

# **Adapting to the Uncertain Nature of Future Conflict**

**A Monograph  
by  
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## Abstract

ADAPTING TO THE UNCERTAIN NATURE OF FUTURE CONFLICT by MAJ Joseph P. Kuchan, U.S. Army, 82 pages.

It is not known against whom or where the United States Army will fight next, nor is it clear what the nature of that conflict will be. What is relatively certain is that the United States Army will likely initially get it wrong, regardless of its level of preparation. In order to prevail, it will have to adapt. The Army is currently focused on winning its two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But these two wars will not last forever and other potential antagonists loom on the horizon. The Army must balance its mandate to win the current wars with its responsibility to prepare for and win unknown future conflicts. The Army must be prepared to fight a war for which it has not previously prepared. This monograph will analyze how two foreign armies prepared for the uncertain nature of their future conflicts.

The first case study analyzes the British Army following World War II (1945-1960), when the British, who prepared to fight the Soviets in major combat operations in Europe, instead fought numerous counterinsurgency campaigns, including Malaya. The British Army, in spite of its extensive recent combat experience in World War II, and partially because of it, initially performed poorly; but over time correctly came to understand the nature of the conflict, adapted, and defeated the insurgency.

The second case study examines the Israeli Army (2000-2006) following its 2000 withdrawal from Lebanon when it prepared to fight a counterinsurgency but instead fought a “hybrid war” of mixed major combat operations and counterinsurgency in Lebanon in 2006. The Israeli Army, in spite of its recent counterinsurgency experience (and perhaps partially because of it) fared poorly; it did not fully understand the nature of the conflict in which it fought and took too long to adapt to its new realities.

The overarching conclusion is that the United States Army must be able and *willing* to adapt to whatever conflict it finds itself in. Leadership is critical to adaptation. Towards that end, broad training that increases adaptability, gaining wide experience at the individual level, flexible doctrine, broad leader education prior to the conflict, and a continuing effort to learn and adjust during a conflict are important to successful outcomes. Secondly, determining the true nature of the conflict as quickly as possible is important to enabling the essential adaptation. A general purpose force trained in full spectrum operations (from counterinsurgency through major combat operations), capable of effectively employing combined arms capabilities, and comfortable operating with other elements of the government is also important.

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## Introduction

It is not surprising that there has often been a high proportion of failures among senior commanders at the beginning of any war. These unfortunate men may either take too long to adjust themselves to reality, through a lack of hard preliminary thinking about what war would really be like, or they may have had their minds so far shaped by a lifetime of pure administration that they have ceased for all practical purposes to be soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

Michael Howard, *The Causes of War*

The true nature of future conflict is inherently unknowable. It is not known against whom or where the United States Army will fight next, nor is it clear what the nature of that conflict will be. What is relatively certain is that the United States Army will likely initially get it wrong, regardless of its level of preparation. In order to prevail, it will have to adapt; this is where the Army should place its resources in preparation—preparing to adapt, enabling adaptation, and more importantly training and educating its leaders in adaptation.

The United States Army recently entered a period of conflict that required, and continues to require, significant adaptation in its operational environments. The ongoing challenging counterinsurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan have been of a long duration and have consumed the United States Army in terms of preparation, intellectual thought, and focus. The Army is focused on winning these two wars. But these two wars will not last forever. Other antagonists loom on the horizon potentially including Iran, North Korea, and China. These states have used the United States' involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan to become more bellicose and aggressive. The United States Army's

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Howard, *The Causes of Wars and other essays*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), 194.

challenge of the future is to balance its mandate to win the current wars with its responsibility to prepare for and win an unknown future conflict. The nature of future conflict is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to accurately predict. While the United States Army must make predictions about future conflicts and must necessarily train and prepare based on these predictions, it must also be prepared to fight a war for which it has perhaps not previously prepared. What is the best way to do this? This challenge is not unique to the United States Army.

This paper will ascertain relevant trends about how best to prepare for and fight future wars by analyzing how two foreign armies prepared for the uncertain nature of their own future conflicts. The first case study is drawn from the British Army's experiences from 1945 to 1960. In particular the focus is on the contrast between the need to deter or potentially fight the Soviets which necessitated preparation for major combat operations in Europe, with the need to win an ongoing counterinsurgency in Malaya. The second case study examines the Israeli Army from 2000 to 2006. This period begins with Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, after which the Israeli Army predominantly focused on counterinsurgency, but then found itself fighting a "hybrid war" of mixed major combat operations and counterinsurgency in Lebanon in 2006. In each case study a number of factors were examined. These include experience, training, education, and doctrine.

The idea of a military preparing to fight the last war is antithetical to its very purpose and an unfortunate cliché. No military purposely prepares for the last war; instead they attempt to prepare for future wars by studying past conflicts and attempting to determine appropriate lessons. It appears, however, to be extremely difficult to divorce

future conflict from past conflicts or, more exactly, to correctly draw the appropriate lessons from the past for application to some future conflict in an unknown future construct or context. As Michael Howard aptly put it, “the soldier has to steer between the danger of repeating the errors of the past because he is ignorant that they have been made, and the danger of remaining bound by theories deduced from past history although changes in conditions have rendered these theories obsolete.”<sup>2</sup> While the United States can certainly make reasonable predictions about the nature of future conflict, these predictions will likely prove inaccurate, or at least partially so. Nevertheless, the Army must still make assumptions about the nature of future conflict and attempt to prepare appropriately; it cannot claim that since it cannot accurately predict future conflict it will refrain from prediction.

Both the British and the Israelis prepared for one type of conflict, only to find themselves fighting another. From a discussion of their experiences this paper argues that the United States Army must be able and willing to adapt to whatever conflict it finds itself in. Towards that end, broad training that increases adaptability, gaining wide individual experience, flexible doctrine, broad leader education prior to the conflict, and a continuing effort to learn and adjust during a conflict are important to successful outcomes. Determining the true nature of the conflict as quickly as possible initiates and further enables the essential adaptation. A general purpose force trained in full spectrum operations (from counterinsurgency through major combat operations), capable of

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<sup>2</sup> Howard, *The Causes of War*, 195.

effectively employing combined arms capabilities, and comfortable operating with other elements of the government is also important in furthering adaptation.

## Great Britain: 1945-1960

Great Britain emerged from World War II an exhausted nation that faced the dilemma of creating a comprehensive social welfare system coupled with a desire to retain influence on the world stage. Given the impending loss of India, the British turned their attention toward solidifying their position in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. The focus of this modified imperial system was to be the Middle East. One of Great Britain's primary challenges towards this end was resources:

Britain was thus faced after 1945 with the same dilemma that had haunted her in the inter-war years: she possessed much overseas territory yet lacked the resources necessary to defend it effectively. This did not, however, alter in any way her determination to cling on to her status as a great power.<sup>3</sup>

Over time, the British realized that maintaining the empire in its previous form was not feasible. They therefore adopted the commonwealth approach which required that the former colonies adopt responsible governments. However, the advent of the Cold War forced the British to again shift focus and once again reconsider their continental commitments. Throughout the Cold War, the dilemma of imperial defense (policing) and the continental commitment persistently challenged the British Army. Between 1948 and 1950 the Labour Government increasingly committed Britain to the defense of Western Europe against the Soviet threat. Nonetheless, imperial policing and counterinsurgency placed considerable demands on the British military establishment. This section will explore how the British Army prepared to execute the defense policy as it evolved. Finally this section evaluates how the British Army's preparation for a large conventional war against the Soviets impacted its fight in Malaya from 1948-1960.

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Dockrill, *British Defence Since 1945* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 31.

Three main themes comprised the British strategic setting at the end of World War II: rebuilding a strong peacetime economy, addressing external threats, and determining its role in the changed world. Determining its new role included how to remain, if not a great power, at least a relevant one and how to address its colonies and empire in light of the economy and its external threats.

While contending with enormous economic debt and a faltering economy, Great Britain simultaneously faced critical decisions about the fate of her empire and the threat of Soviet expansion in Europe that threatened to replace the recently defeated Germany with a new continental challenger. These three critical areas were intertwined. In order to fix the economy Britain had to reduce expenditures. With the election of the Labour Government in 1945, the debt that Great Britain had incurred during World War II increased because of the Labour Government's expensive domestic health, welfare, and education programs.<sup>4</sup> To offset rising social expenditures it made sense to reduce the size of the Army. As the Empire contracted, there was naturally less demand for large-scale, expensive forces deployed around the globe. The impetus towards colonial independence certainly contributed to this trend. If Great Britain no longer had the colonies she would no longer need as large of a force to police them. Consequently, while the Labour Government who also favored de-colonization (primarily on economic grounds), favored a speedy reduction in the size and presence of the military, the military favored continued widespread global presence.<sup>5</sup> However, the colonies were an important source of money

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<sup>4</sup> Dockrill, *British Defence Since 1945*, 20-21; Raffi Gregorian, *The British Army, the Gurkhas and Cold War Strategy in the Far East, 1947-1954* (Houndmills, England: Palgrave, 2002), 12.

<sup>5</sup> Gregorian, *The British Army, the Gurkhas and Cold War Strategy*, 14.

(and to a certain extent power) that Great Britain sorely needed, therefore providing some reasons to attempt to retain them. In order to better understand the role of the colonies within the context of overall defense, the following sections will first address British colonial policy and then Britain's overall defense in terms of perceived threats and Britain's expected response to those threats.

## **Colonial Policy**

The British faced a major policy dilemma regarding its colonies following World War II. Many of the political values that the British espoused at home including self-rule, democracy, justice, equality, and basic human rights appeared to be in direct opposition to imperial rule. This created tension at home between those on the right who still clung to the empire and those on the left who saw the empire in conflict with the new age of "internationalism."<sup>6</sup> In light of the changing political, economic, and military realities, the Labour Government adopted a realist approach to Britain's requirements and capabilities—better aligning requirements, capabilities, and resources. At the same time, the Labour Government, like previous governments, did not advocate the immediate end of the Empire.<sup>7</sup> One solution to this dilemma was the establishment of the Commonwealth, which "facilitated decolonization by satisfying both the internationalism

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<sup>6</sup> French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 217.

<sup>7</sup> Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road To Decolonisation, 1918-1968* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 94-95.

of the left and the cravings of those on the right who still clung to the belief that Britain had a role to play as the leader of an influential world bloc."<sup>8</sup>

The Labour Government pursued its declared policy of granting self-governance to India (1947), Burma (1948), and Ceylon [Sri Lanka] (1948) within the context of helping these former colonies achieve responsible self-government within the Commonwealth. The British extended this general approach to Malaya, but initial moves to put Malaya on the path to independence failed; internal dissent within Malaya concerning the nature of the future government and the role that the various ethnicities within Malaya would play, frustrated British efforts to promote independence.<sup>9</sup> The Labour Government had concluded that attempting to hold onto the colonies would likely increase resentment towards the West and hence encourage or enable further Soviet communist expansion. Understanding the growing nationalist movements in her former colonies, the Labour Government also concluded that it was preferable to accept the inevitable graciously.<sup>10</sup> The policy of promoting self government in these specific (former) colonies did not represent a fixed strategy or integrated policy of decolonization; rather, it reflected the relative maturity of these particular colonies and a realization that Great Britain could not realistically maintain them.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 217. The Commonwealth is a “voluntary association...that supports each other and works together towards shared goals in democracy and development.” Commonwealth, “The Commonwealth FAQs,” Commonwealth Secretariat, <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/180380/> (accessed March 22, 2010). The London Declaration of 1949 established the modern Commonwealth as an association of independent countries, arising from a historical relationship, as “free and equal members.” Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Gregorian, *The British Army, the Gurkhas and Cold War Strategy*, 16-17.

<sup>10</sup> Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road To Decolonisation, 1918-1968*, 96.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 94.

Regardless of its policies, the British fought a series of colonial wars from India, Egypt, Palestine, Aden, Cyprus, Malaya, Borneo, to Kenya, beginning in the late 1940's and lasting through the 1950's and 1960's as they withdrew from their empire. Many of these populations sought freedom from colonial rule either more quickly or in a different manner from what the British anticipated while using violent means to attain their aims. Rather than fighting the British by conventional means, these populations used a "mixture of guerilla warfare, urban terrorism, and forms of non-violent opposition."<sup>12</sup> Although widespread and unique from each other, these conflicts all took place within the larger context of the ever-present and real Soviet threat.

## **Soviet Threat**

The Soviet Union, because of the size of her armed forces and her opposition to many of Great Britain's policies during the waning period of World War II, presented a true existential threat to Great Britain.<sup>13</sup> As early as 1946, when Soviet intentions were not entirely clear, Britain perceived growing Soviet hostility to British interests.<sup>14</sup> Great Britain believed that the Soviets intended to attack Western Europe once they had fully recovered from World War II, but not sooner than 1956. The British realized that they could not face this threat alone and sought help to deter and defend against the Soviet threat first from the rest of Western Europe and then from the United States.<sup>15</sup> Towards

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<sup>12</sup> French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 216.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

<sup>14</sup> John Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1993), 41.

<sup>15</sup> Gregorian, *The British Army, the Gurkhas and Cold War Strategy*, 11-12; Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, 73.

that end, Great Britain led the European effort to organize Western European defense. Spurred by the February 1948 Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, Britain signed the Brussels Treaty in March 1948. The Brussels Treaty established a mutual assistance pact between Great Britain, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. This defense pact signaled Western Europe's commitment to its own defense as well as Britain's leadership role in organizing this defense.<sup>16</sup> Great Britain's effort to secure assistance from the United States to European defense culminated in 1949 with the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).<sup>17</sup> The establishment of NATO had significant implications for Great Britain and its Army, some of which only became apparent later. The first and perhaps most powerful implication, readily apparent at the outset, was that the establishment of NATO effectively created a bipolar Europe dominated by two superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union. This forced Great Britain to operate within that construct.<sup>18</sup> While the United States dominated NATO, and the two super powers dominated the world stage, Great Britain could remain relevant by organizing the Commonwealth in a defense primarily of the Middle East but also of the Far East.<sup>19</sup>

Another result of the establishment of NATO was that Britain was not initially required to maintain a sizeable British force on the continent. The British were therefore somewhat free to use their limited forces elsewhere in support of her empire. In 1950 the

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<sup>16</sup> Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, 71-72.

<sup>17</sup> French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 214.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

<sup>19</sup> Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, 89-90.

British had only two weak divisions in Europe. But this would not last. Following the Soviet Union's successful atom bomb test in 1949 and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, NATO planners decided that it was necessary to increase NATO force levels in Europe to counteract any potential Soviet designs.<sup>20</sup> In 1954, in order to meet these increased force requirements and to show its commitment to the United States, Great Britain committed to permanently stationing four divisions in Europe as a part of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR).<sup>21</sup> Agreeing to station ground forces in continental Europe during peacetime was a remarkable departure from past British peacetime strategies.<sup>22</sup> However, this approach still kept with basic overall British historical policy—she was using an alliance to help her secure Europe (and herself) from the Soviets while giving herself the latitude to pursue other policy goals in the Middle East and Asia. Thus, British policy sought to balance the security needs of Europe with those of the empire.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the impetus toward decolonization, the British realized that retention of some imperial possessions could provide them leverage with the United States and a counter to Soviet expansion. In order to do this she would have to distribute defense responsibilities more equally across the Commonwealth nations.<sup>24</sup> The fundamental aim of the Commonwealth would remain the defeat of the Soviets in Europe, the Middle East, and in India. The Far East played a minor role in this overall strategy, only as a source of

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<sup>20</sup> French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 214.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 214-215.

