PRISM

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Then-Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter talks with then-Lt. Gen. Mark Milley in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sept. 16, 2013. Glenn Fawcett/Defense Department.

Innovation and National Security
Ash Carter's Legacy

By Mark Milley

I had the great privilege of working very closely with Secretary Ash Carter on many occasions over the years. He was a great patriot and a great American. In October 2022 this country, each and every one of us in this country, lost a transformational leader, a friend, and a champion of selfless service. Ash Carter's decisionmaking was always motivated by the care and safety of the men and women in uniform. He was incredibly talented at cutting red tape and speeding up the bureaucracy in order to improve the lives of our soldiers, our sailors, airmen, and marines.

Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates had a vision for the development of the Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP)—the armored vehicles that proved critical to protecting troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. But it was Ash Carter who made that actually happen. The actions of Ash Carter saved American lives on the battlefield, to include my own.

Perhaps Carter's greatest legacy is his sense of urgency for the U.S. military to adopt new technology, to accept risk, and to think of creative solutions to our wicked problems. Secretary Carter was forward thinking. He was talking about generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) while most of us were still trying to figure out our Palm Pilots.

Carter was the rare person who could understand and speak to both the science and the policy of new technology. Most of us need someone to explain what ChatGPT is and how to use it and why it is important. Carter's far-reaching vision and relentless pursuit of innovation reshaped the direction of our military, making us more agile and nimble so we could face down the challenges to come.

We are in the middle of the largest fundamental change in the character of war throughout all of human recorded history. The stakes are enormously high. Today's great challenge is preventing great power war and preserving the rules-based international order that has maintained the great power peace for the last 80 years.

For the past eight decades, this system of rules has helped to prevent great power war. There have been smaller wars to be sure; terrorism, limited wars, and guerrilla wars. But few are alive today in any nation

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on Earth—in or out of uniform—who have lived through a great power war. From the beginning of World War I in 1914 to the end of World War II in 1945, 150 million people were slaughtered in the conduct of great power war.

My parents fought in World War II. My father hit the beach with the 4th Marine Division at Kwajalein and Saipan and Tinian and Iwo Jima. My mother served with the Navy Medical Corps and took care of the wounded coming back to a hospital in Seattle. My uncle was hitting the beach at Normandy when my father was hitting the beach at Saipan in the summer of 1944. It is difficult for us today to imagine the kinds of casualties that come with great power war.

The Meuse-Argonne was the largest battle in American history: 1.2 million American troops, roughly the equivalent of today's total active duty force, fought in that single battle, which began at the end of September 1918 and ended on the last day of the war on 11 November. In this six-week period, 26,000 Americans were killed in action over an area roughly 24 miles. During the battle the Allies advanced all of 10 miles.

Just 37 years later, at Iwo Jima 7,000 Marines were killed and 34,000 wounded in only 19 days. And those are just American casualties. In World War II, the Soviet Union lost 40 million. China 30 million. Germany 15 million. Japan, France, Britain, Italy were all devastated, as well as many other countries. And then there was the institutionalized murder of 6 million Jews and Gypsies and gays and disabled and the elderly and anyone who Nazi Germany determined was of no value. One hundred and fifty million people died in war in the 30 years between 1914 in 1945.

Add in the potential use of nuclear weapons and you quickly realize how devastating a great power war can be. The atomic bombs detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought the war in the Pacific to an end, but at the cost of 355,000 deaths—in just two days. Ash Carter understood the cost and the consequences of great power war. As a physicist, he also understood the horror of nuclear weapons, and as a scholar he had an understanding of deterrence theories from the Cold War.

At the end of World War II, the United States led the victors in setting up the rules-based order to prevent another great power war. Sadly, the leaders of the Soviet Union decided they did not like those rules and they set up an alternative world order called the Warsaw Pact. That order collapsed between 1989 and 1991.

The rules that the United States helped to establish have been governing the world ever since. But now we can all see that that order is fraying. It is not broken, but it is being stretched. China is looking to revise the international order in its favor. They want to be the regional hegemon in Asia within the next 10 years. And they want to exceed the United States as a military global power by mid-century—by 2049 to be exact. If they follow this course, the People's Republic of China will be on the path to potential confrontation with its neighbors and with the United States.

Today Russia is at a very dangerous turning point. While China is a rising power, a revisionist power, Russia is a declining power or revanchist power. Russia wants to go back to the past—back to when it possessed an empire. A little over a year ago, we all witnessed Russia illegally invading the sovereign nation of Ukraine. An unprovoked act of aggression, it was an invasion that undermined the so-called rules-based order. That war now is entering its 18th month and remains extraordinarily dangerous.

Both China and Russia have the means to threaten our interests and our way of life. But we must keep in mind that war with either is neither imminent nor inevitable. And we must continue to deter great power war, which was the central purpose of Ash Carter's professional life. That is what drove Ash Carter. And we will continue to deter great power war through readiness.

Soldiers from the 112th Field Signal Battalion, 37th Division, Ohio National Guard, waiting to advance near Avocourt, France, Sept. 26, 1918, at what would signal the start of the Meuse-Argonne offensive. U.S. Army Signal Corps photo.

It is readiness for the future, otherwise known as modernization, that Ash Carter advocated. He understood that we are at an inflection point in human history where we are experiencing a fundamental change in the character of war. The nature of war, as Clausewitz tells us, is immutable and is not going to change. It is a political act—a decision by humans to impose their political will on their opponent by the use of organized violence.

War involves friction, it involves fear, and it involves agony. It involves confusion. That is the nature of war. The how, where, when, and with which weapons and technologies wars are fought though—the character of war—changes frequently. However, the character of war only changes fundamentally once in a while. And we are in the midst of one of those fundamental changes.

History has taught us that nations that are able to successfully combine new technologies are able to create potentially decisive military advantages, especially at the beginning of a war. The most recent major change—the most recent fundamental change in the character of war—occurred between World War I and World War II when we saw the introduction of mechanization, of wheeled and tracked vehicles, tanks, airplanes and air power, all tied together with communications that were wireless—the radio. There were other technologies to be sure, but these were the drivers behind that fundamental change in war in the last century.

Every great power had those technologies—the United States, Britain, France, Germany, and Japan. All had those technologies, but the country that initially combined them to the greatest effect unfortunately was Nazi Germany. The Nazis took these technologies and combined them into the "German way of war," a way of war that allowed the Wehrmacht to overrun Europe in 18 months.

Eventually, the combined industrial strength of the United States and the Soviet Union along with our allies overcame Nazi Germany. But during the 18 months they dominated Europe there were horrific consequences. We are in a similar moment today, but we might not have 18 months to ramp

Medium shot of soldiers discussing military strategy with holographic landscape display. Shutterstock ID: 1766246936.

up production and build up the military when the next great power war breaks out. We must be ready now, we must be ready in the future. And that is the challenge; figuring out the best combination of technologies, integrating with the right training, doctrine, and organizational structure.

