of the Main Operations Directorate of the Soviet Army and later the General Staff, reform imposed from above had little prospect of success. Rather, he argued, support should have been built from below, beginning with the

Moslem clergy, who numbered perhaps 40,000 and wielded tremendous influence.[32] Still other measures that produced meager results included proclamations of amnesty for deserting soldiers and well-publicized agreements of cooperation with Islamic institutions.

Ultimately, with no end to the war in sight, the Soviet Union began the systematic, phased withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan in 1988. This decision, which marked a major policy reversal, became both possible and necessary as a result of the selection of Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary of the Communist Party in 1985. Because his own prestige was not tied to the former Afghan policy, Gorbachev was able to orchestrate a gradual shift of the official Soviet position with minimal loss of face. In addition, Gorbachev recognized that the war was increasingly unpopular as well as economically burdensome on the home front and was a serious impediment to pursuit of his new policy of accommodation with the United States. Meanwhile, the fact that the DRA did not collapse immediately thereafter marginally camouflaged the Soviet defeat.

In the end, the Soviets failed to accomplish any of their principal objectives for defeating the *irregular* enemy in Afghanistan. This was due to the strength, motivation, and resilience of the resistance as well as to the fact that the Soviets began the war without a coherent strategy and, even later, did not link their assorted efforts in such a way as to establish a basic unity of purpose. A most glaring example of this failure to forge an integrated strategy is the way in which highly destructive, firepower-intensive military operations undermined political campaigns aimed at winning the active support (or at least neutrality) of the population.

Had Soviet strategy been better conceived, there might have been at least some prospect for success. As Gareev wrote after the war, the Soviet General Staff had informed the Ministry of Defense in December 1979 that it would take from thirty to thirty-five divisions to stabilize Afghanistan.[33] Given the actual course of events there, this estimate is reasonable. Thus, the inability or unwillingness of the Soviets to mass the forces necessary to succeed invites an examination of its causes.

The foremost factor limiting the concentration of Soviet forces in Afghanistan was apparently political and, to a degree, self-imposed. When the Afghan War is viewed within the context of the Cold War, of which it became an undeniable part, it is apparent that the vast majority of the Soviet Army was committed to other theaters, especially Europe, where it stood toe to toe with the armies of NATO. For example, by an

official Pentagon estimate of 1989, the Soviets maintained sixty-eight divisions between their western territories and the NATO frontier.[34] These forces represented not only the mass of the Soviet Army but also its best-trained and best-equipped formations. Moreover, this commitment to Europe must be measured both in terms of divisions and economic costs. As became apparent shortly after the Afghan War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union that followed, the Soviet economy was under increasing strain during the 1980s. To sustain large forces in Europe, the Soviet Union had to abstain from making great commitments elsewhere.

The Soviet leadership gradually became cognizant of the diplomatic capital that might have to be spent to expand their effort in Afghanistan. Once the diplomatic costs were realistically assessed—and they were perhaps most severe in the Third World where the Soviets had made great strides in gaining influence during the preceding two decades—the Soviets sought to contain the damage to their foreign policy. As a result, they limited their troop commitment to Afghanistan and were cured of any temptations they might otherwise have felt to launch a major assault against Mujahideen training camps and sanctuaries in Pakistan or Iran.

Yet another practical constraint was the undeveloped character of the Afghan theater. Afghanistan's minimal road network could scarcely accommodate the traffic necessary to sustain the 110,000-man force sent there in the first place. Furthermore, according to 40th Army commander Lieutenant General Boris Gromov, from 30 to 35 percent of that force was tied down defending those same lines of communication, guarding convoys, and carrying out other security missions.[35] Even the relatively close proximity of Soviet air bases in Central Asia, which facilitated airlift, could not fundamentally alter the logistical equation. So dependent were the Soviets on the few available routes that the Mujahideen were afforded spectacular opportunities to ambush Soviet columns and keep the invaders off balance.[36] Most vulnerable of all was the Salaang highway, which threaded its way through narrow mountain defiles and a lengthy tunnel to connect Kabul with Termez on the Soviet border. Concern over the security of the Salaang highway was a major reason for the conduct of repeated offensives into the nearby Panjshir Valley, the stronghold of guerrilla leader Ahmad Shah Masoud. Ultimately, Masoud, like most other resistance leaders, withstood Soviet pressure and remained to fight over the future direction of Afghanistan in the wake of the departure of Soviet forces in 1988.[37]