<sup>22</sup> French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 215.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

<sup>24</sup> Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, 77, 79.

rice, tin, oil, and rubber. The British did not predict that the Far East would be a source of conflict.<sup>25</sup>

## **British Army Policy**

Within the strategic context of the mid to late 1940's several factors interplayed to impact British Army policy: the perceived threat from the Soviet Union, the economy, and the size and capability of the Army. As previously mentioned, Great Britain considered the Soviet Union to be her greatest threat. Simultaneously, because of the weak economy, the British Army faced great pressure to reduce its size and scope in a dual attempt to reduce overall government expenditures and to rapidly get men into the workforce.<sup>26</sup> As a result the British Army undertook a fundamental restructuring and resizing effort. This was an extremely turbulent time for the British Army.

Because of the primacy of the Soviet threat and the existential threat that it posed to Great Britain, the British Army primarily prepared to defeat the Soviets. The British Chiefs of Staff made this explicit in their 1947 "Future Defence Policy" which stated: "The most likely and the most formidable threat to our interests comes from Russia, especially from 1956 onwards, and it is against this worse case that we must be prepared, at the same time taking every possible step to prevent it."<sup>27</sup> In the same document the

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<sup>25</sup> Gregorian, *The British Army, the Gurkhas and Cold War Strategy*, 11-12.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>27</sup> United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, "Future Defence Policy: Report by the Chiefs of Staff." COS(47)102(0), 33.(b), May 1947, as reproduced in Appendix 7 of Julian Lewis, *Changing Direction: British Military Planning for Post-war Strategic Defence, 1942-1947* (London: Sherwood Press, 1988), 378.

British Chiefs of Staff gave the Army their primary task: “The primary task of the Army, apart...[from home defence] will be to ensure the security of our Middle East base.”<sup>28</sup>

In spite of the Soviet threat, the Army still had to down size. The Army’s answer to a reduced size was to transfer the bulk of its resident manpower to the reserves. To achieve this, the Defense establishment steadily increased the National Service requirement (essentially a draft) from twelve months in 1945, to eighteen months in 1948, and to twenty-four months in 1950. Following their service on active duty, these National Servicemen reverted to the reserves and became a national/strategic reserve in the case of a major conflict against the Soviets on the order of World War II. As a result, national servicemen could not participate in contingency operations because it would take too long to train, prepare, and deploy to the contingency area of operations; once there, these National Servicemen would have insufficient time to actually operate before their obligation expired.<sup>29</sup> To maintain its operational effectiveness and relevance the army adopted a rotational cycle where an active battalion rotated between deployments, service at home, and re-configuration or “suspended animation.”<sup>30</sup> Regardless of its level and quality of preparation and the quality of this preparation, the British Army did prepare for conflict. The type of conflict for which it prepared and how it prepared had ramifications in its subsequent conflict in Malaya.

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<sup>28</sup> United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, “Future Defence Policy: Report by the Chiefs of Staff.” COS(47)102(0), 47.(e), May 1947, as reproduced in Appendix 7 of Julian Lewis, *Changing Direction: British Military Planning for Post-war Strategic Defence, 1942-1947* (London: Sherwood Press, 1988), 384.

<sup>29</sup> Gregorian, *The British Army, the Gurkhas and Cold War Strategy*, 35.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

## Experience

The British had significant experience with both conventional war and with counterinsurgency. From 1939-1945 the British fought in World War II, which was chiefly a large scale conventional conflict. As a result, by 1945 many British officers, up to and including battalion commanders, had only served in conventional conflicts.<sup>31</sup> As a result, conventional conflict served as the sole basis of experience for the majority of small unit leaders that, according to British principles of counterinsurgency (which will be addressed later), were so critical to counterinsurgency. The lack of experience in this critical level of leadership would present a challenge in the post-World War II environment. While junior officers lacked experience, senior British Army officers had considerable counterinsurgency experience from the interwar period including in Ireland, India, Burma, Palestine and the Northwest Frontier. Although World War II was primarily a conventional war, the British Army did learn at least one leadership lesson applicable to counterinsurgency. At the tactical level jungle warfare against the Japanese, much like counterinsurgency, required decentralization and a reliance on junior officers.<sup>32</sup>

While the British Army had most recently experienced conventional conflict, they had a much longer experience with counterinsurgency which further provided senior officers some experience. The British gained counterinsurgency experience in 1919 in Ireland, 1921 in India, 1930 in Burma, 1936 in Palestine, and over a long time on both

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas Mockaitis, "The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency, 1919-60" (Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI: University Microfilms International, 1988): 336.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 337-338.

the Northwest Indian frontier and in the Middle East. From this extensive experience of imperial policing and facing rebellions, the British developed several counterinsurgency principles but they did not write a formal doctrine.<sup>33</sup> Both Generals Sir Harold Briggs and Sir Gerald Templer who would later command in Malaya gained counterinsurgency experience during the inter-war years.<sup>34</sup>

As a whole, the British Army's recent experience in World War II left them poorly prepared, (or at least their experience was not particularly applicable) for a counterinsurgency like the one they were about to face in Malaya. Unfortunately for the British, even the tactical experience gained from fighting the Japanese in the jungles during World War II departed with the service members who had done the fighting. Most of the experienced soldiers left the army and National Servicemen replaced them. Compounding this tactical problem caused by the departure of experience, the British Army had no centralized system that trained units for jungle warfare.<sup>35</sup>

Following the Second World War, the British Army had a mix of conventional and counterinsurgency experience upon which to draw. Although the bulk of its recent experience had been conventional conflict, the Army had a longer, but more distant, history with irregular conflict. While the Army's conventional conflict experience may have aided some at the tactical level and almost certainly helped with the deployment, administration, and supply of an expeditionary force, it likely also colored the Army's

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<sup>33</sup> Mockaitis, "The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency," 25-30.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 337.

<sup>35</sup> Daniel Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle: the Indian and British Army Jungle Warfare Doctrines for Burma, 1943-5, and the Malayan Emergency, 1948-1960," in *Big Wars and Small Wars: The British Army and the Lessons of War in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 84.

approach to a new conflict. And while the British did have extensive counterinsurgency experience, it was not resident in those who were about to undertake it—thereby rendering it at least initially inaccessible.

## **British Army Training**

Training reflected policy. Immediately following World War II, the British Army trained as it had during World War II. This is not especially surprising given the Soviet threat that the British Army faced during this timeframe. British training methods had, by all accounts contributed to victory in World War II. Following World War II, the British Army continued using an enemy based on the Japanese or German model in its basic training. That is how the Army trained during the five years of World War II. Even with a clear Soviet enemy, the training apparatus found it difficult to conceive of an enemy different from the Japanese and Germans they had just defeated.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, in the Far East, most units continued training for the small possibility of a conventional war against the Soviets even though the terrain did not lend itself to a European type conventional war.<sup>37</sup> While the British Army perceived that it may become involved in some variety of counterinsurgency, it did not formally train for it. As such, the British Army did not have counterinsurgency skills resident within it as a result of training. The British Army did,

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<sup>36</sup> David G. Chandler and Ian Beckett, eds., *The Oxford History of the British Army* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 316-317.

<sup>37</sup> Daniel Martson, “Lost and Found in the Jungle,” 85.

however, maintain a consistent approach. In its training it identified the Soviets as its main enemy and trained to confront them.<sup>38</sup>

## Doctrine

Doctrine is one way to transmit experience. Another way to transmit experience is from person to person, which can work as long as the recipients are available the next time that experience is needed. Although the British Army had extensive experience in counterinsurgency, it lacked a comprehensive formal doctrine; as a result it relied primarily on transmitting the information between people.<sup>39</sup>

Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn, who served as the commandant of the Royal Staff College from 1926-1932, wrote *Imperial Policing* in 1934, which substituted for doctrine at that time. Indeed both of the British Army's later official publications relied heavily on Gwynn's work.<sup>40</sup> In his book Major-General Gwynn outlined circumstances under which the British Army may intervene under the auspices of imperial policing, principles that govern imperial policing, and several historical examples of imperial policing. Gwynn first outlined three broad circumstances where the Army may be called upon to intervene. The first was small wars where the objective was establishing civil control and where no limitations are placed on the use of force. Gwynn described them as

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<sup>38</sup> Not until 1949, when the British Army established a local training center in Malaya for units and personnel involved in the Malayan Emergency did the British Army adjust their training. Since establishing this school constituted a portion of the Army's adjustment to the realities of Malaya, it will be covered in more depth under "learning and training" following a general discussion of the war.

<sup>39</sup> Mockaitis, "The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency," 382.

<sup>40</sup> Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerillas and Their Opponents Since 1750* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 44. Beckett suggests that General Gwynn may have authored the later publications.

having a “purely military” character; although he did not call them as such, these were essentially regime change wars or wars of conquest.<sup>41</sup> The second type was “when normal civil control does not exist, or has broken down to such an extent that the Army becomes the main agent for the maintenance of or for the restoration of order.”<sup>42</sup> This included the extreme case of martial law but also the more common case of cooperation between the military and civil powers, with the military (at least temporarily being the more capable partner). The third case that Gwynn described was “when the civil power continues to exercise undivided control but finds the police forces on which it normally relies insufficient.”<sup>43</sup> This last case was generally referred to as “in aid of the civil power.”<sup>44</sup>

Gwynn then outlined four principles and doctrines that guide imperial policing: the civil government and its policies remain preeminent; the minimum amount of military force should be employed, depending on the situation; prompt action using minimum force often forestalls having to use greater force later; and the civil and military leaders must cooperate.<sup>45</sup> He concluded his book with “case studies” designed to demonstrate both the successful and sometimes unsuccessful application of the principles.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Major-General Sir Charles W. Gwynn, *Imperial Policing* (London: Macmillan, 1934), 3.

<sup>42</sup> Gwynn, *Imperial Policing*, 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-16.

<sup>46</sup> Each case study comprises a chapter. They include Armistar (India), 1919; Egypt, 1919; The Moplah Rebellion (India), 1921; Chanak (near the Dardanelles), 1922; Khartun (Sudan), 1924; The Shanghai Defence Force, 1927; Palestine 1929; Peshwar District, 1930; The Burmese Rebellion, 1930-1932; and Cyprus, 1931.

Although Gwynn's book captured the principles of aid to civil power and provided an understanding of what specific operations involved, it could not reasonably be considered doctrine. It provided background and understanding but had no prescriptive power.<sup>47</sup> Gwynn's book would have been largely useful in understanding the nature of aid to civil power operations but not how to conduct them. The British had little formal doctrine and the literature was scattered and incomplete. The *Notes on Imperial Policing* (1934) and *Duties in Aid of the Civil Power* (1937) failed to adequately capture the roughly thirty plus years of British counterinsurgency experience. These documents modified Major-General's Gwynn's principles: "necessity for offensive action; co-ordinated intelligence under military control; efficient 'inter-communication;' mobility and security measures, by which was meant care to preserve security as to military movements."<sup>48</sup> Beyond these principles, the manuals mainly dealt with the details of cordons and searches, other tactical measures, and a thorough discussion on martial law.<sup>49</sup>

Prior to World War II when doctrine could have been consolidated, the likelihood of war in Europe increased and attention focused more on preparing for a conventional war. So by 1945 much of the previous knowledge resided in officers and soldiers who had participated in these types of wars.<sup>50</sup> Later, the Second World War influenced the existing counterinsurgency doctrine, but again mainly in the tactical arena. To codify its

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<sup>47</sup> In the preface, Gwynn states that "this book has no official authority. The opinions expressed and the interpretation of Regulations and of Service traditions are my own, though my intention has been to follow the general trend of orthodox doctrine." Gwynn, *Imperial Policing*, v.

<sup>48</sup> Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*, 44.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>50</sup> Mockaitis, "The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency," 390.

experience in fighting the Japanese in the jungles during World War II, the Indian Army published the *Jungle Book* in 1943. This was less a counterinsurgency doctrine and more of a jungle operations manual.<sup>51</sup> Although the *Jungle Book* was available to the British Army at the outset of operations in Malaya, it was not widely read throughout the Army nor was it immediately available for the troops who departed at the beginning of the Malayan Emergency (hereafter simply the Emergency). Instead, in the initial period of the Emergency, the troops relied on a 1906 pamphlet based on the Boer Wars for guidance.<sup>52</sup>

## Education

In addition to doctrine, education is another way to transmit knowledge. Following World War II, British military education lacked any type of counterinsurgency instruction, even in the form of aid to civilian powers. This trend continued into the early 1960's.

During the interwar period cadets [at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst] studied about duties in aid of the civil power, but in the immediate postwar period this topic disappeared, and it was not replaced by any discussion of modern counterinsurgency. The syllabus for 1955...included instruction in conventional infantry tactics, military law, and military history. For the history course the cadets chose one of the following major figures for study: Alexander the Great, Marlborough, Napoleon, Wellington, Stonewall Jackson, or Nelson. Two books on the Mau Mau emergency, were, however, on the recommended reading list.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 91.

<sup>52</sup> Mockaitis, "The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency," 391.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 394-395. This was based on study of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst syllabi.

It was not until 1961 that *The Conduct of Anti-terrorist Operations in Malaya* (the doctrine that was developed during the Malayan experience) became required reading.<sup>54</sup> This lack of formal counterinsurgency education left the junior officers who were most likely to have to implement it without a solid educational basis. This, coupled with a relative lack of experience in counterinsurgency in the Army as a whole suggested that the Army would have a steep learning curve if it became involved in a counterinsurgency.

## **Malaya**

As the majority of Great Britain's Army prepared for a conventional war with the Soviet Union, it soon faced the reality of a war in Malaya. Did preparing for a large scale conventional war help or harm the Army's overall performance in a counterinsurgency in Malaya? While it is unrealistic to expect Great Britain to have had the foresight to know that it would be fighting in Malaya, was it able to reasonably adapt to the new situation? And how was its ability to adapt based on its preparation?

In the late 1940's Great Britain considered Malaya vital to its strategic, economic, and political interests.<sup>55</sup> Malaya was one of Britain's primary sources of income.<sup>56</sup> It supplied much of Britain's rubber and other raw materials. These commodities were particularly important for their dollar earning potential which improved Great Britain's

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 394-395.

<sup>55</sup> Dockrill, *British Defence Since 1945*, 31-32.