There are a few critical technology trends emerging today and perhaps for the next 10 to 15 years that Ash Carter highlighted to us several years ago. I would propose that we look at it like this; the first principle of war is to survive—if you are dead you cannot fight. So, in future war you must survive. Today is an age of pervasive surveillance—an age in which we have sensors that can detect anyone, anywhere, at any time, on the Earth's surface, and, most of the time, its subsurface. We have the ubiquitous ability to sense the environment, and that will only increase as we move forward in the years to come. Just think of Fitbits, GPS watches, and iPhones—all of those are sensors. Think of the space-based capability and the electronic signatures that everything leaves. All of those are part of a sensing environment unprecedented in recorded history. Our ability to see and sense that environment today is literally incredible.

What you can see, you can shoot; and today we can shoot at further ranges, with greater accuracy, than ever before in human history—and we can do it

with great precision. With the advent of hypersonics, we can do it at greater speed. We can shoot at long range, with great precision, at hypersonic speeds. Add in lasers and other forms of non-kinetics coming onstream and you can see that our enhanced abilities to see and shoot, in and of themselves, constitute a fundamental change in the character of war.

To that mix add the ability to move with a variety of technologies that are now coming onstream. Among the most important critical technology trends emerging today are those related to robotics. Robotics and unmanned aerial vehicles, unmanned ground vehicles, and unmanned maritime vehicles are coming onstream at speeds that are unprecedented. In the next 10 to 15 years we are going to see a pilot-less—or at least partially piloted—Air Force, a sailor-less or partially sailor-less Navy, and a crew-less or partially crew-less tank force on the ground.

And last in a long list of technologies that are emerging rapidly is perhaps the most powerful of all: artificial intelligence, a technology that gives you the benefit of making decisions faster than your enemy can.

Napoleon defeated the British on many occasions even if not at the final battle at Waterloo. In those early victories he prevailed by waking up at two in the morning. An insomniac, he wrote his

orders, gave them out to marshals who were on their horses and already on the attack before the British finished their tea. The ability to go through the OODA loop—observe, orient, decide, and act—faster than your opponent is a significant advantage. The ability to make faster decisions more accurately is a significant advantage in the conduct of war. Artificial intelligence and quantum computing will give that advantage to the country that first masters their military application.

To see, to shoot, to move, to communicate—these fundamentals have all been foundational to the conduct of warfighting for centuries. But now we are moving to a different level of capability. And our military was directed, years ago, by Secretary Ash Carter to develop those technologies that are coming to fruition today.

You see that in the Army with a multi-domain task force and long-range fires. You see that in the Marines with a Littoral Regiment. You see that in the Navy with experiments in the 5th Fleet in the Central Command area of operations with unmanned maritime surface and subsurface vessels. And you see it in the Air Force.

Our challenge is to take these new technologies and merge them into a way of war that gives us a tactical and strategic advantage over the adversary. We will do this not to conquer. We will do this to prevent war. And to achieve this, we must operate seamlessly in our Joint Force as we probably will not have those 18 months. On Day One of the next war, we must be fully integrated and able to maneuver through space and time in a fast-paced, high-tech, rapidly changing environment, remaining invisible and in a constant state of movement.

If we can do that we might prevail. But more importantly, if the enemy knows we can do that they will be deterred. The method by which we are doing that is by initiating the Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC), which is now in its third iteration. The JWC is a description of how we intend to fight in the future. The future warfighter will also need to be skilled in breaking down the silos and working across all the various services to solve key problems. As we look to operationalize the JWC we have to recruit a wide variety of talent that may not come from our traditional sources.

The organizational structure needed to implement this JWC—a joint futures organization conceived by Ash Carter and Senator John McCain—has emerged and become known as the Army Futures Command, and a similar concept is being developed for a Joint Futures Command.

If we want to deter great power war we must remember what Thucydides told us: Remember that wars are fought for fear, pride, and interest and these remind us that to deter war we have to remain strong militarily, economically, and societally. Our opponent must see that and must understand that we have the will to use our strength.

We all must recommit ourselves to the vision of Ash Carter. We must always remember that we take our oath to the Constitution and the idea that is America. The idea that it does not matter if you are male or female, black, white Asian, or Indian. It does not matter what the color of your skin is. It does not matter whether you are rich or poor, famous or common, whether you are a Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, or Jew, or you choose not to believe at all. Ash Carter knew that this military was open to all Americans and that none of those identifying characteristics matters. What matters is your commitment and your talent; what matters is that you are an American. What Ash Carter cared about was your merit, your skills, your knowledge, your attributes.

Ash Carter was committed to that idea of America and was someone that we all should try to emulate. All that he stood for is what we should recommit ourselves to—the idea that is America. That is what Ash Carter had as his North Star and it should be our North Star too. PRISM

Selected intelligence disclosures have helped maintain NATO cohesion on Ukraine. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III hosts the sixth meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Oct. 12, 2022. Photo By: Chad J. McNeeley, DOD (https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3186086/allies-are-unified-in-support-for-ukraine-ahead-of-nato-meetings-defense-offici/).

Russia, Ukraine, and the Future Use of Strategic Intelligence

By Joshua C. Huminski

B efore Russia's unprovoked February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the United States and the United Kingdom undertook an aggressive public and private information campaign to attempt to achieve two concurrent objectives. The primary goal was to convince their allies of the threat of Russia's pending offensive (and to smooth the mobilization of support to Ukraine after the fact) and to a lesser degree a secondary goal was to attempt to deter Moscow from acting. Central to this campaign was the very visible and highly publicized use of intelligence. Indeed, as Dan Drezner wrote in the *Washington Post*, "The U.S. intelligence community sure has been chatty as of late about what it thinks Russia is doing."[1] The use of intelligence to support policy or diplomatic efforts and to achieve a strategic effect is, in and of itself, not novel. Intelligence is meant to inform policymakers and their decisions.

What was novel was the speed, frequency, and extent to which intelligence was disclosed to the broader public—intelligence which demonstrated significant human or digital penetrations into Russia's political and military hierarchies, and which was designed to achieve a specific effect. These disclosures also benefited from an unplanned development: the existence of an external third-party validator in the open-source intelligence community. This nascent and maturing field offered a means by which some information, though not all, could be validated in near real-time. Tactical-level activity verified by these communities helped to reinforce Washington's broader message that policymakers were advancing using sensitive intelligence capabilities.

This use of intelligence, the perceived success of the effort, and the utility of that information will likely lead to an increase in demands both by politicians and the public writ large. This raises new issues and reaffirms preexisting challenges that affect and influence the use of intelligence. In that sense, the Ukraine campaign reflects lessons from past successes while, more importantly, also reflecting the lessons from past failures and offering warnings of risks for the future. Many of these lessons are not new. The need to protect sources and methods; the risk that politicians will selectively use intelligence for political aims; the

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importance of tailoring messaging to competing and differing audiences; all of these are familiar themes encountered throughout the history of intelligence.

What is perhaps most novel about the use of intelligence in Ukraine, and likely going forward, is that this represents an effort by the United States to recapture the initiative in the information war, which it largely ceded to Russia by omission and commission. This effort brings with it additional policy challenges and new considerations.

Goals and Efficacy

It is important from the outset to establish the broad outlines of what the United States and the United Kingdom hoped to achieve with the use of intelligence and the audiences at whom it was directed—namely policymakers at home and amongst allies, the adversary (Russia), and the broader world.