When examined in light of the analytical model of *fortified compound war*, four critical aspects of the war come into sharp relief. First, for the many reasons considered above, Soviet and DRA government forces were unable to defeat the *irregular force* in Afghanistan, the Mujahideen. Numerous, agile, and fiercely determined, the Mujahideen constituted a formidable opponent. Nevertheless, their success was not inevitable and might not have been achieved but for the influence of other critical, complementary factors.

The classic complementary relationship in compound war is the dual action of *irregular and regular forces*. However, the regular counterpart to the Mujahideen is not to be found in the Afghan theater.[38] In this instance, it must be sought elsewhere. If one considers the impact of NATO conventional forces in Europe, the relevance of the compound war model is affirmed. Faced with a powerful regular adversary to its west, the Soviet Union could not assume the burden of an unlimited commitment to the war in Afghanistan. In practical terms, the Soviets could never mass the forces necessary to control the countryside and seal the Afghan frontiers.

This inability proved debilitating, in turn, because of the *compound effect* produced by *safe havens* in Iran and Pakistan. A consequence of diplomatic as well as military factors, the existence of a sanctuary freed the Mujahideen from the possibility of the relentless military pressure that might otherwise, in time, have broken their strength. It also provided recourse for the populace, in general, to escape the combat zone and wait out the struggle.

Support from *major power allies* manifested itself in other crucial ways as well. Access to foreign technology and training helped to diminish important Soviet combat advantages. In addition, allies provided the resistance significant economic, political, and moral support.

In sum, the analytical framework of fortified compound war facilitates a clearer understanding of the outcome in Afghanistan. Facing the classic dilemma posed by an elusive, motivated, *irregular* enemy that enjoyed indirect support from an ally possessing a powerful *regular* force, the Soviets were unable to concentrate their effort. Moreover, unable to close with an enemy that possessed the advantage of a nearby *sanctuary*—guaranteed by powerful and influential *allies*—Soviet forces faced a grim, demoralizing, and protracted conflict with little prospect of success.

Notes

1. Gerard Chaliand, *Report from Afghanistan* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 49-51. This general outlook was especially strong among those who believed that the United States would have prevailed in Vietnam had its military power not been constrained by political considerations and subsequently by dissent at home. The author was living in Moscow at the time and offers the personal observation that few natives other than Soviet dissidents were inclined to draw comparisons between Vietnam and Afghanistan.

2. Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 97.

3. Edward Girardet, *Afghanistan: The Soviet War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 23.

4. S. Kusherev, "After Afghanistan," *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, 21 December 1989, as translated in JPRS-UMA-90-006, 20 March 1990, 21-22.

5. Makhmut Akhmetovich Gareev**,** *Moia posledniaia voina (Afganistan bez sovetskikh voisk)* (Moscow: INSAN, 1996), 58; Stephen J. Blank**,** *Operational and Strategic Lessons of the War in Afghanistan, 1979-90* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1991), 29; See also Robert F. Baumann*, Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Afghanistan* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1993).

6. Artyom Borovik, *The Hidden War, a Russian Journalist's Account of the Soviet War in Afghanistan* (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990), 8-9.

7. Girardet, Afghanistan, 76.

8. Ibid., 79; Girardet, "How Stubborn Tribesmen Nibble Russians to Death," *US News and World Report*, 12 July 1982, 25-26.

9. Girardet, "How Stubborn Tribesmen," 25-26.

10. Graham Turbiville, "Ambush! The Road War in Afghanistan," *Army* (January 1988): 32-42.

11. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 27.

12. Borovik, *The Hidden War*, 9.

13. Scott McMichael, "Soviet Counter-Insurgency Doctrine—An Ideological Blind Spot," *Jane's Soviet Intelligence Review* (October 1990): 23-25; McMichael, "Soviet Tactical Performance and Adaptation in Afghanistan," *Journal of Soviet Military Studies* 3, no. 1 (1990): 73-79.

14. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 47.

15. Nasrulah Safi, "Soviet Military Tactics in Afghanistan," *Central Asian Survey* 5, no. 2 (1986): 103-10; Gennadii Bocharov, *Byl I vide l . . . Afganistan 1986/87 god* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1987), 23; V. Sosnitskii, "Desantniki v atake," *Voennyi vestnik*, 10 (1985): 29-30; Les Grau, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1996), 201-04; V. G. Safronov, "Kak eto bylo," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 5 (1990): 11-15.

16. See Baumann, *Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars*, 135-38.

17. Leo J. Daugherty III, "The Afghan War III: The Bear and the Scimitar: Soviet Central Asians and the War in Afghanistan," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 8, no. 1 (March 1995): 87-88; Borovik, *The Hidden War*, 13-14, 175-77; Blank, *Operational and Strategic Lessons*, 46-47.

18. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 53. The author puts the average Soviet strength in Afghanistan at 108,800, including 73,000 combat soldiers.

19. Safronov, "Kak eto bylo," 69; Borovik, *Afganistan: Eshche raz pro voine* (Moscow: Ogonek, 1990), 149.

20. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 55-56; Aleksandr Maiorov, *Pravda of afganskoi voine* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Prava Cheloveka, 1996), 28-29.

21. Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan in 1982: Still No Solution," *Central Asian Survey* 23, no. 2 (1983): 135; "Afganistan in 1983: Still No Solution," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 2 (1984): 235-36.

22. Roy, "What Is Afghanistan Really Like?" *Dissent* (Winter 1981): 54.

23. Josef Bodansky, "SAMS in Afghanistan: Assessing the Impact," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, 25 July 1987, 150-54; Aaron Karp, "Blowpipes and Stingers in Afghanistan: One Year Later," *Armed Forces Journal International* (September 1987): 37-38; John Cushman, "Helping to Change the Course of a War," *The New York Times*, 17 January 1988; David Isby, "Afghanistan in 1982: the War Continues," *International Defense Review* (November 1982): 1524.

24. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 57.

25. Maiorov, *Pravda ob afganskoi voine*, 61.

26. Aleksandr Lebed, *Za derzhavu obidno* . . . (Moscow: moskovskaia pravda, 1995), 91; Mark Urban, "A More Competent Afghan Army?" *Jane's Defense Weekly, 23 November 1985, 1147-51; Girardet, Afghanistan: The Soviet War, 136-37.*

27. Roy, "What Is Afghanistan Really Like?" 54.

28. Borovik, *The Hidden War*, 174.

29. Roy, "What Is Afghanistan Really Like?" 50-51.

30. Gennady Bocharov, *Russian Roulette: Afghanistan Through Russian Eyes*, Alyona Kojevnikov, trans. (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 57.

31. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 22; Maiorov, *Pravda ob afganiskoi voine*, 36.

32. Edward Girardet, "Occupational Hazards of a Soviet Occupation," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 2 July 1982.

33. Gareev, *Moia posledniaia voina*, 46.

34. *Soviet Military Power: Prospects for Change 1989* (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, 1989), 95.

35. Boris Gromov, "Zashchishchali, obuchali, stroili," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 3 (1989), 11-15.

36. Graham Turbiville, "Ambush! The Road War in Afghanistan," *Army* (January 1988): 38-42.

37. In September 2001, two days before the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, Masoud was the target of an assassination attempt. Severely wounded in the attack, he died of his wounds within days.

38. See also Mohammad Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *Afghanistan the Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower* (Havertown, Pa: Casemate, 2001), 224. As the authors point out, the Pakistani intelligence or ISI recognized the hazards of undertaking a conventional campaign with guerrilla forces and never encouraged the Mujahideen to do so. The Pakistanis did, however, provide tactical training (and sometimes direct assistance) on everything from mountain warfare to the employment of tanks. Training typically occurred near

Pakistan's western border with Afghanistan. The author bases these observations in part on an interview with Major Gulraiz Khan of Pakistan in May 2002.