<sup>56</sup> United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, "Defence Programme" (COS(52)618(copy No. 23), November 17, 1952) para 12.

balance of trade with the United States. With Singapore and Hong Kong, Malaya was important to Great Britain's position in the Far East.<sup>57</sup>

During Japan's occupation of Malaya in World War II, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) dominated the guerilla resistance movement that fought the Japanese. The MCP was formed in 1930 and only allied with Britain in 1941 when Britain and the Soviet Union became allies. Although the MCP consisted primarily of ethnic Chinese, they received their instructions from the Soviet Union's Far East Bureau.<sup>58</sup> Following Malaya's liberation by the British in 1945, the communists shifted their focus from the Japanese to the British and organized another resistance movement directed towards overthrowing British colonial rule.<sup>59</sup>

Thick jungle covered most of Malaya with the exception of a coastal plain. A 7,000 foot mountain range ran the length of the country and divided it in two. On the jungle fringe, usually by a river or an inlet, most of the people lived through subsistence farming and by raising livestock.<sup>60</sup> Malaya's population of about five million was comprised of, 49% Malays, 38% ethnic Chinese, and 12% Indian. The rest were British and Aborigines. Of the ethnic Chinese about 600,000 were squatters who had fled the

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<sup>57</sup> Dockrill, *British Defence Since 1945*, 31-32.

<sup>58</sup> Brigadier Richard Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War: Counterinsurgency in Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), 13-16.

<sup>59</sup> Julian Lider, *British Military Thought After World War II* (Brookfield, VT: Gower Publishing Company, 1985), 232.

<sup>60</sup> Michael Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars: Minor Campaigns of the British Army Since 1945* (New York: ST. Martin's Press, 1984), 30.

cities during the World War II Japanese occupation, settled on the jungle fringe, and subsistence farmed.<sup>61</sup>

## Enemy Plan

The Malayan communist party originally focused its resistance against the British through economic means. This was done with the help and the support of the trade unions.<sup>62</sup> In June 1948, following violent communist attacks on Malayan infrastructure, Sir Edward Gent, the British High Commissioner declared a state of emergency.<sup>63</sup> Following the declaration of an emergency, the government outlawed the communist party and the trade unions. Five thousand people, initially referred to as partisans (or bandits depending on perspective) fled into the jungle and began an insurgency. This group later called themselves the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA).<sup>64</sup>

The MRLA saw terrorism as a first step towards a more general revolution that would overthrow British colonial rule.<sup>65</sup> The basic enemy strategy follows:

[The MRLA] hoped first to "liberate" the rubber estates along its fringes; he knew he could rely on the squatters living there. Then he hoped to extend his control into the neighboring villages until he had an area in which he could establish a people's republic and to which he could bring his guerillas from the jungle to be trained and equipped for big battles in the open. The final stage would be to challenge and beat the British-Malayan government Army in conventional warfare..."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>62</sup> Lider, *British Military Thought*, 232.

<sup>63</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 330.

<sup>64</sup> Lider, *British Military Thought*, 232.

<sup>65</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 330.

<sup>66</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 44.

The MRLA was essentially a rural insurgency modeled on Mao's revolutionary model, beginning with small acts of defiance designed to solidify the base and undermine the government, progressing through a time of establishing safe areas, and culminating in a conventional war resulting in a government overthrow.<sup>67</sup>

## General Course of War

### 1948-1951: Defensive

Defense characterized the first period of the war for the British.<sup>68</sup> The British attempted to understand the situation and gain an appreciation for the nature of the conflict in which they found themselves. As such, the initial large unit offensive operations that the British undertook were somewhat misguided. This period also exposed a lack of cooperation between the police and the Army, which lent itself to the operational defense; insufficient intergovernmental cooperation failed to generate an effective offensive. However, as with most effective defensives, it set the framework for a transition to the offensive.

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<sup>67</sup> Mao Tse-tung's model for revolutionary war had three stages, but instead of progressing sequentially through the stages the insurgent may have to move forward and backward as the situation dictated. The first stage was the strategic defensive which stressed political mobilization. The second stage was the strategic stalemate phase, characterized by guerilla warfare. The third and final stage was the strategic offensive, characterized by the transformation of the guerilla forces into conventional forces that would challenge and destroy the government's main forces. Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005), 49-53.

<sup>68</sup> This was primarily in an operational rather than tactical sense. The operational defensive gave the British the opportunity to take stock of the situation.

In June of 1948 the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of Malaya was Major General Boucher.<sup>69</sup> The overall Malayan government forces were comprised of two British, five Gurkha, and three Malay battalions, and 9,000 police. These overall figures are somewhat misleading, given that in the jungle the British and the guerillas were generally evenly matched. In the jungle there were approximately 4,000 government force riflemen facing roughly 4,000 guerillas. These numbers account for the unavoidable support personnel in the government battalions. A government battalion of seven hundred could field four hundred riflemen in the jungle.<sup>70</sup>

The British based their original concept on the model of Burma and India: the military would aid the civilian authorities but not supplant them—“aid to the civil power.” The British government based this approach on a key assumption, notably that operations would be orderly and based on accurate and readily available intelligence.<sup>71</sup> British forces faced significant immediate challenges including a lack of intelligence, requests for escorts and protection that exceeded their capabilities, and exceedingly large areas of operation, proportionate to the available troops.<sup>72</sup>

Partially because they lacked accurate intelligence upon which to base their operations and partially because of the sheer number of required security operations, British military and police efforts lacked cooperation and diverged. Each organization

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<sup>69</sup> Gregory Blaxland, *The Regiments Depart: A History of the British Army, 1945-1970* (London: W. Kimber, 1971), 79.

<sup>70</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 42-43.

<sup>71</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 330. See Gwynn, *Imperial Policing*, 4 for a further explanation of “in aid of the civil power.” “The civil power continues to exercise undivided control but finds the police forces on which it normally relies insufficient.”

<sup>72</sup> Blaxland, *The Regiments Depart*, 79.

saw the problem from its own perspective and attempted to solve it by doing what that organization did best, not necessarily what was required. The police operated independently from the Army and sought to maintain order through policing. Meanwhile, the Army, operating independently from the police, undertook large scale battalion and larger operations designed to prevent the MRLA from being able to conduct operations with greater than two hundred men.<sup>73</sup>

In April 1949, following the initial Malayan insurgent operations and British large-scale operations, communist activity decreased, and incidents fell to approximately one hundred per month. The presence and activity of large-scale British units had nothing to do with the MRLA's retreat into the jungle. Rather, the MRLA retreated into the jungle to reorganize and revise their strategy. At that time, however, accurately determining the reason for the downturn proved difficult. The violence returned after a six month lull in late 1949 with incidents rising to more than four hundred per month.<sup>74</sup>

By 1950 the MRLA had clearly not been defeated. British large scale operations were not succeeding as predicted primarily due to a lack of cooperation between the Army and the police.<sup>75</sup> Therefore in 1950 the British government appointed retired Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs, a veteran of the Burma campaign, to the newly created position of Director of Operations with the authority to coordinate police and Army efforts. Under his direction a new approach emerged, marked by cooperation

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<sup>73</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 330; John Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency: An Analysis of the Malayan Emergency, 1948-1954* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 33.

<sup>74</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 46-47.

<sup>75</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 101.

between the security services.<sup>76</sup> Briggs further realized that there needed to be a change in order to pry the rebels away from their population support base which might then cause the rebels to attack the security forces on their (the security forces') own terms.<sup>77</sup>

The Briggs plan, launched in June 1951, had several key elements, including "village resettlement; denial of food to guerillas; and cooperative intelligence between the police and the army."<sup>78</sup> Under the Briggs plan, the Army's principal role was to intervene between the population and the guerillas. While still hunting the guerillas, the Army was also supposed to protect the population from the guerillas. They were essentially denying the guerillas intelligence and food from the population.<sup>79</sup>

To complement his plan, in 1951 Briggs instituted a policy that units remain in the same area of operation. Units could then gain the trust of the people.<sup>80</sup> These areas of operation would only work if the army adopted decentralized command and control, if lessons learned by one unit in its area of operation were passed both up, down, and laterally across the chain of command, and if tactical flexibility was encouraged.<sup>81</sup>

At roughly the same time that Briggs assumed his post, Major General Roy Urquhart took over as the General Officer, Commanding, Malaya. In July of 1950 Urquhart held a conference to address what he perceived to be shortcomings in strategy and tactics. As a result of this conference General Urquhart decided to focus the Army's

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>77</sup> Blaxland, *The Regiments Depart*, 92.

<sup>78</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 100.

<sup>79</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 100.

<sup>80</sup> Mockaitis, "The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency," 349. Previously, units rarely remained in one area for very long and instead they moved around the country as necessary.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 351-352.

effort at the company level on reconnaissance patrols, reinforced by "fighting" patrols. General Urquhart also decided not to adopt a comprehensive doctrine for Malaya but rather to rely on the pamphlets already in use.<sup>82</sup>

The declaration of the Emergency until the implementation of the Briggs' plan marked the first stage in the British counterinsurgency effort. In the middle of 1951 it appeared that the MRLA had the upper hand: between January and July of 1951 there were 600 guerilla operations by 8,000 MRLA.<sup>83</sup> Although the British got off to a rough start, by late 1951 they had reviewed their recent experience, made some adjustments, and developed a clear way forward. What remained to be seen was if this new way forward would actually be effective.

#### 1952-1955 Offensive

Following both the guerilla killing of Sir Henry Gurney (the High Commissioner) and the departure of Lieutenant General Briggs in October 1951, General Sir Gerald Templer assumed command of the newly combined post of High Commissioner and Director of Operations.<sup>84</sup> In this post he exercised complete authority over both the police and the military.<sup>85</sup> The Government created this post because it wanted to synchronize all the governmental functions and the most efficient way to do this was to place one man in charge. General Templer continued the implementation of the Briggs plan and made

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<sup>82</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 101-102. The shift in emphasis to the company level did not take place until 1951, when most battalions began establishing patrol bases in the jungle.

<sup>83</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 332.

<sup>84</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 35.

<sup>85</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 331.

several improvements of his own. These included improving the intelligence structure and insisting on a formalized standardized approach to counterinsurgency that clearly contained a political element.<sup>86</sup>

Partially as a result of Templer's expanded powers to synchronize, the quality of the intelligence gradually increased. He instituted a new system for organizing, processing, and making intelligence useful whereby intelligence was pooled and given to the appropriate agency for action. This enabled precise counterinsurgency operations.<sup>87</sup> Further, upon assuming his position, General Templer ordered the production of a standardized counterinsurgency manual applicable across Malaya. This manual, *The Conduct of Anti-terrorist Operations in Malaya* (ATOM) became available in late 1952.<sup>88</sup>

The government went on the offensive in early 1952 with twenty-six regular units; Templer had also enlarged the population's involvement by expanding the Home Guard and raising an additional Malay battalion.<sup>89</sup> The offensive had more of a local flavor than the previous large scale sweeps. Although it was conducted country-wide, it was executed locally rather than centrally controlled. The offensive was directed at the local Malaya Communist Party branches which served as the conduit between the people and the MRLA.<sup>90</sup> As part of this general offensive, the police assumed more static

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 331.

<sup>87</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 331.

<sup>88</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 103.

<sup>89</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 36.

<sup>90</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 36.

positions and concentrated their policing on the high population areas, while the Army conducted operations against the guerillas in the jungle.<sup>91</sup>

In the middle of 1953 there were approximately 5,500 guerillas fighting in the jungle. The tide had turned and the government was winning the war.<sup>92</sup> Between January and July of 1954 there were only 100 guerilla operations by 3,000 MRLA.<sup>93</sup> As a result of this offensive, the government made great advances and indeed turned the tide. But that was difficult to tell at the time since many indicators were either unclear or lagged behind the actual progress. Nevertheless, on May 30, 1954 when General Templer departed, several areas of Malaya were declared free of guerillas and firmly under government control.<sup>94</sup>

#### 1955-1960 Victory

During the remainder of the Emergency the government increasingly became more effective and the insurgency less so. There was no great decisive battle, no liberation, only a negotiated end to the hostilities and independence for Malaya. General Bourne took over for Templer and adopted a strategy of attacking the rebels in the jungle by occupying large areas of operation in the jungle for an extended time. To a large degree this was a “mopping up strategy.”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 44.

<sup>92</sup> Lawrence James. *Imperial Rearguard Wars of Empire, 1919-1985* (London: Brassey's, 1988), 155.

<sup>93</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 332.

<sup>94</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 40.

<sup>95</sup> Blaxland, *The Regiments Depart*, 115,118.

The government adapted its approach both politically and militarily but continued to apply pressure on the guerillas. In 1955 there were fewer than 1,500 dedicated guerillas still actively fighting. To increase the psychological pressure on the remaining guerillas and to reduce the attractiveness of prolonging the conflict, in September 1955 the Malayan government offered amnesty. Few guerillas, however, accepted.<sup>96</sup> Simultaneously, military operations also changed as the Army focused on denying the guerillas food by ambushing possible food cache locations or otherwise destroying them. These operations, combined with increased food rationing, were designed to reduce the amount of tangible support that the guerillas received.<sup>97</sup> Though operations continued for a few years after, the British felt comfortable enough with the situation to grant the Malayan government independence in 1957.<sup>98</sup> The State of Emergency was ultimately lifted on July 31, 1960.<sup>99</sup>

## **Army Actions During the War**

### **Employment of Forces**

The British Army initially based its concept for involvement in the Malayan Emergency on the use of the armed services as an aid to civil power.<sup>100</sup> The British Army's initial operations were not particularly effective. They tended to conduct large

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<sup>96</sup> James, *Imperial Rearguard Wars of Empire*, 155.

<sup>97</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 41.

<sup>98</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 332. As guerilla resistance decreased, operations fell increasingly to locally recruited Malay Regiments, often advised or "seconded" by British Officers.

<sup>99</sup> Dewar, *Brush Fire Wars*, 43.

<sup>100</sup> Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency*, 31.

scale operations based more on their experience and their capabilities rather than on the situation in which they found themselves. These large scale operations “were ambitious and owed much to previous experiences in the open country of the North-West Frontier and Palestine.”<sup>101</sup> Brigadier Clutterbuck, a British officer who served in Malaya, attributed these large operations to “their [the British Army’s] previous training and experience.”<sup>102</sup> This trend persisted even into the late 1950's, as “new brigade commanders would arrive from England, nostalgic for World War II, or fresh from large-scale maneuvers in Germany.”<sup>103</sup> However, some claimed that these large scale operations, especially at the beginning of the Emergency, prevented the guerillas from organizing and consolidating to the point that they could conduct larger operations.<sup>104</sup> The British Army later improved its operations after it underwent a learning period and recognized the true nature of the conflict and how the Army should operate within it. Until then, the large, ineffective operations persisted.

## Intelligence

There is also a clear linkage between intelligence and operations. Good, accurate intelligence drives effective, focused operations. Effective operations, in turn, generate more accurate and actionable intelligence. Intelligence is inextricably linked to operations and vice versa. Therefore, it is not surprising that early in the Emergency when the

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<sup>101</sup> James, *Imperial Rearguard Wars of Empire*, 149. Although these were both counterinsurgencies, the terrain in both the North-West Frontier and Palestine lent itself far more to large scale operations than the Malayan jungles.

<sup>102</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 51.

<sup>103</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 51; Mockaitis, “The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency,” 345; James, *Imperial Rearguard Wars*, 150.

<sup>104</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 49-51.