At a strategic level, the West's efforts in the run-up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine had two primary goals. The first, and arguably most successful, was to convince skeptical policymakers in Western allies and even Ukraine of the imminent threat from Moscow. The selective and sustained release of information, often augmented by considerable open-source information (though perhaps not always by design or intention), sought to allay allies' doubts about the imminence of the threat. This contributed to the subsidiary goal of beginning the process of mobilizing a collective allied response after the invasion. In this aim, the effort was decidedly successful.

Throughout the winter of 2021 and the early months of 2022, the United States highlighted a steady drumbeat of indicators and warnings about Russian intentions and likely plans vis-à-vis Ukraine. In December 2021, an unnamed administration official warned, "The Russian plans call for a military offensive against Ukraine as soon as early 2022 with a scale of forces twice what we saw this past spring during Russia's snap exercise near Ukraine's borders." They added, "The plans

involve extensive movement of 100 battalion tactical groups with an estimated 175,000 personnel, along with armor, artillery and equipment."[2] This was a concerted effort to prepare the battlefields of public opinion and private policymaking with intelligence.

By disclosing sensitive intelligence—even at possible risk to sources and methods—the United States signaled to Russia that it knew its plans and intentions in advance, thereby possibly achieving a deterring effect. After laying its cards on the table about what the intelligence community knew, the Biden Administration communicated the likely consequences should Moscow choose to act on the plans. According to National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, to try to deter Putin they "needed to send somebody to Moscow to sit with the Russians at a senior level and tell them: 'If you do this, these will be the consequences.'"[3] President Biden, for his part, noted, "What I am doing is putting together what I believe to be, will be the most comprehensive and meaningful set of initiatives to make it very, very difficult for Mr. Putin to go ahead and do what people are worried he may do."[4]

How effective the efforts were in deterring Russia is an open question. It was effective in getting ahead of false flag operations—operations designed to appear as being carried out by another actor—and disclosing what provocations Moscow planned to initiate to serve as a *casus belli* for its military activity. It does appear that America's warnings of imminent provocations[5] may have prevented Russia from acting on those plans.[6] Carrying out such an attack after the fact would have been undercut by the advance warning. This does assume that Russia needed the provocation in the first place and/or that the West was the primary audience of the said provocative act.

The U.S. intelligence revelations did not change Putin's plans to expand his invasion of Ukraine. They did, however, change the information environment in which his war took place. By disclosing the intelligence before the invasion, the West

undermined Russia's ostensible *casus belli*, removed potential provocations as justifications for invasion, and forced the Kremlin to concoct ever-evolving narratives for both foreign and domestic audiences, the development of which took time and energy, and which ultimately achieved little for Russia, in the West's estimation.

While the ultimate efficacy of the overall intelligence effort is subject to debate—especially as it is difficult to prove a negative or a counterfactual outcome—certain trends could, arguably, be divined. America's effort to convince its allies that the threat from Russia was imminent appears to have at the very least laid the foundation for a swifter response to Moscow's aggression than may have otherwise been possible. It is clear from reporting from the *Washington Post* and others that the effort was far from smooth. At times the United States struggled to convince its allies (beyond the United Kingdom and the Baltic States), and even Ukraine,[7] of the seriousness of the threat. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the differing assessments of the threat posed by Russia. Doubts about U.S. intelligence among allies also reflected comparable weaknesses in terms of their intelligence services' access and penetration of Russian security services.

Indeed, America's performance in the run-up to the Ukraine War was, in many ways, a contrast to the flawed use of intelligence prior to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. America's intelligence community is seen as having been unduly influenced by the zeal of some members of the Bush Administration to invade Iraq, who selectively used intelligence to make their case for invasion. The failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and the subsequent chaos that resulted in the wake of the removal of Saddam Hussein were seen as a stain on the credibility of American intelligence. In the case of Ukraine, Germany[8] and France,[9] in particular, were thus skeptical of American claims about Russian intentions, especially after

Washington declined to share all of the intelligence available regarding Moscow's aims.

In reality it would have been naïve to expect that the selective disclosure of American and allied intelligence would ultimately dissuade Russia from acting. It is unlikely that any amount of dissuasion—publicly or privately—could have halted Russia's movement to war. At best it perhaps stalled or interrupted elements of the Kremlin's plans, but it would be too much to expect that it would halt a looming invasion. If there were such expectations that selective intelligence revelations would deter war, they likely resulted from assuming too much about the West's ability, and too little about President Putin's intentions. Arguably, there was little that the United States or the West writ large could have done to dissuade Moscow from acting, short of outright capitulation by Kyiv.

As for the wider world, the effort to use intelligence to control the narrative of the Ukraine War proved markedly less successful, and remains a challenge to this day. While it is arguable whether there was high value in convincing the Global South of the imminence of the threat or the need to respond to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, messaging to China and India is of critical importance. Given the relatively strong relationships of both Delhi and Beijing with Moscow, their voices on the international stage matter—particularly as calls for a resolution to the crisis are now growing.

Intelligence in Policy and Diplomacy

The use of intelligence to inform policy in a messaging manner is not a novel development. The United States, and indeed all powers, have sought to use intelligence at every level of political and military conflict to dissuade adversaries, convince allies, or communicate with the public more broadly. Even the use of sensitive intelligence—obtained via exquisite means or through high-level sources—to support policy aims is itself not a novel development.

The United States declassified photos obtained by the U-2 aircraft during the Cuban Missile Crisis,[10] for instance, and used these photos in Adlai Stevenson's speech before the United Nations. The United States and the United Kingdom also undertook extensive efforts to sanitize and release information through unofficial means during the Cold War—e.g., selectively providing intelligence to friendly outlets, think tanks, and unwitting activist groups. In the wake of the 1986 bombing of the La Belle discothèque in West Berlin, Washington used declassified signals intelligence intercepts to prove the case that Muammar al-Qaddafi's Libya was responsible.[11] More recently, and perhaps most controversially, the United States used human intelligence of dubious value in the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq over Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program.[12]

Indeed, in the aftermath of the failed intelligence related to Iraq's WMD program, several reviews were undertaken to evaluate what went wrong, and how, and to make recommendations for the future. There is a careful balance to be struck between providing intelligence for assessment and the use of that intelligence in policymaking. It is often the case that the latter omits the caveats of the former, caveats that are vitally important to accurately portray the information in question. In the United Kingdom, the "Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction," also known as the Butler Report, found that:

> *If intelligence is to be used more widely by governments in public debate in the future, those doing so must be careful to explain its uses and limitations. It will be essential, too, that clearer and more effective dividing lines between assessment and advocacy are established when doing so.[13]*

The Iraq Inquiry report, also known as the Chilcot Report, echoed this conclusion, finding that, "The statements prepared for, and used by, the UK Government in public from late 2001 onwards conveyed more certainty than the [Joint Intelligence Committee] Assessments about Iraq's proscribed activities and the potential threat they posed."[14] In many ways, as discussed below, the use of intelligence in Ukraine reflected these lessons.