Conclusion

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Like any other device for interpreting complex historical events, the concept of compound war as introduced in this volume must be understood both for what it is and what it is not. Judiciously employed, compound war and its more robust fortified variant constitute a practical theoretical framework for grappling with the historical dynamics of war and strategy. As demonstrated in the preceding case studies, it is a new construct superimposed upon the past that describes an important pattern in the conduct of many wars and, moreover, offers a useful lens through which to scrutinize the means employed and ends achieved. In light of its relevance to students of warfare, it is useful to explore briefly the limits of compound and fortified compound war. This can be accomplished, first, by looking at the way the concept can be applied and, second, by sharpening the distinction between compound war and other terms of discussion about the nature of war such as guerrilla war and coalition war. Several critical observations about the place of compound war within the framework of war and strategy as a whole naturally flow from this analysis.

As a concept, compound war can be regarded as both Jominian and Clausewitzian. From the former perspective, it offers the pragmatic observation that the simultaneous employment by a given power (or coalition) of regular and irregular forces is frequently more effective than the use of either kind singly. In this regard, the complementary use of different types of force is central. Thus, compound war poses a strategic challenge to an adversary that is distinct from the simple addition of like forces whether the result of alliance or other means. In other words, doubling the conventional or unconventional forces alone would not in many cases prove as effective, although it is self-evident that additional forces virtually always enhance combat power to some extent.[1]

By denying an adversary a single focal point against which to apply its power, compound war strategy tends both to diffuse and confuse the enemy's efforts. Therefore, it may be seen not only to increase the strength of the side employing it but also to diminish in a real way the power of the opposing side. In addition, if this compound approach is reinforced by the material or financial backing of a powerful ally or the availability of diplomatic or geographical safe haven (or both), its

impact multiplies and ideally will render one's main force invulnerable. The broad significance of these elementary propositions is well established in the cases explored in this volume. Thus, employed in the Jominian fashion as a practitioner's tool, compound war can provide a framework to assist the analyst of war to better understand certain strategic situations and logical courses of action that may flow from them. Put more simply, it offers a likely menu of options and risks under specific circumstances.

Yet, as Prussian theorist Carl von Clausewitz frequently cautioned, little in warfare is as simple as it at first seems; neither, he asserts, is warfare reducible to a set of rules.[2] Accordingly, an important feature of the analytical framework of compound war is that although it informs and illuminates, this volume makes no claim that it is a quantitative or predictive model—at least not in terms of the scientific experimental method. Despite its utility in defining a historically significant pattern of warfare, it does not function well as a rigid template. Rather, it must be understood as a flexible framework that comfortably incorporates innumerable additional variables such as geography, social forces, culture, intensity of motivation, and the role of personalities which shape both the course and outcomes of events.

Having considered the application of fortified compound war, it is instructive to consider the range of its relevance. In light of the almost infinite variety of war in history, it is no surprise that compound war strategy occasionally has occurred as an inadvertent consequence of time, space, and geography as they shape the process of military decision making. To invoke Clausewitz yet again, the role of chance is no less in compound war than in any other form of conflict and ultimately the effects of strategy count more than the intent behind them. For instance, in assessing Russia's defensive campaign against the Napoleonic invasion of 1812 (yet another case that featured both regular and irregular warfare), Clausewitz concluded that the extemporaneous strategy of Barclay de Tolly and Kutuzov—which exhibited limited aspects of compound war—would have been no more brilliant or successful had it been part of a grand design.[3] Yet, as the product of an extended sequence of separate operational decisions based upon evolving circumstances, it could easily appear after the fact to have been a work of genius. Consider the circumstances at the time. Facing a superior force in the Grand Armee, the Russians made a sequence of decisions to retreat. Though not part of a master plan—sustained retreat as a strategy would have been politically unacceptable—it nevertheless was an application of the traditional

stratagem of relinquishing space to gain time, or delay engagement until a more propitious moment. This was possible, however, because Imperial Russia enjoyed the de facto military sanctuary afforded by its vast territorial expanses that no invader could hope to conquer in full. In the later states of strategic withdrawal and then during the pursuit of the French Army back to the frontier, the Russians increasingly practiced irregular warfare. Without risking destruction of their own army, they employed angry peasants and irregular cavalry to harass and isolate their enemy. In the end, the Grand Armee essentially withered away. Thus it happens that compound war theory imposes no requirement that it be employed as a conscious design, although one might logically expect that it could be used to greatest effect by strategists fully aware of the implications of means and ends.