British Army's operations were ineffective so too was its intelligence. In the initial stages the MRLA had far better intelligence than the British. Their intelligence came from their informants and spies throughout the police, the government, and among the primarily ethnic Chinese farmers and enabled the MRLA's small units.<sup>105</sup> Conversely, in 1949, British intelligence failed to help their small units.<sup>106</sup> Several factors may have contributed to this—the intelligence system was not yet established (Special Branch was not established until 1950) or because operations were not geared towards generating intelligence. For example, smaller patrols that had more contact with the populace may have generated better intelligence than the larger “sweeps.” Mockaitis states that even with smaller patrols, the British Army had difficulty generating intelligence during this time.<sup>107</sup> This problem was compounded due to the frequent change of unit locations.<sup>108</sup>

## Leadership

As the British Army decentralized its operations, small unit leadership played an increasingly critical role in its performance. The small unit leader had great impact on how the British Army related to and was perceived by the local population, and hence its overall success. The small unit leader's actions contributed directly to generating intelligence.

The best commanders used intelligence to direct all patrols, even small ones.

Based on the enemy situation and the environment, a platoon could conduct most

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<sup>105</sup> Chandler and Beckett, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, 330.

<sup>106</sup> Mockaitis, “The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency,” 344.

<sup>107</sup> Mockaitis, “The British Experience in Counter-Insurgency,” 346-347.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 348-349.

operations if given proper intelligence.<sup>109</sup> The environment differed from what most commanders were accustomed to—and what was generally considered doctrinally “correct.” Small unit leaders found it difficult to arrive at this realization and to make the necessary adjustments from the doctrine to what worked, especially given their past training. In order to effectively make adjustments and adapt, a commander needed situational awareness, willingness to change, ability to affect change, and support from his superiors.

The critical aspect of leadership in this particular conflict, or any conflict, appeared to be the ability to properly analyze the situation in order to determine what was happening, why it was happening, what if anything they should do about it, act, and then effectively communicate orders to his subordinates. These qualities do not appear to differ much from those that make a commander successful in a conventional conflict. The greatest difference was perhaps in determining that this was not strictly a conventional conflict. The British leadership adapted, although unevenly. While it is difficult to draw a direct relationship between the British leadership’s preparation (education and training) and its performance, the leadership did perform well enough to eventually win.

### Learning/Training

The British Army’s training prior to the Malaya Emergency did not prepare it especially well, not just because it trained for conventional war, but also because the

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<sup>109</sup> Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War*, 52-53. Because of the nature of both the environment and the enemy, a platoon possessed the necessary capabilities to attack a guerilla camp of 150-200. Generally only a few soldiers engaged in direct contact with the enemy at any one time and so it was immaterial if either twenty or one hundred soldiers followed those few in direct contact; the guerillas tended to try to escape rather than fight anyway.

conventional training was not particularly effective.<sup>110</sup> However, the British Army as a whole adapted well, learned as an institution, and eventually revised its training so that it applied to the Malayan conflict. To prepare, train, and improve its forces, the British Army established a school through which all units deploying to Malaya passed.

In the initial stages of the Emergency many British Army units were understrength and as a result of the personnel who eventually filled their ranks, untrained. Some of the men who filled these understrength battalions had not undergone basic training. As a result, training these unprepared and untrained personnel for jungle warfare or counterinsurgency took longer and proved more difficult than originally anticipated.<sup>111</sup>

Partly to correct the shortfalls of the British Army units arriving in Malaya and partly because the British (Indian) Army took similar actions during World War II when faced with jungle warfare, in 1949 General Sir Neil Ritchie, the commander of Far East Land Forces (FARELF) established a jungle training school called the FARELF Training Centre (FTC). A cadre of officers and non commissioned officers (NCO's) who had jungle warfare experience during the Second World War ran the school. Conceptually, as battalions received notification to deploy to Malaya, they would send select officers and NCO's to this three week school. Following the completion of the FTC, these newly

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<sup>110</sup> See section titled "British Army Training" earlier in this paper.

<sup>111</sup> Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency*, 33-34. It took about fifteen months of training to get a typical battalion prepared to conduct operations in Malaya. Had these units been trained in even the basics of conventional warfare, the British Army in general and the effort in Malaya would have been better served. However, they were not. This was less a symptom of the Army's adherence to a conventional training strategy than the result of a mismatch between the personnel requirements of the Army, the size of the Army, the demands placed upon the Army, and the personnel available to fill the army. A disconnect existed between what the nation provided the Army and what it required of the Army. However, it likely would have led to clearer, more informed decisions, had the Army been smaller, and yet filled to strength rather than to have a force that appeared to be full and yet was not. The Army's capabilities and readiness would have been more readily apparent.

qualified officers and NCO's would then train their own battalions.<sup>112</sup> The establishment of the FTC helped increase the amount of available training time that a battalion had to prepare for service in Malaya.<sup>113</sup> The exact purpose for establishing this school remains somewhat unclear, although it appears to have been more in response to the unique nature of jungle warfare and its tactics rather than recognition of the need to train for counterinsurgency. Or perhaps the Army established the FTC to correct training deficiencies in the undertrained average soldier. When the course of instruction is examined, it has almost no counterinsurgency training, yet a significant amount of jungle tactics.<sup>114</sup>

The cadre at the FTC faced many challenges. The primary challenge was simply a lack of basic tactical knowledge among the trainees; it was difficult to build on such a weak base to teach advanced jungle fighting techniques and tactics.<sup>115</sup> As previously noted under “Employment of Forces,” however, commanders who received training at the FTC continued large scale operations into the mid 1950’s well after it became apparent that these operations were no longer effective. This is especially problematic, considering the training that these commanders should have received at the FTC, the

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<sup>112</sup> Martson, “Lost and Found in the Jungle,” 98-99.

<sup>113</sup> Coates, *Suppressing Insurgency*, note #46, 45. Initially a battalion received very little preparation time upon its deployment notification but by 1952 a battalion was given ample time to train at home station (for example the 1st Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry trained in Germany for Malaya while a part of the British Army of the Rhine).

<sup>114</sup> Riley Sunderland, *Army Operations in Malaya, 1948-1960* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation Memorandum 4170, 1964), 45-50. The course consisted of 167 hours of practical instruction: “110 given over to 4.5 days in the jungle, 24 to a preliminary day in the jungle, 16 to immediate action drill, 8 to jungle navigation, 4 to motor-transport ambush, 3 to observation and tracking, and 2 to jungle marksmanship. Demonstrations and lectures laid the foundation for this.”

<sup>115</sup> Martson, “Lost and Found in the Jungle,” 99.

dissemination of lessons learned in Malay, and the commanders' own self-development as they prepared for Malaya.

The FTC also had a major role in ensuring that various techniques were passed between units. To do this, Malaya Command also required company commanders to attend an annual course which encouraged the dissemination of practices among peers. Additionally, every three years, British battalions were removed from operations for retraining.<sup>116</sup> Throughout the 1950's Malaya Command continued to gather and disseminate lessons learned from battalion operations. Some battalions conducted After Action Reviews or "post-mortems" following operations and then occasionally passed the results to the brigade level. Apparently submitting after action reviews to higher commands occurred more as a matter of luck than of reinforced practice. It appears that Malaya Command accepted the importance of disseminating ideas and reinforcing successful practices, but, aside from the FTC, Malaya Command lacked a systematic dissemination process—or at least the post-war literature failed to appropriately stress it.

## Doctrine

Initially the British Army used *Notes on Imperial Policing* (1934) as the doctrine for Malaya. As the command realized that this was a different sort of conflict, or at least it was new to those participating in it, the British developed and published a doctrine that helped develop and share a common understanding of the conflict across the force. Upon General Templer's publication of *The Conduct of Anti-terrorist Operations in Malaya* (ATOM) in late 1952, it became the doctrine for the Malayan Emergency. This doctrine

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 102.

did not remain stagnant, undergoing continual revision as successive GOC's added or revised their own lessons learned based on their own experiences and understanding of the ever-evolving situation.<sup>117</sup> The ATOM as doctrine focused far more on the tactics of jungle warfare than on the guiding principles involved in counterinsurgency. Throughout its body, the ATOM stressed the overall importance of quality intelligence and focused on small unit (platoon and below) operations. Furthermore, each of the GOC's, in the "forward" to their edition stressed the importance of accurate shooting, and adherence to the drills and tactics contained in the ATOM.<sup>118</sup> One reason for ATOM's tactical focus may have been the British understanding of doctrine at that time; another reason may have been ATOM simply filled a requirement to standardize tactics.

## Conclusions

Britain's initial failures in Malaya had their roots partially in a lack of preparation and partially in an incorrect preparation. But primarily, Britain's initial failures stemmed from a misunderstanding of the true nature of the conflict and determining an appropriate approach. The British recognition of the true nature of the conflict and their appropriate adaptation directly translated into eventual British success. The British Army adapted by taking the tactical lessons that they learned from fighting the Japanese in World War II and applying them within the framework of the "imperial policing" lessons that they had

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<sup>117</sup> Martson, "Lost and Found in the Jungle," 104-105.

<sup>118</sup> [British Forces Malaya?], *The Conduct of Anti-Terrorist Operations in Malaya*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (St. Petersburg, Florida: Hailer Publishing, 1958), xii-xiii.

previously learned. The British also leveraged their accrued institutional knowledge and experience by establishing the FTC, for example.

How did preparing for a large war and then fighting a smaller war impact the British Army? First, preparing for a conventional war provided them a solid base which they could adjust from in terms of training soldiers, supplying and deploying a large force overseas, and having the systems in place to direct and control large formations. Training for a conventional war should have provided the rudimentary training that the individual soldier required in Malaya, especially during the initial stages of the conflict; from there the Army could have made any necessary adjustments. Because of the somewhat hollow nature of the British Army and understrength battalions, this conventional training did not help. As a result, many British units that fought early in the Emergency were poorly trained and ill-prepared.

In terms of education, although counterinsurgency was not in the junior officer curriculum for the duration of the Malayan Emergency, the officer leadership appeared well enough prepared to react and adapt. The Army compensated for this lack of formal education with in-theater education and training in the form of the FTC and the regular rotation of both officers and units through training programs. The effective combination of training and education is critical to effective leadership.

The British lack of doctrine hampered their efforts. If they had had an appropriate doctrine at the outset of the Emergency it could have served as a departure point, like the intended uniform basic training of all soldiers. Without this doctrine, the British Army muddled through until they came to a consensus about how to best conduct the conflict and subsequently produced a doctrine, the ATOM. Interestingly, both the British Army's

doctrine (ATOM) and the in-theatre training (FTC) tended to focus on tactical topics and the uniqueness of jungle warfare rather than counterinsurgency. This suggests that although the British Army did not perfectly transform their approach into training and doctrine, they got close enough, and through the ATOM were able to generate a common understanding of their approach to the conflict. The length of the conflict also allowed the British Army time to adjust—it took it ten years to win. This is an extremely important point. The danger is that an army may not always have that amount of time. If the insurgents had been more aggressive (or conversely more passive) at the beginning of the Emergency, then the British may not have had such ample time to adjust.

## Israel: 2000-2006

Though the times and geopolitics are unique, Britain and Israel shared similar challenges in maintaining militaries capable of dealing with a broad range of challenges. Throughout its history, Israel has had to deal with the reality of a traditionally hostile neighborhood. By 2006, Israel had recently somewhat mitigated its hostile neighborhood through treaties. However, it still shared borders with Egypt, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Since its inception as a state in 1948, Israel had routinely been at war and consistently faced elimination at the hands of its enemies. It fought its War of Independence (1947-1949), the Sinai Campaign (1956), the Six-Day War (1967), the War of Attrition (1968-1970), the Yom Kippur War (1973), and the Lebanon War (1982).<sup>119</sup> By 2006 Israel had generally adapted a strategy of deterrence through conventional superiority; it planned to make any Arab incursion or attack too costly for them to successfully undertake.

By 2006 Israel generally enjoyed peaceful relations with Egypt and Jordan; it perceived Syria as a greatly reduced threat and Iraq had been effectively removed as a current threat.<sup>120</sup> In these circumstances, Israel's attention was primarily focused on threats from non-state actors and proxies acting with state sponsorship, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Israel had fought the First Intifada (1987–1993) and was in the midst of the Second Al-Aqsa Intifada (2000–2005)

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<sup>119</sup> Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Israel Wars," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Modern+History/Israel+wars/> (accessed March 9, 2010).

<sup>120</sup> Martin Van Crevald, *Defending Israel: A Controversial Plan Towards Peace* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 40,41; David E. Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges: Insights from the Experiences of China, France, the United Kingdom, India, and Israel* (Prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Santa Monica, California: The Rand Corporation, 2009) <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG836/> (accessed March 9, 2010), 202.

as well as continued threats from Hamas in Gaza and the West Bank and from Hezbollah in Lebanon.<sup>121</sup> Since the first Intifada in 1987 policing the territories had been the IDF's primary mission. Following their withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 the Israelis conducted a sustained counterinsurgency campaign against the Palestinians that was ongoing in 2006.<sup>122</sup> The Israelis faced a wide array of threats. Israeli President Shimon Peres characterized the threats for which Israel had to prepare as “knives, tanks, and missiles.”<sup>123</sup> “Knives” meant threats from non-state actors, “tanks” meant conventional threats like Syria, and “missiles” meant threats from weapons of mass destruction, generally (although not exclusively) from other states like Iran.<sup>124</sup>

### **Israeli Army Policy**

The historic strategy of the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is succinctly treated in Ze'ev Schiff's book *A History of the Israeli Army*.<sup>125</sup> The basic concepts are the few against the many, a war of survival, a strategy of attrition, geographic pressures, and the time factor. The few against the many means that Israel is surrounded by a significantly larger Arab population and could potentially face a much larger Arab force. A war of survival means that for the majority of its history, Arab states (and now non state actors)

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<sup>121</sup> Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges*, 202; Anthony Cordesman with the assistance of Aram Nerguizian and Ionut C. Popescu. *Israel and Syria: The Military Balance and Prospects of War* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2008), 73-76.

<sup>122</sup> Matt M. Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 6-9, 22.

<sup>123</sup> Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges*, 198

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

<sup>125</sup> Ze'ev Schiff, *A History of the Israeli Army 1874 To The Present* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985).

have aimed at destroying Israel as a nation; every conflict is therefore potentially a war for the existence of Israel itself. Also because of its relatively small population, this in turn leads to an extreme sensitivity to casualties. A strategy of attrition means that Israel must attempt to inflict unacceptable losses on its enemies in order to bolster its deterrence. Israel has several geographic disadvantages, including lacking the ability to trade territory for time in the defense, vulnerability to a sea blockade, and limited early warning capability. The time factor is the idea that Israel will have to bring a war to an advantageous conclusion as quickly as possible. The perceived necessity to bring war to a rapid advantageous conclusion is based on a key assumption and a couple contributing factors. The assumption is that the United Nations would likely intervene early in a conflict with Israel's Arab neighbors. The contributing factors include Israel's limited resources, and its concern for casualties.<sup>126</sup> These concepts although tempered remained consistent through 2006.