Risks to Sources and Methods

Perhaps the most significant issue resulting from the West's use of intelligence in this most recent crisis is the tension between protecting sources and methods and the utility of collected intelligence. This is not a new challenge. There is a fine balance between the intelligence officer's mission of ensuring the protection of their agent, or the cyber intelligence protection of a unique exploit or vulnerability, and the need to inform policymakers, who then seek to shape the political and diplomatic environment. Whenever intelligence is sanitized and released, there is the risk of heightening adversary awareness of capabilities and the resulting loss of that asset or exploit.

There are, and always will be, concerns about risks to sources and methods—it is the cardinal rule of intelligence collection: protecting agents and capabilities. Yet, in the words of one former senior intelligence officer,[15] it can be followed to a fault. There is a risk that the zeal to protect sources and methods could restrict their attendant utility. Too much protection reduces their utility, too much use risks their exposure and loss. This can be avoided by the judicious and select release of information, but it remains a delicate balance between protection and usefulness.

Certainly, in the run-up to Ukraine, it appeared that the Biden Administration was willing to err on the side of utility over protection. The administration's disclosures about Russia's capabilities and intentions were impressive for their specificity. For example:

■ "Intercepted communications obtained by the U.S. have revealed that some Russian officials have worried that a large-scale invasion of

Ukraine would be costlier and more difficult than Russian President Vladimir Putin and other Kremlin leaders realize, according to four people familiar with the intelligence."[16]

- Speaking to the *New York Times*, a U.S. official noted that "the United States has acquired intelligence about a Russian plan to fabricate a pretext for an invasion of Ukraine using a faked video that would build on recent disinformation campaigns."[17]

- "The U.S. intelligence community had penetrated multiple points of Russia's political leadership, spying apparatus and military, from senior levels to the front lines, according to U.S. officials."[18]

This intelligence could only have been acquired through high-level penetrations or compromised Russian communications networks. The very release of this information, sanitized as it was, could jeopardize the access of the agent in question or the vulnerability or exploit leveraged.[19] While there is an argument to be made that Russia and others likely assume to some degree that they are subject to near-constant surveillance—attempted or successful—the specificity of the warning (if Moscow was paying attention) would likely have been disquieting. It is undoubtedly the case that Moscow has launched or will launch a robust counterintelligence effort to identify the source of the information used by the United States. If successful, that exploit or agent may be "burned" in intelligence parlance and no longer useful.

It is possible, though far less plausible, that the intelligence community wished to create the impression that it had insights into Russia's decision-making process when, in fact, it did not, to sow doubt and confusion. While generating such intelligence is possible, doing so would have almost certainly been exposed by the Russians or allies and would have certainly eroded the credibility of the community at a time when that credibility was vital amongst allies.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell holds a vial of anthrax during his presentation to the United Nations Security Council on February 5, 2003. UN Photo/Mark Garten.

In the case of Ukraine, it was clear that the urgency of the threat and the need to mobilize allied support trumped some, but not all, of the concerns about sources and methods. As reported by the *Washington Post*, and discussed above, the United States disclosed some intelligence related to what it knew about Russian intentions, but did not provide raw intelligence intercepts or reports to many of its

European allies. This caution is not surprising, as such information is restricted even amongst the Five Eyes.[20] While this was undoubtedly a prudent move, it fueled existing skepticism about the quality and veracity of American intelligence, and undoubtedly rekindled concerns from Berlin and Paris about the politicization of said intelligence (especially in light of their pre-existing skepticism of the threat from Russia and likely limited access of their own intelligence agencies to the Kremlin).

Open Source Validation

In the case of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the United States and the United Kingdom did enjoy an advantage that did not exist to the current degree in previous crises: open-source intelligence. Throughout the run-up to Russia's expanded invasion of Ukraine, there was, and now remains, a robust body of open-source intelligence analysis.[21] Derived through publicly available tools, commercial satellite imagery, and a dedicated cadre of social media sleuths, the open-source community served as an external validator or check for some of the claims made by the United States and the United Kingdom. Government claims about mobilization activities could, at least at a macro level, be verified against what commercial imagery revealed, and through collated analysis from groups like Bellingcat. Further validation of this information was found through social media channels like Telegram—troop movements could be tracked via the chattiness of Russian soldiers and the observations of the communities through which units moved. Perhaps most amusingly, the movements of Russian soldiers were tracked through their use of dating apps, according to reports.[22]

Robust open-source intelligence served as a semi-transparent check on information released by governments. Bellingcat and others demonstrate their work, opening it up to public scrutiny in a way that the intelligence communities of the United States and the United Kingdom could not

and almost certainly would not. There are attendant risks, however, in relying on these well-meaning amateurs and semi-professional intelligence analysts. There is an uneven quality to the open source community—not every organization is Bellingcat, and there is not always wisdom in crowds. In theory, the free market nature of this community offers a check on the quality of the analysis. Outlets that are misleading, misguiding, or peddling inaccurate information will be outed and castigated if the system works as intended.

According to one former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operations officer, in the case of Ukraine, the United States had the most significant advantage in that truth was on its side, and this truth was validated by open-source analysis.[23] While open-source intelligence is certainly a novel development and reliant on technologies still in their relative infancy in many cases, there is a risk of self-fulfilling expectations. External checks such as Bellingcat and others were and are helpful in the present crisis, but only to a degree. In the future, these external checks will provide validation for the West's information in some cases, and in others it will contradict the information being offered by Western intelligence. In this sense the open-source community itself could well become part of the competitive information warfare terrain moving forward. While the West had the advantage of the truth, that will not necessarily always be the case. Counter-open source intelligence efforts could well emerge, either through direct state-sponsorship of institutions—an anti-Bellingcat of sorts—or penetration of existing organizations.

Moreover, while the open-source community has performed admirably in many cases, there are limits to what it can verify. The government will still retain exquisite means that will remain beyond the ability of open-source analysts to confirm or validate. Open-source intelligence will, in the future, be able to corroborate the presence of forces and the

movement of those forces, or even conduct small-scale intelligence investigations of their own—e.g., the identification of the GRU officers responsible for the Novichok poisoning in Salisbury, England.[24] It will not, however, be able to divine the intentions of those within the Kremlin (or in the future, perhaps within Zhongnanhai in Beijing). This will remain the unique selling point of the intelligence community.

There is also the question of what would happen if open-source intelligence contradicts official government sources of information. Russia's expanded invasion in February 2022 presented a perfect testbed for when things go right, and when truth and interests aligned seamlessly. Such alignment will not always be the case. Governments will undoubtedly have information the open-source community will not be able to access. There will also be times when governments are interested in pursuing a policy and using intelligence selectively to support that policy, which may result in contradictions with the open-source community. Squaring this difference will be a challenge as it all feeds into the broader information ecosystem; e.g., a trusted open-source community disagrees with the government assessment, the media picks up on said disagreement, the media questions the government assessment, and so on.