As the case studies in this volume suggest, compound war also allows for some of its most important effects to be achieved by indirect or surrogate means. In its standard application, such as against the French occupation of Spain, the intervention of British regulars was instrumental in foiling French efforts to extinguish guerrilla resistance by disallowing the dispersal of French forces necessary to fight an effective anti-guerrilla war. What is striking, however, is that regular and guerrilla forces in combination achieved what conventional coalition armies had as yet failed to achieve: the defeat of a French army. However, other cases reveal that in some circumstances the same advantage can be obtained by means short of direct conventional military engagement. For example, as the cases of Ireland or Afghanistan suggest, the potential—as opposed to actual—application of force by an external power can be sufficient to constrain the efforts of a given belligerent. In such a manner, neither the British nor the Soviets could apply their full might in the conflicts in question because of the existence of other, more pressing political or military concerns. The British could never afford to direct their focus away from the requirement to garrison their empire, nor could the Soviets ignore the "main threat" posed by force of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe. Therefore, the effect of an active, conventional ally in support of guerrilla resistance was largely achieved without the direct intervention of any other power in the conflict.

This brings us to the consideration of conceptual boundaries. As thoughtful skeptics would be quick to note, the admission of such slightly deviant cases poses some risk to the integrity of the concept of compound war itself. After all, the further one searches, the more one is likely to find exotic scenarios that somehow mirror the effects of

compound war strategy. Furthermore, if broadly enough interpreted, the umbrella of compound war might eventually harbor beneath it a myriad of conflicts that while deviating far from the original template are vaguely suggestive of the means and effects of compound war. After all, World War II, seen by many as representing the acme of conventional warfare, embraced pockets of guerrilla activity that doubtless played some role in the eventual outcome. Guerrilla warfare in Yugoslavia and the Philippines certainly had profound regional implications. Fortification can be found as well if one examines the war broadly enough. The United States and the deepest recesses of the Soviet Union even served as strategic sanctuaries of allied power beyond the reach of axis might. Consequently, the question logically arises as to whether a theoretical framework that can be applied ad infinitum does not become so distorted and blurred as to be eviscerated of real meaning. If virtually any conflict can somehow be construed to reveal the relevance of the concept, does not the very idea of evaporate as a discrete and legitimate category?

With regard to the present collection of case studies, several of the authors test the limits of compound war without deforming the theory beyond recognition. In the case of the Anglo-Irish war, whether or not one concludes that the means employed were strictly representative of compound war, the effects achieved were essentially similar. In other words, even if compound war effects were accomplished by other means, the compound logic of their consequences is what matters in this instance. Even in the case of the American war with the Indians of the Great Plains, discussion of the potential as opposed to actual employment of a compound strategy makes the historically valid point that strategic options often go unused. In fact, by testing the concept in a variety of settings, the cases herein effectively explore important ways in which compound war strategy can manifest itself. The conclusion that this framework assists in the interpretation of such a variety of cases strongly suggests its value as an analytical category in the study of warfare.

In light of the heterogeneous nature of the conflicts discussed in this volume, it is important to affirm certain regularities that prevail among them. First and foremost among these is the simultaneous employment of conventional and unconventional means. Each case we have examined posed the fundamental problem facing the weaker power in warfare: how to resist by military means without bringing about its own destruction. The most common solution was to employ guerrilla warfare in one form or another. As Walter Lacquere observes in

Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study, such changing of the rules of conflict is a natural response of those who are not equipped to meet a conventional foe on equal terms.[4] Thus, it is apparent that guerrilla warfare, though a precondition of compound war, is not in itself compound war.