Based on these historical concepts, the IDF currently has as its basic doctrine:

- Israel cannot afford to lose a single war
- Defensive on the strategic level, no territorial ambitions
- Desire to avoid war by political means and a credible deterrent posture
- Preventing escalation
- Determine the outcome of war quickly and decisively
- Combating terrorism
- Very low casualty ratio<sup>127</sup>

This doctrine has some interesting aspects. The first is that the war must be quick and decisive. In many ways this leaves little room for error during the opening salvos. Israel's

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<sup>126</sup> Schiff, *A History of the Israeli Army*, 115-117.

<sup>127</sup> Israeli Defense Forces, "Doctrine," [http://dover.idf.il/IDF/English/about/doctrine/main\\_doctrine.htm](http://dover.idf.il/IDF/English/about/doctrine/main_doctrine.htm) (accessed February 15, 2010).

insistence on low casualties amplifies this small margin of error. This places significant pressure on the IDF to get it right from the outset of a conflict. It will have little time to adapt.

## **Israeli Training**

Following their withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 and their continued involvement in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, the Israeli Army primarily focused on counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations. Because this was their primary operational concern it became their primary training focus. The Israeli Army had to prepare its units for what they would face while conducting ongoing operations.

Israel's training focused on preparing their units for the ongoing counterterrorist and small unit war against the Palestinians, not for a conventional war.<sup>128</sup> This was further reinforced by where the Israeli Army placed, or more exactly did not place, emphasis. In 2006, conventional Army ground forces had not completed a major training exercise in a year while the reserves had not conducted major maneuver training in over six years, since the beginning of the Palestinian uprising.<sup>129</sup> Defense budgetary decisions partially accounted for curtailing the Army's training for conventional war.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> David Makovsky and Jeffrey White, "Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War: A Preliminary Assessment," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*. Policy Focus no. 60 (October 2006). <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubPDFs/PolicyFocus60.pdf> (accessed 03 January 2010), 42.

<sup>129</sup> Captain Daniel Helmer, "Not Quite Counterinsurgency: A Cautionary Tale for US Forces Based on Israel's Operation Change of Direction." *Armor*, (January– February 2007), 9. This is based on the author's interview with Yaakov Katz, an Israeli journalist and author.

<sup>130</sup> Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges*, 205-206; Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 64.

Defense analyst Anthony Cordesman claims that while the Israeli Army realized that they lacked experience in conventional warfare, they failed to attempt to mitigate this deficiency with modified training that may have helped them better balance their preparation.<sup>131</sup> "Soldiers with perishable combat skills, such as tank crewmen, patrolled the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in some cases, going years without training on their armored vehicles."<sup>132</sup>

Israeli Army training focused on ongoing operations designed to win the current fight, rather than on what they may be called upon to do. Some of this may have been hubris; based upon the strategic environment, the Israeli Army did not foresee itself facing a conventional threat. It thought that it would be able to choose its future opponents and, even if Israel was unable to choose its opponents, such future opponents would likely be forced to resort to terrorism and insurgency rather than face the Israeli Army in some other manner.

## **Israeli Experience**

The West Bank and the Gaza Strip was the Israeli Army's experience for many years. By 2006, very few in the Army had done anything besides counterinsurgency and counterterrorism. It seems that the Israeli experience in counterinsurgency led them to believe that this would be the nature of future wars. Additionally, this experience influenced the Israeli Army's understanding of its enemies—they came to understand that

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<sup>131</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, "Preliminary 'Lessons' of the Israeli-Hezbollah War," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. (Revised: 17 August 2006). [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/060817\\_isr\\_hez\\_lessons.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/060817_isr_hez_lessons.pdf) (accessed September 15, 2009), 23.

<sup>132</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 27.

the majority of their future enemies would fight like the Palestinians. However, their extensive counterinsurgency experience did help the Israeli Army realize the importance of adaptation.

Fighting the Palestinians, a relatively weak opponent, over a sustained period of time led to deficiencies in the IDF. One of the main deleterious effects was the establishment or amplification of an already existing culture of casualty aversion. In the territories the Israeli Army generally accepted that it was better to kill one terrorist and lose no Israeli soldiers than it was to kill three terrorists and lose one Israeli soldier. The terrorists would still be there the next day and the Israelis could continue to pursue them then.<sup>133</sup> It was a long conflict with no foreseeable end, so there was no motivation to risk casualties.

In the territories, the Israelis faced a poorly armed and trained opponent, were familiar with the terrain where they operated, and enjoyed both numerical superiority and intelligence dominance.<sup>134</sup> "No amount of training or discipline can substitute for combat experience, and the IDF had only dealt with a poorly armed and disorganized Palestinian resistance since 1982."<sup>135</sup> The Israeli Army adapted to its enemy but to its detriment regarded them as the standard enemy that it would likely continue facing.

Another of the results from Israel's sustained counterinsurgency against the Palestinians was that very few officers in 2006 had any other combat experience besides

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<sup>133</sup> Avi Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War: Why the Poor Performance?" *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 1 (February 2008): 14-15.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>135</sup> Cordesman, "Preliminary 'Lessons' of the Israeli-Hezbollah War," 23.

counterinsurgency.<sup>136</sup> The Israelis were very inexperienced at the battalion and below level in both Lebanon and with fighting Hezbollah in particular. No one below the company level had fought in Lebanon.<sup>137</sup> Additionally, commanders lacked experience in maneuvering large formations in general and large armor formations in particular. No commander below the division level had any combat experience outside of the territories.<sup>138</sup>

The Israeli Army's counterinsurgency experience did provide it with some clear benefits. Primary among these was that it realized the necessity of adapting to the enemy. From its extensive experience in counterinsurgency and striving to learn and adapt faster and better than its enemy, the Israeli Army adopted several systemic solutions to help them, including using liaison officers extensively.<sup>139</sup> Even though the Israeli Army had extensive operational experience in counterinsurgency and as a result had improved at adaptation as an institution, it had very little experience in conventional conflict, either through training or through real-world experience.

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<sup>136</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 22.

<sup>137</sup> Makovsky and White, "Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War," 52.

<sup>138</sup> Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 14, 16.

<sup>139</sup> Gil Ariely, "Learning to Digest During Fighting – Real Time Knowledge Management," International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, September 11, 2006. <http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/tabid/66/Articlsid/229/currentpage/10/Default.aspx> (accessed March 16, 2010).

## Israeli Doctrine

Most Israeli doctrine from this period remains classified. Several sources indicate that Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) constituted a significant portion of Israeli doctrine.<sup>140</sup> This paper assumes that the Israeli version of LIC doctrine shared some commonality with United States Army doctrine. In the United States LIC doctrine was an intermediary step of current counterinsurgency doctrine (and in fact contains a chapter on counterinsurgency operations). But it was based on a fundamentally different concept than the current doctrine; LIC was considered separate from war: “[T]he US intent in LIC is to protect and advance its national interests without recourse of war.”<sup>141</sup> The imperatives of United States LIC doctrine do not differ significantly from those in the later Counterinsurgency (COIN) manual.<sup>142</sup> But this understanding may not translate into how Israel understood LIC; in Israel, LIC served as a way to conceptualize conflict that informed doctrine. LIC doctrine’s greatest fault may have been in characterizing a conflict by its intensity, thereby, at least in perception, minimizing the possibility that LIC would involve high intensity elements. It is probable that LIC’s characterization of conflict influenced Israeli doctrine.

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<sup>140</sup> Kober, “The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War,” 33; Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges*, 207.

<sup>141</sup> Department of the Army, *FM 7-98: Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, October 1992) sec. 1-3, 1-1.

<sup>142</sup> Department of the Army, *FM 7-98: Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict*, sec. 1-4—1-8, 1-2—1-3. The imperatives were: “Political Dominance, Unity of Effort, Adaptability, Legitimacy, [and] Perseverance.” The COIN manual added “Manage Information and Expectations, Use the Appropriate Level of Force, Learn and Adapt, Empower at the lowest Levels, [and] Support the Host Nation.” Department of the Army, *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, December 2006), sec. 1-138—1-147, 1-24—1-26.

During this same period, Israel was in the process of revising its doctrine; it adopted a new doctrine just prior to the Second Lebanon War. Two ideas influenced this doctrinal revision. One was the relatively new concept of Effects Based Operations (EBO) which the United States military had recently adopted. Another concept was Systemic Operational Design (SOD), a novel approach to understanding and developing warfighting approaches.<sup>143</sup> The combination of these new concepts resulted in a poorly understood and ineffective new doctrine. Additionally, the Israeli Defense Force adopted this doctrine immediately before the Second Lebanon War so although portions of the doctrine had been unevenly socialized, there was time neither to educate those who would be implementing the doctrine nor time to practice it.

Since the Israelis based a large amount of their understanding of EBO on the United States' understanding and doctrine it is helpful to provide a brief explanation of how the United States conceptualized EBO at this time. EBO was alternatively described as both an approach to and a process of warfighting that loosely followed a targeting methodology but focused less on the destruction of the enemy and more on producing specific effects. As it was eventually understood, EBO required vast amounts of detailed information (for accurate intelligence and assessment of effects) and precise weapons to produce the effects. Presumably this approach results in less collateral damage and fewer casualties.<sup>144</sup> Partially because of the pressure from Hezbollah and perhaps because of

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<sup>143</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 23.

<sup>144</sup> LTC Allen W. Batschelet, "Effects-Based Operations: A New Operational Model?" (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 9 April 2002) <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA404406&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>, 2-5; Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 23-24. LTC Batschelet's article provides an excellent discussion of the debates ongoing

their reluctance to get involved in another ground war in Lebanon, Israel adopted a version of EBO that relied heavily on precision firepower and information dominance. This approach appealed to Israel because of its small population base, its being surrounded on all sides by enemies, and its “persistent” conflict with the Palestinians.

Although EBO influenced the new Israeli doctrine, the key Israeli doctrinal evolution began with the establishment of the Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI) under Brigadier-General (retired) Shimon Naveh in 1995 and continued for the next ten years, through 2005. This evolution sprung from a desire among some senior members of the IDF to “move beyond tactical virtuosity and develop a systemic approach to operational art that aimed at more tightly linking the utilization of military force with the achievement of Israel’s national interests, political goals, and strategic objectives.”<sup>145</sup> Essentially it sought to translate Israel’s historic tactical dominance into strategic success. Those who initiated this process believed that Israel had to consider a new approach if it were to win strategically in modern conflicts.<sup>146</sup>

After studying the evolution of the operational art, Naveh determined that there was a systemic Israeli inability to appropriately connect tactics to strategy—the essence of operational art. Naveh and his colleagues “turned to emerging decision-making

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within the United States military (and presumably the Israeli Army) about the definition of EBO, what it really meant, and its implications.

<sup>145</sup> Shimon Naveh, *Operational Art and the IDF: A Critical Study of a Command Culture*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment, prepared for the Director of Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense (September 30, 2007), 1.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-78, 81. The same senior leaders who initiated this process (and many within the Israeli defense establishment) expressed frustration about several topics: inconclusive conflicts in Gaza and Southern Lebanon prior to 1991, a realization following the 1991 Gulf War that Israel had failed to properly prepare for the type of war that the United States had just won, a perception that generalship was weak in the IDF, a perception that the IDF lacked knowledge of operational art, and that IDF institutions did not match the current or emerging threat.

theories based on systems and complexity theory to develop a new approach to operational art and operational design. The result was Systemic Operational Design (SOD).”<sup>147</sup> According to Naveh, although SOD was a critical component of the new doctrine, in fact the “the most powerful one, the most coherent one” the IDF failed to properly integrate it into the doctrine as a whole.<sup>148</sup> Naveh attributes this failure partially to a failure to understand SOD on the part of the IDF senior staff, but primarily to a flawed socialization process, internal IDF jealousies and competing agendas—in short bureaucratic resistance to change.<sup>149</sup>

The new Israeli doctrine was signed by the Chief of the IDF General Staff Lieutenant General Dan Halutz in April 2006. “Many IDF officers thought the entire program [Of SOD] elitist, while others could not understand why the old system of simple orders and terminology was being replaced by a design that few could understand.”<sup>150</sup> According to Naveh, SOD was not intended to serve as a type or replacement for doctrine or planning but rather to serve as a predecessor to, an addition to, or to work cooperatively with the planning process.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> LTC L. Craig Dalton, “Systemic Operational Design: Epistemological Bumpf or the Way Ahead for Operational Design?” A Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, (Fort Leavenworth, KS, AY 05-06), [http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm4/item\\_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p4013coll3&CISOPTR=783&CISOBX=1&REC=1](http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p4013coll3&CISOPTR=783&CISOBX=1&REC=1) (accessed March 18, 2010), 27.

<sup>148</sup> Matt Matthews, “An Interview with BG (Ret.) Shimon Naveh” (Operational Leadership Experiences in the Global War on Terrorism, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1 November 2007). In Command and General Staff College Electronic Library, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/p4013coll13&CISOPTR=754&filename=755.pdf> (accessed 09 February 2010), 4.

<sup>149</sup> Naveh, *Operational Art and the IDF*, 3-6.

<sup>150</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 25.

<sup>151</sup> LTC Dalton, “Systemic Operational Design,” 26.

Although the doctrine that General Halutz approved is classified, what we know of it provides a fair understanding of the IDF's general approach to warfare. According to Israeli officers who were familiar with the doctrine, land forces were to focus on low-intensity conflict (LIC). The doctrine also combined the concepts of both EBO and SOD and relied on precision stand-off fires, primarily delivered from the air as the main ways of conducting war.<sup>152</sup> Given the new doctrine's complexity, it was unfortunate for the Israeli Army that they found themselves in the midst of embracing it when they found themselves in a new and unexpected conflict.

## **Israeli Education**

Because a detailed discussion of Israeli military curricula is beyond the scope of this paper, a general discussion of educational philosophy and approach will suffice. Israel's educational and officer selection and training process are significantly different from most Western militaries. Generally, Israeli officer education focuses far more, and perhaps exclusively on combat related tasks; there are no educational pre-requisites to be an Israeli officer. An officer's training and experience, particularly at the junior level (up to battalion command) is far more important than his education. "The IDF conclusion [from an experiment correlating combat command to academic proficiency] was that the ability to lead combat units effectively required something more than, or perhaps different from, academic prowess and hence demanded a selection and training process independent of civilian schooling."<sup>153</sup> Another reason for the focus on training stems

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<sup>152</sup> Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges*, 207.

<sup>153</sup> Reuven Gal, *A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 35.

partially from the unique requirements and constraints of the Israeli Army and its people. A citizen's compulsory service begins at the age of eighteen, lasts for three years, and is considered preparation for service in the reserves.<sup>154</sup> Within that time, if a soldier is to become an officer he must first be selected as a non-commissioned officer and then as an officer. If he is chosen to be an officer he will incur an additional year on his conscription.<sup>155</sup>

Most learning and training is done on the job. Since the officer candidates already have the technical expertise, the officer candidate training and selection curriculum focus on developing and assessing creative thinking, problem solving, adaptability, flexibility, and aggressive leadership by example.<sup>156</sup> In this way the best soldier, in a platoon for example, should be the platoon leader.<sup>157</sup> But this also simultaneously precludes him from attending a university at this time. Generally after forty-eight months on active service, at which time he is generally a captain, the officer must decide if he will remain on active duty or revert to the reserves.<sup>158</sup> If he chooses to remain in the active army, he may be offered a two to three year period of academic study followed by a return to active duty. From there the officer will continue to a full year at the Command and Staff School as a major, which is a pre-requisite for promotion to

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<sup>154</sup> Gal, *A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier*, 32-33, 122. Three years is the baseline for men. It may increase with additional voluntary skill training. Women have a two year term of service.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 91,119.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-120,129,130,132-3,135.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 116, 121, 139.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 122-123.

lieutenant colonel.<sup>159</sup> Following the command and staff college, as individual leaders progress they will attend a university, if they have not already, and an increasing number of military schools.<sup>160</sup>

From this we can determine that the Israeli education system did not play a significant role in its preparation. This also suggests that the experience and training of Israeli officers is of greater relative importance, especially in the junior ranks. As a whole the IDF views training and the education gathered from institutional schools as sufficient, and in some ways superior or more desired, than the educational benefits of academic institutions that have little or no direct relation to the military. Although this preference for institutional schooling is relatively distinct at the junior levels of command, it certainly becomes less distinct and in fact may disappear with increasing rank.