The question of utility, then, inevitably follows. The open-source community has proven to be a particularly useful aid in the present crisis, but a useful aid only for the Western body politic. For Russia, China, India, and the Global South, the fact that Bellingcat and other open source outlets verified the West's intelligence matters far less, as does the intelligence itself.[25] In fact, on the global stage, open-source intelligence is likely competing in a much more contested information environment. There are already innumerable accusations that Bellingcat and others are merely arms of the CIA or Special Intelligence Service, allowing those predisposed to be skeptical of their claims to dismiss them as Western propaganda, no different than that which is being produced by Moscow. Given the United States' and the United Kingdom's Cold War support for dissident movements, think tanks, and journalistic outlets, such claims are not without some historical grounding, however questionable they are today.
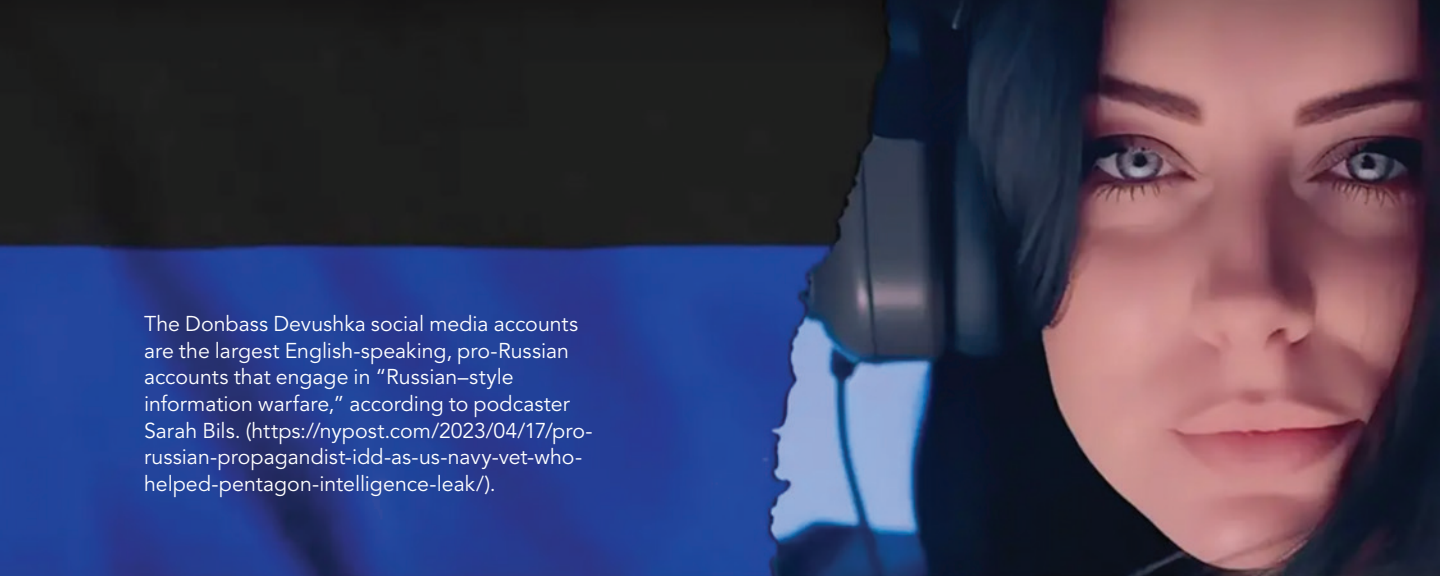
The Future of Intelligence as an Effect

There is a temptation to believe that the West's performance in the run-up to the Ukraine War will become the norm in the future—in other words, that the frequent disclosures of sanitized sensitive intelligence will become commonplace. While not wholly misguided, it's important to remember that the situation in Ukraine was unique. In the prelude to the largest war in Europe since the Second World War, Washington and its allies believed that all measures and steps were necessary. It was a crisis in which the United States was working to convince its allies of a clear and present danger and, to a lesser degree, to attempt to deter Russia from its course of action.

To expect the United States and its allies to attempt to communicate or signal through the use of strategic intelligence in a similar manner in every crisis would be misguided. Public dissemination of strategic intelligence can be a useful tool, but as University of Nottingham intelligence historian Rory Cormac noted, it is not a magic bullet. CIA Director William Burns also noted as much, saying, "I think we're going to have to be careful looking at other instances, whether it's in terms of cyber threats or other kinds of challenges that the United States and our allies will face in the future."[26]

There is also a risk of confirmation bias in light of the Ukraine effort. The campaign to convince skeptical European allies was to a degree successful due in no small part to the accuracy of the information and the fact that the Biden Administration was and is seen as an honest broker or trusted source. Should the Intelligence Community get it wrong in the future, or should the intelligence be seen as used to support a

The Donbass Devushka social media accounts are the largest English-speaking, pro-Russian accounts that engage in "Russian–style information warfare," according to podcaster Sarah Bils. (https://nypost.com/2023/04/17/pro-russian-propagandist-idd-as-us-navy-vet-who-helped-pentagon-intelligence-leak/).

DONBASS DEVUSHKA

political purpose, as was the case in 2002 and 2003 vis a vis Iraq, that goodwill will rapidly erode. Intelligence is not perfect—in the words of one former operations officer, it is never confirmed, it is only corroborated, building an incomplete picture and filling in the missing bits with analysis.

While public dissemination of intelligence may not become the "new normal," it is also unlikely to be a one-off development. Its efficacy in this crisis may well presage a change in the attitude of the intelligence community. The pendulum may have swung away from the hoarding of intelligence and risk aversion. Instead, the United States and the West may subsequently use intelligence more often and more frequently in a public manner.

There is also a risk that policymakers and the public more broadly come to expect this to be the "new normal," nonetheless. Representatives of the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence (MoD) noted that they had not expected their Twitter threads on the Ukraine conflict to become as popular or as widely sought after as they eventually became.[27] The MoD team quickly became a victim of its own success, with journalists, ministers, and the public alike clamoring for the latest releases. This forced the team to quickly staff up to

support the effort, one that was intended only to be a temporary activity (indeed, it continues as of this essay's drafting to post content nearly every day). This creates a risky dynamic—not every crisis will be the equivalent of Ukraine and receive similar attention—and resolving that dynamic will require careful and astute policymaking.

Another risk is blending the public use of intelligence with public affairs activities. The former requires nuance and context, while the latter requires pith and often snark, which eliminates the care necessary in intelligence products. Striking the right balance between the two will present both a challenge and a risk. Managing the expectations of both the public and politicians will also be critical. Simply because there is a snarky Twitter thread on the crisis du jour does not mean that the issue is not serious or that the government lacks insight into what is happening.

Striking the right balance between intelligence used by policymakers for advocacy, versus intelligence provided by the community for assessment, will require continuous due diligence and attention. The Butler Report highlighted this tension in the government's case to the British public concerning Iraq's WMD program:

The Government wanted an unclassified document on which it could draw in its advocacy of its policy. The JIC sought to offer a dispassionate assessment of intelligence and other material on Iraqi nuclear, biological, chemical and ballistic missile programmes…. But this will have put a strain on them in seeking to maintain their normal standards of neutral and objective assessment.[28]

Will the United States and the West find themselves in a similar crisis scenario necessitating a similar campaign to publicly reveal strategic intelligence in the future? Almost certainly. In the run-up to a potential Chinese invasion of Taiwan, the United States would almost certainly selectively disclose intelligence to allies in the region, and to the public more broadly. Such a disclosure could follow a similar pattern to the run-up to Ukraine—an aggressive campaign of private communication with regional allies and Beijing, backed by sanitized high-level intelligence to convince policymakers of the imminence of the threat (and the West's awareness thereof), supported by a public campaign of signaling and communication. Once again, the goal would not primarily be deterrence alone. It is unlikely in that instance that Beijing could be deterred from its decided course of action. Rather, such disclosures would seek to convince regional and Western allies of the threat in a bid to mobilize their support.