Absent the effects of compound war, simple guerrilla wars or wars fought by coalition partners are not notably more successful than other forms of war. A guerrilla campaign waged without the benefit of conventional support or geographical sanctuary can be defeated by a power possessing superior resources and sufficient resolve to use them. A case in point is the American subjugation of the so-called Philippine Insurrection from 1899 to 1903. Confined by island geography and isolated from outside assistance, the nationalist guerrillas could only survive by holding territory and winning popular support but failed in both endeavors. The United States was able to focus its military campaign on neutralizing the guerrillas while it mounted a civil effort to win over the populace or at least separate it physically from the guerrillas.

Other cases not included in this study tend to confirm the lessons of the Philippines. For example, the Russian subjugation of mountaineer resistance in the Caucasus revealed the potency of superior resources if a smaller guerrilla force lacks either a major, conventional ally or permanent sanctuary. There, rugged terrain most unfavorable to the employment of conventional tactics and logistics coupled with the galvanizing effect of charismatic leadership enabled the guerrillas to prolong the struggle for half a century.[5] Still, in the end, the focused resources and combat power of the Russian Empire prevailed. The overriding strength of a strong conventional army facing a guerrilla threat is that its ability to mass combat power at any given place and time permits it to seize terrain almost at will. If it is able to employ trained conventional regiments in sufficient numbers and supply them, it simply cannot be dislodged except through the application of other forms of pressure—economic, diplomatic, or political.

In general, however, compound war and especially fortified compound war reverse the odds of success. The Spanish resistance against Napoleonic France offers a superb illustration of this assertion, as does the Chinese Civil War. In neither instance could the conventional power continuously dominate the terrain thanks to the mounting of a combined conventional and unconventional effort. Conventional armies, for all their might, have vulnerabilities; the greatest in compound war settings is the insecurity of supply and lines

of communications. Guerrilla forces with the active support of the populace can exploit this weakness and compel a powerful conventional foe to relinquish territory that it is strong enough to conquer but not defend.

Ultimately, compound war enjoys limited conceptual overlap with guerrilla war but demands that the latter operate in a multi-dimensional context. The same is true of coalition war. Compound war typically, though not always, entails alliance relationships. Yet, it is not the addition of an ally but the addition of a complementary type of force that is the defining quality of compound war. In most cases examined in this volume, the ally has contributed to compound war by lending a conventional force in support of a local guerrilla force. This compels the outside conventional opponent to wage two different wars simultaneously, each requiring differing strategies, tactics, organization and so forth. As always, the specific forms of struggle are a function of the peculiar conditions of any given war.

One fascinating case is the history of Anglo-French competition in North America during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Both sides made use of conventional units and irregular Indian allies, demonstrating that compound war need not be the domain of a single side alone. The British prevailed in the end because of superior wealth and numbers. Of course, warfare in the Americas transcended European perspectives.

For example, in the so-called French and Indian War, the guerrilla strategy employed by Native American allies of the French was not so much a choice as a matter of cultural convention. By virtue of their environment and traditions, the indigenous tribes of the northeastern quarter of the future United States were masters of individual combat in the vast, untamed forests that were a predominant geographical feature of the region. This conferred on them enormous tactical advantages although it left them strategically weak.

Conversely, there are cases in which leaders have made the choice to fight a compound war out of necessity and thereby contradicted the conventional wisdom of their own military culture. In the case of the American Revolutionary War, guerrilla tactics were employed to good effect by such leaders as Nathanael Greene, who despite his training as a conventional soldier, exhibited a natural talent for unconventional war. To be sure, the American side also employed forces whose true nature was neither guerrilla nor conventional. In practice, most colonial militias occupied a rough middle ground between conventional and unconventional forces, a fact that drove George Washington nearly to

despair. Fortunately, in addition to his small Continental Army, Washington had the conventional might of France on his side. Moreover, given the severe logistical and maneuver constraints facing British forces in North America, the militias often enjoyed advantages common to guerrillas such as superior knowledge of the terrain, the ability to sustain themselves among a friendly populace in the countryside, and a practical edge in mobility off of the main roads.