## **Lebanon 2006**

### **Enemy Plan**

Following Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah began preparing for their next conflict, and they chose that Israel would likely be their opponent. Based on some basic assumptions about Israel, Hezbollah began developing their own plans and designing their own forces. Matthews goes on to suggest that based on its experience fighting Israeli forces in Lebanon, Hezbollah modified its original guerilla doctrine to incorporate both guerilla and conventional aspects.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Gal, *A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier*, 125.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 169-170.

<sup>161</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 22.

Hezbollah based its preparation for the 2006 war on a few assumptions, which turned out to be remarkably accurate, about how Israel would approach future conflict. First, Hezbollah assumed that Israel would be casualty averse--both in terms of its defense forces and its society. From that assumption Hezbollah further assumed that in any future conflict, Israel would likely rely on airpower and precision based munitions thereby reducing the need to employ casualty vulnerable ground forces.<sup>162</sup>

When Hezbollah considered what these assumptions meant in relation to their own plans, they determined that they would have to somehow impact Israeli society which they considered vulnerable. They planned to target the Israelis with rockets that would require protection from Israeli strengths – precision firepower and airpower. To protect their rockets, Hezbollah developed a firing system that minimized exposure and hid the rockets in an extensive tunnel and bunker system.<sup>163</sup> Hezbollah tasked their ground forces with protecting these rockets and their launch sites by delaying any Israeli attempt to destroy them via the ground.<sup>164</sup> Hezbollah ground forces did extensive terrain analysis, had prepared defensive positions, established an advanced command and control system, and were armed with modern anti-tank weapons.<sup>165</sup> Similarly, Hezbollah determined that it would have to protect its command and control system from Israeli precision munitions, firepower, and airpower. Hezbollah thus established "a network of

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<sup>162</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 16.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18. The firing system included the use of timers as well as separate elements to move, set up, and fire the rockets.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 18. As part of their terrain analysis they considered likely avenues of approach and planned their defenses accordingly. Into their defensive positions they incorporated observation posts, planned for the integration of direct and indirect fires, incorporated mines and established trigger lines.

autonomous cells with little inter-cell systemic interaction."<sup>166</sup> As a result, Hezbollah lacked high payoff targets—it did not have the command and control centers that were identifiable targets for Israeli precision munitions.<sup>167</sup> Hezbollah further enhanced the effectiveness of their defensive techniques by positioning their bunkers and their rockets close to and inside of population centers; this presaged their attempt to win the media war.<sup>168</sup>

Hezbollah effectively generated an operational approach that was in keeping with both their internal logic and their capabilities. It made sense. They had a reasonably accurate understanding of the enemy, themselves, and the environment in which the future conflict would likely occur. Hezbollah's operational plan left the Israeli's with the options of conducting a sustained ground campaign potentially resulting in a large number of military casualties or allowing sustained but likely lower levels of civilian casualties due to the rocket attacks.<sup>169</sup>

## General Course of the War

A semi-military organization of a few thousand men resisted, for a few weeks, the strongest army in the Middle East, which enjoyed full air superiority and size and technology advantages. The barrage of rockets aimed at Israel's civilian population lasted throughout the war, and the IDF did not provide an effective response to it. The fabric of life under fire was seriously disrupted, and many civilians either left their home

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<sup>166</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 21.

<sup>167</sup> Sarah E. Kreps, "The 2006 Lebanon War: Lessons Learned," *Parameters* 37, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 79.

<sup>168</sup> Cordesman, "Preliminary 'Lessons' of the Israeli-Hezbollah War," 10. Non-state actors like Hezbollah typically plan on using civilian shields in a variety of ways when facing a more powerful enemy because this is one of the only ways that they can counteract the more powerful opponent's advantages. If the more powerful opponent harms these civilian shields, non-state actors will use this to win the media war.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

temporarily or spent their time in shelters. After a long period of using only standoff fire power and limited ground activities, Israel initiated a large scale ground offensive, very close to the Security Council resolution imposing a cease fire. This offensive did not result in military gains and was not completed.<sup>170</sup>

On July 12, 2006 following a Hezbollah ambush, Hezbollah fighters kidnapped two wounded Israeli soldiers and took them across the Lebanon border. This initiated a series of immediate and localized pre-planned IDF contingency operations on July 12 designed to re-capture the abducted soldiers. All of these operations failed.<sup>171</sup>

Beginning that same night, the IDF initiated an air campaign aimed to both render Hezbollah militarily ineffective and compel them to return the captured soldiers. To do this the Israeli Air Force planned on attacking Lebanese infrastructure, Hezbollah military and political leadership, Hezbollah rockets, and command and control centers.<sup>172</sup>

On July 17, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert articulated the objectives of the war in a speech to the Knesset:

- The return of the hostages, Ehud (Udi) Goldwasser and Eldad Regev [the two captured Israeli soldiers];
- A complete cease fire;
- Deployment of the Lebanese army in all of southern Lebanon;
- Expulsion of Hizbullah from the area, and
- Fulfillment of United Nations Resolution 1559<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, "Winograd Commission Final Report," Council on Foreign Relations published January 30, 2008. [http://www.cfr.org/publication/15385/winograd\\_commission\\_final\\_report.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/15385/winograd_commission_final_report.html) (accessed December 20, 2009), paragraph 11. The Israeli Government appointed the Winograd Commission following the Second Lebanon War to investigate the conduct of the war. Elyahu Winograd led the commission.

<sup>171</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 34-37; Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 10. The Israelis also had several large-scale contingency plans for such an event including a forty-eight to seventy-two hour air campaign followed by a ground invasion north to the Litani River. These plans were never fully implemented.

<sup>172</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 37.

<sup>173</sup> Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel, "Address to the Knesset by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, 17 July 2006," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Speeches+by+Israeli+leaders/2006/Address+to+the+Knesset+by>

Following Israel's initial bombardment and the destruction of some Hezbollah long range rockets, Hezbollah retaliated and some long range rockets landed on northern Israeli cities.<sup>174</sup> Hezbollah subsequently began launching its short range Katyusha rockets. The Israeli air campaign and its use of precision firepower failed to affect the daily launch of hundreds of Katyusha rockets. These rockets landing in northern Israel terrorized the citizenry.<sup>175</sup> On July 17, General Dan Halutz, the IDF Chief of Staff, ordered limited battalion and brigade sized raids into Lebanon to produce a sense of defeat amongst Hezbollah in lieu of a full scale ground offensive to the Litani River. In spite of the stated war aims, these raids were not designed to destroy Hezbollah, or to capture the rockets, or to seize the rocket launch sites.<sup>176</sup> The raids did seem designed to support the dictates of the newly approved doctrine, to produce a cognitive sense of defeat in the adversary.

On July 21, General Halutz called up the Israeli reserves.<sup>177</sup> This signaled his understanding that the conflict may turn into a protracted conflict or at a minimum it signaled an understanding that significant ground forces would be required.

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[+PM+Olmert+17-Jul-2006.htm](#) (accessed March 10, 2010). UN Resolution 1559 as it applied in this case affirmed the Lebanese government as the only sovereign government within its territory and called for the "disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias." See United Nations, Press Release Security Council/8181, "Security Council Declares Support for Free, Fair Presidential Election in Lebanon; Calls for Withdrawal of Foreign Forces There." The United Nations. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sc8181.doc.htm> (accessed March 12, 2010).

<sup>174</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 38.

<sup>175</sup> Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 4.

<sup>176</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 43. The Litani River is generally considered the northern boundary of southern Lebanon.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

An Israeli raid on Maroun al-Ras, a town inside the Israel/Lebanon border, typified one of these raids:

On July 22, Hezbollah units of the Nasr Brigade fought the IDF street-to-street in Maroun al-Ras. While the IDF claimed at the end of the day that it had taken the town, it had not. The fighting had been bloody, but Hezbollah fighters had not been dislodged.

The fighting continued with varying intensity within Maroun al-Ras, until the end of the conflict. The Israelis never fully defeated Hezbollah in the town nor did Israel ever firmly control it.<sup>178</sup> On July 25, following a similar raid on Bint Jbeil, Israel claimed that it had captured the town.

[T]he fight for Bint Jbeil went on for nine days. But it remained in Hezbollah hands until the end of the conflict. By then, the town had been destroyed, as Hezbollah fighters were able to survive repeated air and artillery shellings, retreating into their bunkers during the worst of the air and artillery campaign, and only emerging when IDF troops in follow-on operations tried to claim the city."<sup>179</sup>

On July 27 the Israelis activated three more reserve divisions, a total of 15,000 troops.<sup>180</sup> On July 29 the IDF expanded its operations to seize terrain north of the Israeli-Lebanese border and establish a security zone. By mid August it became clear that the offensive had not achieved its aims: Hezbollah's command and control system remained largely intact and Israel had failed to stop the launch of short range Katyusha rockets.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Alastair Crooke and Mark Perry, "How Hezbollah Defeated Israel, Part 2: Winning the Ground War," *Asia Times Online*. [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle\\_East/HJ13AK01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/HJ13AK01.html) (accessed 30 DEC 09). This report was generated from Hezbollah sources.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 5; Johnson et al., *Preparing and Training for the Full Spectrum of Military Challenges*, 199. By the end of the conflict between one hundred and two-hundred Katyusha rockets impacted in Israeli communities.

On August 11, the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved resolution 1701 whose aim was to end the war and implement a cease fire.<sup>182</sup> Knowing that the adoption of this resolution marked an end to the war, General Halutz ordered ground forces north to the Litani River. The reasons for this operation remain unclear: perhaps he intended it to demonstrate Israeli military prowess, to attempt to regain lost face, or to gain some type of a nominal victory. Regardless, it made no progress towards achieving the stated aim of destroying Hezbollah or of capturing rocket sites.<sup>183</sup> Rather, this late attack seemed terrain based rather than enemy based, which further appears odd since United Nations Resolution 1701 defined the borders and directed their re-establishment.

The divisions that took part in the drive to the Litani River encountered serious problems. The airborne reserve division managed limited gains and failed to reach the Litani. Division 91 similarly failed to reach its destination, partly due to confused orders and haphazard execution. Division 162 had similar problems; this division encountered a conventional ambush where anti-tank missiles hit twenty-four of its tanks. Again, this division failed to achieve its mission. The reserve armored division encountered similar problems.<sup>184</sup> Each of these divisions had similar fates. They suffered from a series of erratic starts and damaging initial small engagements which distracted the divisions so they never really gained momentum. As a result, the so-called offensive did not succeed and it is questionable if it ever really began. At the end of the war Israel claimed 400-500

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<sup>182</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 51.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-55.

Hezbollah killed but a different counting (of funerals for Shi'ia) suggests that the number killed was merely 184.<sup>185</sup> Israel reported over one hundred of its own soldiers killed and almost 1,000 wounded.<sup>186</sup>

## **Army Actions During the War**

### Employment of Forces

We found serious failings and flaws in the quality of preparedness, decision-making and performance in the IDF high command, especially in the Army.

These weaknesses resulted in part from inadequacies of preparedness and strategic and operative planning which go back long before the 2nd Lebanon war.<sup>187</sup>

Israel received significant criticism, both from without and from within, for their lack of force employment acumen from the strategic through the tactical level during this war. The Israelis were criticized for their lack of imagination at the operational level, a general lack of conventional warfighting skill, and apparent incompetence at combined arms operations. Many claimed that Hezbollah won this war at the strategic through the tactical levels of war. There remains some disagreement about who eventually won the tactical battle at battalion level and below.

Several authors roundly criticized Israel for a lack of experience and a lack of proficiency at planning, employing, and executing combined arms, particularly

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<sup>185</sup> Crooke and Perry, "How Hezbollah Defeated Israel, Part 2."

<sup>186</sup> Daniel Byman and Steven Simon, "The No-Win Zone: An After-Action Report from Lebanon," *The National Interest* 86 (November/December 2006): 58.

<sup>187</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, "Winograd Commission Final Report," paragraph 12. Only two of the five points from paragraph twelve are quoted because of relevance.

employing infantry and armor in tandem.<sup>188</sup> Throughout the ground offensive, the IDF had consistent concerns about their own lack of combined arms experience and poor tactical skills. Matthews claims that years of fighting counterinsurgency operations and a lack of subsequent training to mitigate this focus led to conventional war fighting skills atrophying.<sup>189</sup> For example, early in the conflict the IDF abandoned maneuver and instead opted for frontal attacks against positions that Hezbollah had prepared for six years.<sup>190</sup> This demonstrated the IDF's lack of experience, evidenced its conventional expertise atrophy, and showed poor understanding of combined arms operations.

When the Israeli ground forces conducted limited raids, the Israeli chain of command appeared to place their soldiers in disadvantageous positions; these same soldiers reportedly performed poorly when they faced a conventional and persistent enemy. Hezbollah repeatedly (and unexpectedly) isolated Israeli units that subsequently required rescue. Hezbollah used their own precision guided weapons (anti-tank weapons), as well as small arms, rockets, mortars, and mines to target Israeli forces when they moved into pre-planned Hezbollah targeted locations.<sup>191</sup> As an example, the Israeli Army improperly applied some of the experiences and lessons that it had learned from counterinsurgency operations.

For example, in the territories the IDF used to protect soldiers from small arms fire by sheltering them in the houses of the local population. Based on this experience, in Lebanon soldiers were ordered to take shelter in a similar manner, ignoring the fact that Hizballah was using sophisticated anti-tank guided missiles

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<sup>188</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 54,55; Crooke and Perry, "How Hezbollah Defeated Israel, Part 2."; Byman and Simon, "The No-Win Zone," 59.

<sup>189</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 44.

<sup>190</sup> Helmer, "Not Quite Counterinsurgency," 9.

<sup>191</sup> Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 45-48.