The Politics of Intelligence as an Effect

The Biden Administration's conduct in the run-up to the expanded invasion of Ukraine was an example of the professional and measured use of sensitive intelligence to achieve the desired effect. The administration, to its credit, is fairly *au fai*t with the practice, consumption, and use of intelligence, and its associated sensitivities.

In the future, this may not always be the case. It is possible that future administrations will not be as well-versed and knowledgeable about the use of intelligence and the process by which it is produced, or as circumspect in its use. Increased tensions between the intelligence community and elected officials and political appointees are not beyond the realm of possibility. Recent history has demonstrated significant tensions between the White House and the more apolitical intelligence community.[29] It is incumbent upon the analysts and officers to inform policymakers of the limitations of intelligence. This was a key finding of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence's "Report on the U.S. Intelligence Community's Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq." The committee found that "The Intelligence Community did not accurately or adequately explain to policymakers the uncertainties behind the judgments in the 2002 National Intelligence Estimate."[30] Whether or not policy makers read the National Intelligence Estimate is another matter.

The success—perceived or real—of the United States' and United Kingdom's intelligence efforts in Ukraine may well have set expectations of both availability and utility far higher than results justify. This could create a cycle of increased pressure for more publicly usable intelligence in both crisis and non-crisis scenarios—pressures that the intelligence communities in Washington and London may feel compelled to meet. The metaphorical genie is out of the bottle as the public and politicians alike may well demand increased intelligence to support or justify state actions.

Indeed, by way of example, how does one turn off the social media taps from the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence "Intelligence Update"? Concerning internal bureaucratic politics, the success of this effort could well be seen as a way to advance bureaucratic interests and gain increased political exposure and potential resources. It could become the "shiny new object" within the government toolkit. That path could easily lead to

the increased politicization of intelligence, which is anathema to intelligence agencies.

The tension between policymakers and intelligence professionals is not new or unique—it is inherent to the push-pull of politics and intelligence. This is not a strategic challenge, but more of a tactical problem set. As found in the Butler Report:

> *We also recognise that there is a real dilemma between giving the public an authoritative account of the intelligence picture and protecting the objectivity of the JIC from the pressures imposed by providing information for public debate.* It is difficult to resolve these requirements. *[emphasis added]*[31]

Successfully managing intelligence in the future will require additional considerations to reflect this new environment. This becomes increasingly relevant in the domain of information warfare. To this end, for example, one former senior Ministry of Defence representative suggested that the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, respectively, should establish clear guidelines on the use of intelligence in the public space, particularly in an information warfare context.[32] Once again, this is not a novel development, but rather a response to the evolution of both the pace of events and the broader information ecosystem.

The efficacy of the Biden Administration's efforts to convince allies of the threat from Russia was due in no small part to the discipline of the messaging effort. Both publicly and privately, tailored messages were delivered to specific audiences. In the case of Ukraine, this campaign would not have been nearly as successful had it been uncoordinated, the messaging unclear, and elements of the administration working at cross-purposes. Indeed, throughout the summer there appeared at times breaks in this messaging discipline. For instance, the disclosure in May of this year from

unidentified American officials that Washington helped Ukraine target and kill Russian generals[33] was quickly rolled back.[34]

Leaks or selective disclosures outside of the central narrative, or even well-meaning private initiatives, could undermine the overall effort. This highlights the imperative of controlling the use of intelligence to avoid disclosures that are unintentionally escalatory or inflammatory—again, not a novel development, but one that has taken on new urgency given the speed at which information travels. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, prior to the February invasion, was at times critical of the information narrative, urging the West not to create a panic.[35] While perhaps understandable, it does highlight the challenges of competing information narratives and the risks of unintended consequences.

In the main, there is the risk that intelligence is stretched beyond its intended meaning and is selectively used to support government policy. Avoiding this requires a set of savvy intelligence consumers who understand the limitations and capabilities of the product they receive. Equally, it requires a community of intelligence professionals able to push back when political considerations appear to be driving intelligence and analytical products toward a specific end.

Intelligence in Information Warfare

The United States' use of intelligence in the run-up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine is, arguably, part of an attempt by Washington to regain the information narrative against Moscow's disinformation campaign. Russia's use of the information space as a domain of warfare is well understood and stands in contrast with the United States' understanding of that space.

As has been well documented, Russia wields a firehose of disinformation, falsehoods, propaganda, and "what about-ism."[36] It saturates the information space with conflicting narratives seeking to

confuse, disrupt, and convince adversaries, allies, and domestic audiences alike.

By contrast, Cormac notes that there is a consistent Western modernist assumption that the truth will speak for itself.[37] Yet, the West's "truth" is but one narrative in an increasingly tumultuous information space in which adversaries constantly attempt to undermine the very concept of objective truth. The challenge for the United States and the United Kingdom is finding a way for the truth to cut through the noise, and for their intended signal to reach the targeted audience for maximum effect. Because disinformation has far more avenues to spread while trusted sources are fewer in number and prominence, the speed of disinformation is far outpacing the speed of truth.

Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea via "little green men" and later involvement in Eastern Ukraine were conducted with sufficient obfuscation and subterfuge to muddle the West's response. While there was significant reporting on the ground that the forces were Russian or Russian-backed, political obfuscation and an unwillingness to act ceded the information battlefield to Moscow. The United States' aggressive campaign in the run-up to the expanded invasion in February 2022 should then be seen as a corrective to this failure, and a sign of a growing recognition of the importance of the information space and the need to better integrate intelligence into the toolkit of national power.

There is a balance to be struck between intelligence to inform policymakers and intelligence for the information war. While they can be mutually reinforcing, tensions between the two are likely to exist. The information warfare calculus will require careful calibration, particularly as it pertains to intelligence. This goes to the heart of the use of intelligence in an era of information warfare—what is the desired effect (or effects) and what is the best way of achieving them? What is gained and what is lost in sanitizing and disclosing intelligence? Will a

source or exploit be exposed and, if so, at what cost? Will it be a short-term tactical gain at the expense of a long-term strategic benefit?

Such a calculus will inform policymakers and intelligence professionals in deciding what kind of intelligence is best suited for their objectives. Questions will naturally follow as to whether the information is appropriate for disclosure given the risks to sources and methods—a risk calculus that likely has changed in the wake of Ukraine. Does the immediacy of the crisis imply that greater risks to sources and methods are warranted? Or does the risk to long-term access outweigh the need for tactical intelligence successes? The messenger matters as much as the message. Statements from the White House or Department of State carry weight with traditional outlets, but feeding information to nontraditional partners or mediums may be more effective with different audiences.