If, as demonstrated in the aforementioned cases, some form of guerrilla warfare is the fundamental common element of compound war strategy, its indispensable complement is the employment—or potential employment—of conventional force in sufficient strength as to deny the enemy a consistent and coherent anti-guerrilla strategy. The complementary relationship between conventional and unconventional forces shields both from destruction. If this combination is further bolstered by the presence of safe havens and a major ally, the apparently weaker power might well in reality be the stronger (virtually indestructible) as long as it is waging a fundamentally defensive war. As illustrated in the cases in this volume, sanctuary can be the result of geography, as in the remote Appalachian interior of North America in George Washington's struggle versus the British, or the product of diplomatic frontiers, as in the case of America's war in Vietnam. Occasionally, it is a function of both, as in Afghanistan where the Mujahideen enjoyed limited sanctuary in the deep, mountainous recesses of their own country, as well as diplomatic safe haven in Pakistan and Iran.

In none of the cases contained in this study did the conventional allies of the guerrilla forces assume the principal burden of waging the war. Rather, each judiciously applied limited power to maximum effect, seeking strategic advantage while limiting its own liability in the event of failure. The French in their support of the American Revolution and the British in support of Spanish guerrillas committed only sufficient forces or materiel to affect the balance of power in what was viewed as a merely regional and subordinate theater of a broader conflict. Moreover, they did so not to bring about the complete defeat of a peer power but merely to exploit a limited strategic opportunity. Indeed, the advantages to a major conventional power of combating a peer adversary by supporting a third party engaged in a guerrilla struggle could well be the subject of a study in their own right. This suggests perhaps a corollary principle to compound war. A conventional power that realizes potential advantage by forming a compound relationship with another power often does so as a result of

having been victimized by the same strategy as employed by an adversary. History offers ample cases in which a defeated power is later able to turn the tables.

Accordingly, cases in which a power defeated by a compound war strategy will use the same to achieve a future success can be found in the late Twentieth Century as well. Without directly intervening, the Soviet Union rendered effective material aid to North Vietnam and the Viet Cong guerrillas to defeat American policy in Indochina. In return, the United States equipped and funded the Afghan guerrillas who thwarted Soviet efforts to maintain a stable client regime on their southern frontier in Central Asia. In both instances, the victorious (ostensibly weaker) side prevailed not by directly driving out their enemy by military means but by prolonging a stalemate until their great power opponent found continuation impractical.

As the cases in this volume suggest, compound war strategy offers many routes to victory and thus must be construed as applying to a broad range of wars. Compound warfare itself perhaps belongs to an even larger strategic category concerning the application of multiple and distinct kinds of forces towards a common purpose. The employment of multiple methods in combination is nearly as old as warfare itself and is a proven approach. In broad historical context, this has been especially true at the tactical level whether we speak of pike and musket, infantry and cavalry, or artillery and armor. The larger point is that the same principle applies at the operational and strategic levels. The history of modern warfare has demonstrated the complementary effect of air and ground forces, surface and sub-surface fleets, and information warfare and precision guided munitions. The intent over time has always been essentially the same: to create or discover, and then exploit, an enemy deficiency by presenting problems for which he has no solution.

Notes

1. I owe this insight in large measure to a conversation with my colleague Curt King in July 2000.

2. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1993), 97.

3. Clausewitz, 744.

4. Walter Lacquer, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publications, 1998), 69-79, 382-409.

5. Robert F. Baumann, *Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Afghanistan*, Leavenworth Paper Number 20 (Ft. Leavenworth, Ks.: Combat Studies Institute, 1993), 1-48.

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Robert F. Baumann has taught at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College since 1984. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1974 with a B.A. in Russian and earned his Ph.D. from Yale University in 1982. In 1979-1980 he was a graduate exchange student at Moscow University with grant support from the Fulbright-Hays Program and the International Research and Exchanges Board. Baumann is the author of *Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan*, published by the Combat Studies Institute in 1993 and co-author of *Invasion, Intervention, Intervasion: A Concise History of the U.S. Army in Operation Uphold Democracy*, published by the Combat Studies Institute in 1998. A recent recipient of a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, Baumann is also co-author of a forthcoming book and writer-producer of a documentary film on the U.S. and multinational peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. He has also written extensively on the history of the Bashkirs and served as a Visiting Professor of History briefly at the Bashkir State University in Ufa in the fall of 1992.

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