(ATGMs)... 9 soldiers were killed and 31 were wounded when Hizballah destroyed the house using ATGMs."<sup>192</sup>

Israel also had difficulty defending its armor and in using it in ways that prevented its destruction. Israel left behind more than forty armored vehicles in Lebanon when they retreated back across the border.<sup>193</sup>

While some claimed that the Israelis performed poorly at the tactical and individual level, Makovsky and White gave Israeli forces generally high marks at the battalion level and below.<sup>194</sup> They went further and claimed that as Israel began leveraging her inherent advantages, including the addition of eight more brigades, she began gaining the upper hand. "What began to make a difference was the combined weight of Israeli infantry skill and numbers and the firepower provided by tanks, artillery, and air power. Hizballah was able to offset some of these, but ultimately could only raise the cost to Israeli forces."<sup>195</sup> This provides a fundamentally different assessment from what other authors presented. Markovsky claims that the momentum was shifting to Israeli and that given more time (which seems to be supported by Hezbollah pressing early for a cessation of hostilities) Israel would have improved her gains.

The Israeli Army's employment of its forces in the second Lebanon War left much to be desired. From its experience fighting the Palestinians, the army often drew

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<sup>192</sup> Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 16.

<sup>193</sup> Croke and Perry, "How Hezbollah Defeated Israel, Part 2."

<sup>194</sup> See Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 50. "IDF commanders were also disturbed by the performance of their troops, noting a signal lack of discipline even among its best-trained regular soldiers. The reserves were worse, and IDF commanders hesitated to put them into battle." Croke and Perry, "How Hezbollah Defeated Israel, Part 2." Contrast that with the view that Israeli forces demonstrated professional proficiency, high morale, and "willingness to close with and kill the enemy in the face of casualties." Makovsky and White, "Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War," 52.

<sup>195</sup> Makovsky and White, "Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War," 35,44.

inappropriate lessons or at least applied them incorrectly. Additionally, the Second Lebanon War demonstrated that at multiple levels Israeli conventional war fighting skills, specifically combined arms skills, had atrophied. In some ways, the war also exposed an operational deficiency, although this will be discussed more in the leadership section.

## Intelligence

Understanding the importance and necessity of intelligence, Israel expended significant effort towards gaining and employing solid intelligence during this conflict. The Israelis would require excellent intelligence if they were going to effectively employ Effects Based Operations. However, the Israeli understanding of their intelligence may have been inaccurate. Part of the Israelis' challenge stemmed from a misguided reliance on technology and what they could reasonably gain from it. Another of their challenges was that their human intelligence network, so effective in their previous conflict with the Palestinians, had significant shortcomings in Lebanon against Hezbollah.

Although the Israeli intelligence apparatus tracked the influx of the various rockets, anti-tank weapons, and small arms into Lebanon that Hezbollah eventually used, the Israelis accurately predicted neither how Hezbollah would fight nor how they would use these weapons.<sup>196</sup> Whether this happened at the strategic or at the tactical level is immaterial. The Israelis knew, at least functionally, Hezbollah's capability. Israel knew the types of anti-tank weapons that Hezbollah had and the capabilities of those weapons. So they were aware of what Hezbollah *could* do, but did not accurately, or maybe even attempt to predict what Hezbollah *would* do—how they would fight with this material. Of

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<sup>196</sup> Cordesman, "Preliminary 'Lessons' of the Israeli-Hezbollah War," 20.

course, predicting what an enemy will do is very difficult. It did not appear that that the Israeli's took into consideration that Hezbollah would fight differently from the Palestinians did nor even that Hezbollah themselves would fight differently from how they had previously fought.

Additionally, intelligence that relies primarily on technology of any sort is not perfect. Part of this imperfection results from the lack of real time intelligence and part of it results from the dual purposes that many objects (and people) serve in an asymmetric fight; insurgents use that to their advantage. For example, a truck can be both a vehicle that carries food to households and a vehicle that carries rockets to their launch site. "The truth, however, is that modern technology does not provide the kind of sensors, protection, and weapons that can prevent a skilled urban force from forcing Israel...to fight it largely on its own terms and to exploit civilians and collateral damage at the same time."<sup>197</sup>

This addresses one limitation of intelligence: it cannot directly influence the battle; it cannot prevent the conflict, in this case, from being fought in and amongst the population, or at the very least it cannot prevent the inevitable civilian casualties and collateral damage. However, intelligence, when coupled with effective analysis should be able to predict reasonably well how the enemy will fight. Additionally, intelligence at the tactical level should enhance or even dictate operations. In the same way, effective operations should improve the quality of intelligence. In this case the Israeli Army based its intelligence expectations on its previous operational experiences in the West Bank and

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<sup>197</sup> Cordesman, "Preliminary 'Lessons' of the Israeli-Hezbollah War," 11.

the occupied territories. These proved unrealistic when applied to the situation in Lebanon with Israel's greatly reduced intelligence infrastructure.<sup>198</sup> The Israeli Army did not appear to focus its efforts on generating or obtaining the right kind of intelligence for the fight which they were in.

## Leadership

The decision made in the night of July 12th ^ to react (to the kidnapping) with immediate and substantive military action, and to set for it ambitious goals - limited Israel's range of options. In fact, after the initial decision had been made, Israel had only two main options, each with its coherent internal logic, and its set of costs and disadvantages. The first was a short, painful, strong and unexpected blow on Hezbollah, primarily through standoff fire-power. The second option was to bring about a significant change of the reality in the South of Lebanon with a large ground operation, including a temporary occupation of the South of Lebanon and 'cleaning' it of Hezbollah military infrastructure.<sup>199</sup>

On first look, there certainly appear to be problems with the Israeli Army leadership during this war. Although Army leadership should be held accountable for the Army's results, the results themselves are rarely as simple as a failure or a success of leadership as a whole. In this case, at least, there appeared to be a singular focus on a failure of leadership in the IDF and the Army in particular.

One of the primary problems was determining what was happening at the operational level. In this case General Halutz first considered the IDF's actions as a retaliatory attack rather than a war. Consequently, he refused to allow his staff to refer to

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<sup>198</sup> Russell W. Glenn, *All Glory Is Fleeting: Insights from the Second Lebanon War* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, February 2008), 31-32. This document is classified as "Unclassified//For Official Use Only." Only those portions which were "Unclassified," and not "For Official Use Only" were used.

<sup>199</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, "Winograd Commission Final Report," paragraph 13.

it as a war until much later.<sup>200</sup> Furthermore, once the government stated its political goals, the Army did not provide a plan that adequately achieved them. This was particularly evident in its reaction to the short range missile threat.<sup>201</sup> At the operational level the Army fought within a construct that failed to account for (or improperly accounted for) such factors as domestic public opinion, international opinion, the limits of force, and time.<sup>202</sup> The Army's operational plan and execution appeared disjointed, indecisive, and unclear as to what it was actually attempting to achieve. Additionally, it appeared bereft of nuance, relied on improvisation, and relied far too much on brute force at the operational level.

Makovsky notes significant problems in the senior leadership of the IDF at every critical point in the war: determining to go to war, developing the plan, making adjustments after the first week, advancing to the Litani, and accepting the ceasefire.<sup>203</sup> There were also serious command problems at the operational level (the Northern Territorial Commander was relieved during the conflict) and to an extent at the division level as well.<sup>204</sup> However, Makovsky balances this criticism by citing several successes in IDF leadership including initiating the air campaign, adjusting to the nature of the war, preparing for the ground offensive, and managing a two front war.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 9-10.

<sup>201</sup> Makovsky and White, "Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War," 50-51.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-15. General Moshe Yaalon, a previous IDF Chief of Staff detailed a plan that was previously in place to deal with a Hezbollah provocation.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, 49-50.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

During the conflict, various members of the chain of command, at an unspecified level, committed forces piecemeal and so did not make use of the Israeli advantage in numbers. If the initial forces required assistance, the chain of command committed additional small forces that Hezbollah subsequently easily engaged. These types of employments failed to take advantage of Israel's greater firepower, command and control capability, synchronization, and maneuver.<sup>206</sup> It is difficult to justify how employing forces piecemeal and failing to take advantage of their numbers is not a case of incompetence, failure to understand the nature of the threat, or a lack of conventional skill or practice. While mass may be less important in irregular fights, it can be extremely important in conventional ones.

To varying degrees Israeli leadership also relied too heavily on technology. This allowed commanders to command from “their plasma screens” rather than personally experiencing the battlefield. This apparently stemmed from the supposed quality of intelligence or information that these command centers could provide rather than any claims of an unwillingness to share danger. An over reliance on technology, as opposed to a reliance on battle fundamentals, permeated the force and many blame it for more than just leadership failures.<sup>207</sup>

There was also a prevalent culture in the IDF that sought to limit or eliminate friendly troop casualties, even at the expense of mission accomplishment. Many

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<sup>206</sup> Makovsky and White, “Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War,” 52.

<sup>207</sup> Kober, “The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War,” 19.

commanders, because of pressure from their superiors, thought that safeguarding their men was more important than accomplishing the mission.<sup>208</sup>

As in most conflicts there appears to be a mixed account of Israeli leadership. Most of the complaints appear to be directed at the senior levels of the Israeli Army and fewer directed at the tactical level where combined arms skills were poorly applied. In this relatively short conflict, it is unclear if the Israeli Army demonstrated a greater level of incompetence, unpreparedness, or lack of agility.

### Learning/Training

The learning and training undertaken by the Israeli Army as a part of this conflict figured prominently in the leadership's effectiveness, or lack thereof. An important part of leadership is to know when to adapt and then to affect the adaptation. Thus far it should be clear that the Israeli Army began fighting a conflict different from the one for which they prepared. As the Israeli's realized this, did they adapt to the new reality? Were they able to rapidly adjust and disseminate appropriate lessons to increase their effectiveness? The simple answer is that the Israeli Army did this at the tactical level but failed to learn how to do this at the operational and strategic level.

"Hizballah's adroit use of anti-armor missiles not only against Merkava III tanks, but also to destroy improvised IDF defensive positions, was extremely effective and could not be countered in the short duration of hostilities."<sup>209</sup> The quite prevalent

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<sup>208</sup> Kober, "The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War," 11. This trend was identified in a post conflict report conducted by Major General (res.) Yoram Yair. General Halutz later attributed this trend to the IDF's counter-terror operations.

<sup>209</sup> Byman and Simon, "The No-Win Zone, 58-59.

conclusion that Israel failed to adapt during the short war is an easy one to make, but it ignores some of Israel's tactical adjustments. During the war the IDF established a Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) that collected and distributed tactical lessons learned throughout the force. "The center gathered knowledge gained from each day's operations, printed digests, and distributed these down to company level by the next day."<sup>210</sup> Although not widely publicized these near real time lessons learned had tangible effects in Bint-Jbeyl; CALL disseminated lessons learned from attacking units in different chains of command across the force the next day. In addition to generating close to real-time lessons learned, CALL was positioned so that units moving into the fight "received 'fast-forward' training, an operational knowledge package and a digest of lessons learned so far, updated on a daily basis..."<sup>211</sup>

This is an important aspect of this conflict in particular and shorter duration wars in general. Israel had little time to adjust to Hezbollah's manner of fighting and to learn from its mistakes; the ground war lasted just twenty-eight days. The Israeli Army appears to have adapted at least fairly well at the tactical level, but poorly at the operational level.

But that does not have to always be the case; learning should take place not just from direct experience but also through the experience of others, mainly through education. And perhaps because of Israel's unique position, in that its wars of this nature are likely to be very short, it should be ready to incorporate lessons even faster.

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<sup>210</sup> Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5: The U.S. Army Commander's Appreciation and Campaign Design* (Fort Monroe, Virginia: United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, January 2008), 7.

<sup>211</sup> Gil Ariely, "Learning to Digest During Fighting."

## Doctrine

Doctrine played an interesting and unique role in this conflict. Generally, doctrine guides the actions of the Armed forces and provides a common understanding about how forces will be employed. Doctrine also serves to articulate a common approach so that ideally the relevant actors operate with a common understanding. It can synchronize actions on a very broad scale. In the Israeli case, however, doctrine may have served the opposite function by desynchronizing actions and indeed increasing confusion in the force.

The doctrine that General Halutz signed in April 2006 was based on Systemic Operational Design (SOD). Some, including Brigadier General (ret) Naveh, later claimed (rightfully or not) that the doctrine failed to make the necessary links to the tactical level, it inappropriately addressed its purpose of serving as an overarching document that addressed everything, and it failed to be readily understandable to those who would implement it.<sup>212</sup> There are some problems here: either the doctrine was designed to operate at the operational level and should have so stated, or it should have established links to the tactical level.

Perhaps SOD was not intended to function or to be applied at the tactical level the way that it was eventually implemented. Instead, perhaps it was intended to promote understanding of operational campaigns, and serve as a pre-cursor to planning, rather than to serve as a means to transmit orders, a type of formal planning doctrine. Both of

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<sup>212</sup> Matthews. *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 26-27. This characterization is based on Matthews' interviews with Shimon Naveh and Ron Tira who is an author, former Israeli Air Force (IAF) fighter pilot, former section chief of the IAF intelligence division ("Lamdán") and a reservist in the IAF Campaign Planning Department.

BG Naveh's comments (noted above) suggest that SOD was intended to generate understanding and operational concepts and guiding principles rather than to replace a doctrine upon which orders are based.

Although many authors blamed the Israeli Army's failure in the Second Lebanon War to a varying degree on the adoption of the new doctrine and SOD in particular, the IDF adopted it so late that it likely had little effect on the force's overall performance.<sup>213</sup> Since it was not properly socialized or disseminated throughout the force, it could not have been primarily to blame for the IDF's failure.

Although the doctrine was certainly important, the operational approach mattered more than the details of the doctrine. Some would argue that that's the true role of doctrine anyway. But more than the eventual doctrine itself that was adopted it was the slow migration towards EBO and a reliance on precision weapons and air power that eventually hampered the Army rather than a poor doctrine. The doctrine certainly contributed to some degree but it was not the critical factor as some would propose.

## Israeli Conclusions

The Israeli experience in preparing for one type of war and fighting another ultimately did substantially help them, but it may have also impeded them. This resulted from several factors. The first was that the Israeli Army inappropriately and unconsciously adjusted to an inferior enemy. The second was that the manner in which

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<sup>213</sup> Among them are Matt Matthews and Avi Kober. See Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared*, 61-63. Matthews places a large portion of the blame for the IDF's dismal performance on Israel's late and incomplete adoption of its new doctrine, its misapplication of that doctrine, and the doctrine's over-reliance on EBO. The doctrine was adopted at a bad time (late, but they had no way of knowing this), it was a fundamentally bad doctrine, it was not understood, and it was complicated and confusing.

they prepared did not fundamentally prepare them for what they eventually faced. Third, once the Israelis discovered that they were in a different conflict it took them too long to adequately adjust.

The Israeli Army's experience from fighting the Palestinians under very favorable conditions overshadowed the positive results of the experience that the Army gained such as learning during a conflict. While experience is generally helpful, it can be harmful when a new experience is fundamentally different from previous experiences—when the Israeli Army found itself fighting Hezbollah instead of the Palestinians. In a way the Israelis adapted too well to the Palestinian fight which impeded their adaptation to Hezbollah, in terms of intelligence expectations, nature of combat and combatants, and the role of time. Furthermore, Israel's tactical counterinsurgency experience was counterproductive because it produced a false sense of security and it generated lessons that did not apply to the new conflict. For example, in counterinsurgency it is sometimes better to do nothing.<sup>214</sup> Although this is also occasionally the case in conventional war, it is less often so. Furthermore, while it may make sense in a counterinsurgency to not risk casualties to achieve an immediate goal, in major combat operations it often makes even less sense, partially due to the likely duration of the conflict. Similarly, casualty aversion may make more sense if the nature of the war is a long duration counterinsurgency. However, in short duration major combat operations this may be debilitating.