In this new era of information warfare, the complexity of maintaining messaging discipline while communicating to differing audiences—policymakers at home and amongst allies, the adversary (Russia), and the broader world—will only grow. Discrepancies or differences in narratives will be easily discovered—what is said to a Russian audience could easily be compared with what is told to a European ally or even the American electorate. Social media has made this challenge infinitely more difficult—a quick Google search or scraping of Twitter's API will allow easy analysis.

There is also the temptation to engage in straightforward deception through official channels, which carries great risk. Once again, this is not new. During the Second World War nearly every outlet available to the allies was fed similar information as part of Operation Fortitude to deceive Nazi Germany into believing the invasion was coming across the English Channel at a different point, and not to Normandy. Prior to D-Day, the Allies engaged in complex and multi-layered deception operations

to convince Berlin that an invasion was targeting Greece and Sardinia, not Sicily.

The Cold War is also replete with examples of selective leaks to friendly journalists and the feeding of supported think tanks with official but off-the-record information to ensure the production of content supportive of the government's narratives. While not outright propaganda, it certainly supported the government's aims of undermining the Soviet Union. Of course, there is a difference between an official disclosure of accurate information for a desired political outcome and outright propaganda. There are legal restrictions, such as the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 and Executive Order 12333, that are meant to control the production of propaganda and are intended to prohibit information designed for foreign audiences from reaching the American public. Maintaining these prohibitions and boundaries is arguably as important now in the era of social media as at any point prior.

The success of the efforts by the United States and Great Britain to use sensitive intelligence to seize the narrative before the most recent invasion of Ukraine was founded on the accuracy of the information presented, often validated by external open-source information. This is a marked recovery from the crisis of trust that resulted from the botched intelligence surrounding Iraq's WMD program. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that, by omission or commission, a government could seek to advance narratives that are false or contain seeds of falsehood but carry the imprimatur of "intelligence."

The reputational damage caused if such falsehoods are subsequently revealed, however, would be significant. That the UK's Defence Intelligence Twitter account has been so successful is due in no small part to its accuracy and the fact that it carries the weight of the official Ministry of Defence seal. The information is factual, not speculative, and generally limited to the realm of that which is known or verifiable. Were Defence Intelligence to

push unverified speculation—as it was seen to be doing by highlighting news stories alongside its own analysis—or to attempt to embark on a deception campaign, that trust would rapidly erode.

This is not to say that the government should not engage in deceptive activities. Arguably in the future deception and obfuscation will become even more important on the information battlefield. Rather, it is the mechanisms and vehicles that carry that information, and the labels that it carries, that will require greater due diligence. The *Washington Post* will want to know that the information that carries the label of "intelligence" is as factual as possible, and not being spun to suit a specific administration's requirements or political narrative. Again, this is not a new challenge, but one that is likely to be exacerbated in this new information era.

Planning, Measurement, and Information Warfare

The future successful use of intelligence as part of an information warfare narrative requires prior planning and internal interrogation. In the run-up to Ukraine, intelligence was largely used in a crisis response manner. Russia's invasion was looming; the United States sought to rally its allies, convince Ukraine of the urgency of the threat, and dissuade Moscow from acting. As discussed above, this effort was only partially successful.

Reflecting on the campaign in Ukraine and considering future scenarios, there is an opportunity to better plan how intelligence will be used. The key question underpinning any information effort must focus on the desired effect—what are policymakers trying to achieve? What are the desired effects or blend of effects? With the benefit of hindsight regarding Ukraine, was it a realistic goal to try to deter Putin or coerce Russia into not invading? Was a more realistic goal to sow dissent or mistrust within Putin's inner circle by the selective release of information, or to convince him that there is a mole

Russian military convoy marches towards the contact lines – Sputnik (https://npasyria.com/en/73303/).

within the Kremlin? More broadly, was the goal to expose Russian propaganda to the world at large? Was the desired effect introducing an element of chaos and distraction within Kremlin's counsels? A more modest goal, and one that was arguably achieved, might have been to simply make the operational environment for the Kremlin far more difficult than it would have otherwise been.

Having decided on the desired effects, what information or intelligence is available to support this effort or this narrative? What or who is the best medium for conveying this information? How can all elements of the government be leveraged to achieve the desired effect? Finally, how will the efficacy of the information operation be judged?

This raises critical questions as to the intended audience, and whether it is even possible to achieve the desired effect given their preconceptions. In the case of France and Germany, for instance, there was considerable skepticism about American

intelligence. This was the result of past failures of American policymakers in handling intelligence (e.g., Iraq), and built-in skepticism about the possibility of a major land war on the European continent. Skepticism may also have resulted from the limitations and failures of their own intelligence agencies to anticipate events. Parochial economic and political interests of residents in Paris and Berlin may also have played a role.

These questions are not fundamentally new. The United Kingdom's robust efforts in the Second World War and both Washington and London's campaigns throughout the Cold War were all informed by these very questions. What is new is the effort by the West to recapture the information narrative in an era characterized by chaotic social media, growing open-source intelligence, and disinformation that travels at the speed of light.

Conclusion

The United States' use of intelligence in the run-up to Russia's expanded invasion of Ukraine marked an evolution of statecraft. Washington learned from past failures and sought to recapture an information space that had largely been ceded to an aggressive Moscow.

The nature of the crisis—the first major state-on-state conflict in Europe since the Second World War—demanded a unique response. The United States thus sought to leverage intelligence in a manner to convince allies of the imminent threat and, to a lesser degree, dissuade Moscow from acting, while signaling that it had deep insights into the Kremlin's plans. More than anything else, the United States had the benefit of the truth on its side—Washington was seen as a trusted information broker by most, particularly in the face of a belligerent and perceived pathological liar in Russia. Furthermore, the truth of the intelligence was validated by a far more established third-party open-source community than in previous incidents.

In many ways, the lessons to be drawn from this crisis are not unique. Future decisions on the use of intelligence to support military and diplomatic efforts will depend on a familiar calculus: Will the disclosure of information put sources and methods at risk? Will the gain outweigh the loss? Who is the best medium for the message? Most important, what is the desired effect?

What is unique is a rapidly evolving information domain, one in which information flows far faster and decisions must be made quicker. While the audiences may remain the same—domestic, adversary, and international—their habits of information consumption will demand far greater savviness in information operations than in the past. Washington may have achieved a nominal success in seizing the narrative in the Ukraine conflict, but it also potentially unleashed greater demands for its intelligence products than it is willing to provide. Not every crisis will be of the scale or scope of interstate war, nor will every crisis benefit so clearly from some intelligence informed truth-telling.

The Ukraine conflict strongly suggests that the use of intelligence in modern information warfare needs deeper consideration and analysis. We have seen selective intelligence releases by policymakers designed to achieve a signaling effect, for instance—not the least of which is related to the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons.[38] The West has also used intelligence to signal to its ostensible partner, Ukraine, its displeasure over the assassination of Darya Dugina, the daughter of a Russian ultra-nationalist polemicist.[39]

The Ukraine conflict may also prove somewhat unique. In a future crisis scenario, for instance, the attending pressures and rapid build-up toward an impending war may also work against an administration's efforts to similarly craft or control the narrative, a situation one could easily imagine in the scenario of a rapid Chinese invasion of Taiwan. The reality to always keep in mind in all modern warfare

is that the delta between the speed of disinformation and the speed of information will always favor the former over the latter.