From 2000-2006 the Israeli Army prepared itself for a counterinsurgency or a Low Intensity Conflict based on its recent experiences fighting the Palestinians and how

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<sup>214</sup> Department of the Army, *FM 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, sec. 1-152, 1-27.

they expected to continue fighting in the future—more counterinsurgencies and Low Intensity Conflicts. Due to several contributing factors, the Israeli Army did not prepare for major combat operations in the sense of employing combined arms in large formations. Fundamentally, the Israeli Army prepared for current operations and what they determined would be reasonable future operations rather than the range of possibilities of future conflict. They did, however, attempt to integrate adaptability training into their leader training (primarily at the junior level). Understanding the predilection that fighting continuous counterinsurgency gives to an Army and its leaders, the Israeli Army could have partially offset these tendencies both through greater training diversification that included elements of conventional combat and combat against different enemies.

Two broad factors impeded the Israeli's ability to adapt. First they had an unhelpful construct, LIC, which characterized a conflict's intensity and positively reinforced the Israeli Army's recent experiences. Secondly, there was limited time between when the conflict was considered and initiated; there was no slow escalation or war clouds forming. The first led to a difficulty understanding the war for what it was rather than trying to fit the war to the existing construct. The second exacerbated adaptation problems within the timeframe of the conflict, primarily at the operational level. Both the conflict's short duration and its relatively rapid start impeded adaptation because adaptation requires time and multiple "iterations" in order to be able to process information and effectively learn.

Regardless of the length of the conflict, the Israelis had difficulty determining the true nature of the war and then adapting to it. They fought the war as a conventional war

at the operational level and in many ways as a counterinsurgency at the tactical level. This approach was almost completely opposite to the true nature of the war, which aligned more closely to a counterinsurgency at the operational level and a conventional war at the tactical level. Although this characterization is helpful it is also simplistic and inaccurate because the nature of the war was a mix of both types. A critical part in the successful prosecution of war is matching the appropriate military approach to the political goals. The Israeli Army, for the reasons outlined above, were unable to do this.

One of the best ways to improve this linkage between the political goals and the appropriate military approach to achieve these goals, is through rigorous thought exercises and true operational exercises, ideally with the involvement of the political or strategic leaders. While the Israelis did this, they failed to pay heed to what they themselves had discovered.

## Conclusion

The United States Army is unable to accurately predict the nature of its future conflicts. Regardless of the thoroughness of its preparation, it will have to adapt to the specifics of the conflict. Failing to do so will likely doom the endeavor. To enhance the likelihood that that Army can successfully adapt, it will have to invest heavily in educating and training its leaders. In the two case studies, the leaders' willingness and ability to adapt was a key determining factor of eventual triumph.

The United States Army is in a similar position that confronted both Great Britain in 1945 and Israel in 2000. Great Britain and Israel had recent defining conflicts: Great Britain in World War II and Israel in Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Both nations had to assimilate what they had learned, make assumptions about the nature of future conflict, and decide how to prepare for the next conflict. Once they became involved in that future conflict they had to adjust to its particular nature. From these two case studies the United States Army can divine some basic lessons in relation to adaptation, training, experience, doctrine, education, and concept of force structure as it prepares for uncertain future conflict.

It is difficult to get training "right" because it should balance what the Army is currently doing or preparing for (in an effort to remain relevant) and what the Army expects to do in the future. The Army should train its officers and soldiers to adapt by developing and reinforcing those skills necessary to effectively do so. Broad training incorporating the full spectrum of operations would best prepare the Army for uncertain conditions while maintaining currency on skills that may readily atrophy, like combined arms operations. Although this is an appealing idea, training for the full spectrum of

operations may result in a wide range of training without training for anything particularly well. In essence it necessitates little obvious strategic choice. This approach has the potential to disguise what the force is actually prepared to do because leaders at all levels still make choices about how to allocate resources. In this case their choices may not be readily apparent. Reasonable proficiency at most operations, when combined with an individual and an institutional ability and willingness to adapt, is preferable to exceptional proficiency at some operations and a lack of proficiency at others. This is not a remarkable insight: with a reasonably proficient force, the best way to prepare for uncertainty is to train for it. Perhaps the most important aspect to understand is that uncertainty is unavoidable and must be trained for.

To a large extent, neither Great Britain nor Israel was particularly well trained for the conflict that they eventually fought. Great Britain entered Malaya with a largely untrained force because of a variety of factors, but principally due to under-manned battalions; the personnel that eventually filled the understrength ranks had not received even basic training. Great Britain's untrained units were not primarily the result of poor or misguided training, but rather the result of insufficient training. Fortunately for the British, over the course of the Malayan Emergency there was ample time to adjust and account for this training deficiency. Israel also entered their conflict with a force poorly trained for what it encountered. Israel thought that their forces would fight another counterinsurgency, as they had over the past six years, and that is almost exclusively how they trained. When confronted with elements of both conventional warfare and counterinsurgency, it became apparent that Israel had inadequately trained for the conventional aspect of their conflict.

Experience, for good and ill, informs the army. Experience shapes an army's identity. To a great extent, the Army cannot determine its own experiences; they are largely determined by the government's employment of the Army. However, the Army can control its experiences with regard to training, with respect to how its experiences are translated, and the training and educational experiences of its leaders. Because experience informs the constructs that institutions and individuals use to relate to events, not being tied to a particular construct and having many constructs available should be helpful. Broad and wide experiences as an institution are difficult to achieve, but attaining these with individuals is infinitely more attainable. This in effect becomes a hedge against too restrictive of a construct or further enabling the formulation of a new construct.

Understandably so, the British World War II experience and the Israeli counterinsurgency experience initially hampered them both. These nations' recent experiences led them to view their current conflict in a particular yet generally inaccurate way. Over time, however, the British depth and breadth of experience, institutionally and individually, assisted them in their waging of a successful counterinsurgency. Israel's vast conventional institutional experience was not a factor because it was neither trained nor previously experienced by soldiers in this conflict. There also exists the possibility of learning too much from a particular experience. The apparent importance of small unit actions in Malaya and in the Israeli territories prior to 2006 is an example. In both of these cases small units and small unit leadership figured prominently in the overall operational success. However, at least in the Israeli case, as a result of this experience, they focused on training and preparing these small units, to the detriment of the larger units and formations. There is a danger in learning too well.

Doctrine can both constrain flexibility and serve as a common point of departure for adaptation. Flexible doctrine helps an army prepare for uncertain conflict by allowing it to operate within broad guidance that accepts the necessity of flexibility and adjustment. Maintaining a broad guideline approach to doctrine while simultaneously providing adequate direction on “the how” of operations is essential. Admittedly this is not an easy balance to strike. In Malaya the British initially did not have a doctrine and their actions across the theater were uneven. The adoption of a doctrine, even though it was mainly tactical and did not adequately address the larger themes of counterinsurgency, contributed to a common understanding across the force and led to more consistent operations. Israel’s pre-2006 doctrine, informed by Low Intensity Conflict, and its doctrine based on Effects Based Operations and Systemic Operational Design were inadequate. The doctrine informed by LIC characterized conflict in terms of its intensity which hampered both training and preparation. In the newer form Israeli doctrine overly focused on precision firepower which similarly hampered training, preparation, and an appreciation for the true nature of the conflict. The United States Army uses *Field Manual 3-0: Full Spectrum Operations*, as its overarching operational doctrine and other manuals to deal with particular types of conflict like counterinsurgency. This approach alleviates some problems encountered by the British and the Israelis, but it has shortcomings of its own. Primarily, the potential remains to classify a conflict as something that it is not. Another shortcoming is that there is a divide between the concept of operational art in *FM 3-0: Operations* that does not translate well across the entire spectrum of conflict. Finally, the Army does not appear to have an

operational concept about how it would fight major combat operations, along the lines of Air-Land Battle.

A broad approach to education, certainly no guarantee of flexibility, appears to increase the ability of leaders to more readily ascertain the true nature of the conflict and then make necessary adjustments. A broad education that focuses on developing and encouraging attributes and characteristics that enable leader adaptation is essential. Broad education enhances experiences (although somewhat vicariously) and complements training. The British made an effort to broadly educate even their junior leaders, not intending to particularly teach adaptation, but simply because they thought it was important. The Israelis, although generally accepting the idea that a better educated leader is a better leader, do not subscribe to the idea of broad education until later in a leader's career. This approach does not appear to hamper the junior Israeli leadership but it may adversely affect it at the more senior levels. The initial reason for developing SOD was the perceived inability to turn Israeli tactical successes into strategic successes. This may be a side effect of beginning the strategic development later in an officer's career. An Israeli officer may indeed be a tactical virtuoso, but fail to move beyond that role.

Once the Army enters a conflict many of the same principles of broad education and adaptability apply. Accurately determining the nature of the war is critical. Initially the British thought that they were fighting a conventional war, or at least support to civil authority, but later realized that they were fighting a counterinsurgency and adapted appropriately. Similarly, Israel incorrectly identified its conflict as a conventional conflict (or perhaps a conflict based on counterterrorism) and neglected the irregular aspects of the conflict much to their detriment. In some ways, then, flexibility and mental agility at

the operational level appear to be more important, and more difficult. This may be because either tactical leaders are closer to the fight and hence are better able to adapt or that tactical failures do not matter as much as a single operational failure.

Also while engaged in a conflict for which the army did not prepare it is critical to continue learning. The Army must incorporate learning and training into ongoing conflicts even (perhaps especially) during the early stages to encourage adaptability. Learning must be incorporated during ongoing operations as it was in both Malaya and the Second Lebanon War. One of the main challenges to ensure that this learning is helpful is structuring an organization and developing the leaders who can learn faster than the enemy.

A critical part of enabling this learning is incorporating and structuring a force or an organization to obtain and process intelligence. This is true in both force structure, training, and in actually fighting an unexpected conflict. Intelligence helps first by informing the appraisal of the conflict's overall nature. It is also critical to effective operations in any conflict. As with the very nature of the conflict itself, an appropriate intelligence apparatus and which type of intelligence is most important varies with each conflict. Great Britain and Israel initially struggled with intelligence. They both appeared to assume that intelligence would come to them, rather than understanding that they would have to actively conduct operations, search for it, and occasionally fight for it.

A way to frame the current debate on how the United States Army should prepare for future conflict is in terms of the nature of the future threat and the Army's role in dealing with that threat. In a recent article, Frank Hoffman provided a useful categorization of perspectives on future Army force structure. The four schools he

identified were: Counterinsurgents, Traditionalists, Utility Infielders, and Division of Labor.<sup>215</sup> Counterinsurgents contend that the future enemies of the United States will use irregular warfare to achieve their aims. Since irregular warfare cannot properly be conducted by a general purpose force, it requires a variety of specialized forces.<sup>216</sup> Traditionalists propose that the United States should only get involved in conflicts where American vital interests are at stake, widely characterized by an antagonistic state. Traditionalists propose that the Army should revert somewhat to an industrial age military focused on major combat operations in high intensity conflict.<sup>217</sup> Utility Infielders see the future threat as a mix of conventional and irregular threats. To deal with this wide-ranging threat, Utility Infielders seek to distribute the risk of conventional operations and counterinsurgency by preparing for both types of conflict while mitigating this inherent uncertainty by training Army officers to be adaptable.<sup>218</sup> The Division of Labor approach contends that the two greatest and most likely types of threat are Major Combat Operations (against Iran, China, or North Korea) and irregular war. In a major conflict with one of the aforementioned states, the United States could rely more on the Air Force and the Navy; this allows the Army to pursue one of two options. The Army

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<sup>215</sup> Frank G. Hoffman, "Striking a Balance: Posturing the Future Force for COIN and Conventional Warfare," *Armed Forces Journal* (July/August 2009): 15. Hoffman's article consolidates what he considers the leading perspectives in the current defense debate. Each of the schools that Hoffman presents is far more nuanced than presented in this paper. A detailed discussion of each of the schools is beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 16. Leading Counterinsurgents include David Betz of King's College, London and Nathan Freier, a former U.S. Army strategist.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 16-17. The Traditionalist approach is also characterized as the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine. Current proponents are James Macgregor, a retired U.S. Army colonel and COL Gian Gentile from West Point.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18. Utility Infielders are closest to official U.S. Army and Marine Corps doctrine and training approaches.

could either prepare for irregular warfare thereby preventing a larger war through preventative stability and security cooperation or it could divide its forces into those that prepare for irregular warfare and those that prepare for Major Combat Operations.<sup>219</sup>

Great Britain and Israel adopted the Utility Infielder approach with mixed results. Both nations had limited military resources and multiple missions for which to train and prepare. The British adapted their force for operations in Malaya, primarily through additional training at the Far East Training Center. In order for this process to work efficiently, the units and the personnel required an initial base level of training. They had to be reasonably good, or good enough. The ten year duration of the Malayan Emergency certainly contributed to the tailoring of the British Utility Infielder force. Israel did not have as much success with the Utility Infielder approach, partially because they experienced one of its pitfalls. A specific, rather than a broad, training approach and a short conflict inhibited the necessary adaptation of the Utility Infielders. This illuminates one of the dangers of the Utility Infielder approach. Although the force is supposed to be capable of operating across the full spectrum of operations in order to combat a wide range of threats, the true capabilities and readiness of the force may be disguised because of either a conscious or an unconscious decision to focus on a specific portion of the spectrum of operations. This is what happened to Israel. While they thought that they were using the Utility Infielder approach, they were in fact Counterinsurgents. In order for the Utility Infielder approach to work, the force had to initially be good enough to

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<sup>219</sup> Hoffman, "Striking a Balance," 18-19. Andrew Krepinevich and a recent RAND team report support the Division of Labor approach.

survive and not fail. Arguably the Israeli Army achieved this, but had insufficient time to adapt the force to make a significant difference.

As the United States Army prepares for war, the Utility Infielder Approach has the greatest applicability. While a general purpose force may not solve any one problem specifically, it will get close enough which will enable the necessary adjustments. This force should be able to effectively apply combined arms and work jointly with the rest of the government. Strictly from the two case studies, if forced into a decision about preparing for one type of conflict or another, it is better to prepare for a conventional conflict and fight an irregular conflict. This proscription is based on several assumptions: the irregular conflict is longer (and hence allows more time to adapt), the irregular conflict would not endanger the nation, and the conventional conflict must be won and it would likely not be as long. But this is, after all, a false choice. The United States Army does not have to choose all of one approach or all of another approach. Striking the right balance is critical. Quickly adapting to the realities of a conflict is of paramount importance in both preparing for conflicts and in actually fighting them. When resources for preparation eventually decline, the best way to ensure the Army's adaptability is through leader education and training. Certainly the Army must also train, but rather than obsessing about training specifically for conventional conflict or irregular conflict, the Army should devote the majority of its resources to educating and training its leaders to adapt. The force must be trained, but focus limited resources on the leaders who will employ the force and lead it in adaptation.

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