The intelligence community will continue to be *sine par* in terms of exquisite collection and analysis. Suggestions that it will simply offload its intelligence collection requirements to the open-source community are spurious. It will undoubtedly increasingly leverage this community where appropriate (as well as increase its own in-house open-source capabilities), but as noted above, the OSINT community's abilities are and will remain limited and will not always be suitable for a policymaking agenda. As General Sir Jim Hockenhull, Commander of the United Kingdom's Strategic Command, recently said, the linkage of open-source and secret intelligence will prove invaluable in the future:

> *Whilst open source doesn't provide the lid of the jigsaw box, it gives an almost infinite number of jigsaw pieces. The challenge now is that you can make an almost infinite number of pictures as a consequence of the available pieces. It also introduces a challenge in terms of discretion around the information, and we must filter with a view to being able to refine. This is where the combination of open source intelligence and secret sources of intelligence becomes invaluable in being able to see whether we can define greater understanding as a consequence.*[40]

The Ukraine conflict also suggests that the lessons of America's post-Iraq intelligence reviews, as well as those conducted in the United Kingdom, are just as applicable and relevant today as when they were first drafted. There remains a fine balance between intelligence produced to inform policymakers and the use of intelligence to achieve desired effects. Maintaining this balance between assessment, analysis, and advocacy requires officials who understand and respect the difference. The temptations to blur the distinctions by omission or commission are very real, and the consequences are potentially disastrous.

While there exist processes and protocols for the declassification of information and its dissemination within the government and to the public, these processes are not designed for the demands of information warfare. The ad hoc process undertaken by the Biden Administration in regards to Ukraine, while effective, needs a procedural framework and template for future administrations to follow. That will be especially true in crisis situations where the politicians in power are not as savvy in the use of classified information and the distinctions between different kinds of intelligence. Equally, future administrations must be prepared for the possibility that the intelligence community might get it wrong.

The Ukraine War has shown that competing in the modern information domain requires leveraging all tools of national power. Intelligence, hitherto used primarily to inform policymakers, will be an increasingly key asset in that arsenal when judiciously and appropriately used. The role of intelligence will become even more important as the West seeks to recapture the initiative in the information war.

America's intelligence community and the policymakers it supports demonstrated the potential utility of this information in the 2022 Ukraine conflict and the information war against Russia. Changes in modern warfare will necessitate adjustments in the way the intelligence community views intelligence—not just as a product to be provided to policymakers, but a ready-made tool to achieve strategic effects in a crisis scenario. Drawing the right lessons from its use in the Ukraine War—cognizant of that which has changed and that which has not—will ensure that Washington is better placed to wage the information wars of the future. PRISM

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Neutral Territory! Warning marker on the Swiss border during World War II. Photo by Theodor Strubin, Museum BL/Keystone (https://www.nzz.ch/english/expert-swiss-sanctions-on-russia-consistent-with-neutrality-ld.1674659).

Neutrality After the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

The Example of Switzerland and Some Lessons for Ukraine

By Thomas Greminger and Jean-Marc Rickli

I n 1956, former American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles stated that "neutrality has increasingly become an obsolete conception."[1] Dulles's statement seemed to be vindicated after the end of the Cold War as only a handful of countries in Europe identified themselves as neutral. Whereas in the past Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden adopted neutrality, only two countries in Europe—Austria and Switzerland—are considered permanent neutral states under international law after the Cold War. Together with Sweden and Finland, Austria although maintaining a constitutional basis for its neutrality, became a non-allied state when it joined the European Union (EU) on January 1, 1995.

With Finland having just joined NATO and Sweden about to do so, these two countries are definitely leaving the camp of the neutral and non-allied European states. Thus, Switzerland remains the only permanent neutral state in Europe with no commitment towards the EU and its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), as the core substance of Austria's "Neutrality Act equals the status of a non-allied country"[2] since Vienna joined the EU. Considering the renewal of the discussion on the relevance of neutrality in European security following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, this article sheds light on the contemporary relevance of the concept. It will do so by first looking at the conceptual and strategic meaning of neutrality, then reviewing the evolution of Switzerland's understanding and practice of neutrality, and finally recasting the relevance of neutrality, especially regarding Ukraine, in today's geopolitical and geostrategic environment.

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Neutrality As a Small State's Strategic Option

Though the United States has been tempted at times in its history—notably at the beginning of World War I—by the adoption of a policy of neutrality, the consistent use of neutrality is typically a foreign and security posture of small states. Small states can be defined as states having limited abilities to mobilize resources, which can be material, relational, or normative.[3] In short, small states have a deficit of power in terms of their capabilities as well as in terms of their relationship to others—i.e., the lack of power they can exert. Power represents the ability to remain autonomous while influencing others.[4] The ability of states to achieve their foreign and security objectives ultimately depends on the exercise of these two dimensions.[5] Foreign and security policy outcomes of small states must therefore be understood and analysed along this continuum between autonomy and influence.[6]

Due to their lack of resources, small states lack the power to set agendas and thus have a limited capacity to influence or modify the conduct of others. They also have limited powers to prevent others from affecting their own behaviour.[7] It follows that for small states the security and foreign policy objective is to minimize or compensate for this power deficit.[8] This translates into three broad security policy orientations. Small states can favour either influence, or autonomy, or try to simultaneously play with both through hedging.[9]

When a small state chooses to maximise its influence, it is adopting a foreign and security strategy based on alignment by joining either an alliance or a coalition. An alliance is a "formal association of states bound by mutual commitment to use military force against non-member states to defend the member states' integrity."[10] NATO through its collective defense clause in Article V of its charter is the epitome of a military alliance. A coalition is a looser form of association that does not entail a formal security pact; the countries that joined the United States in the war against Iraq in 1990–1991 or in 2003 joined a U.S.-led coalition.[11]

In terms of alliance or coalition behaviour, small states can either ally with (band wagoning) or against (balancing) threats.[12] Whereas band wagoning is driven by the opportunity for gain, balancing is pursued by the desire to avoid losses.[13] In this case, an alliance is a tool for states for balancing when "their resources are insufficient to create an appropriate counterweight to the hegemonial endeavours of one state or a group of states."[14] Alignment and more particularly alliance policy provide small states with the protection and the dissuasion exerted by a great power, but at the expense of their autonomy. This is the biggest risk for small states, as alliance commitments entrap small states with the policy of their larger partner and force them to fight wars that are not in their direct interests. In addition, since protection by the bigger partner can never be taken for granted, alliance policies are fraught with uncertainty as well.[15] It follows that entrapment and the loss of strategic autonomy are inherent risks for small states adopting a foreign and security strategy relying on alignment.

In situations of mature anarchy—that is, when the international system reaches a certain degree of institutionalisation—small states can use a different type of alignment strategy which mainly relies on exerting influence within an international or regional organisation.[16] The United Nations (UN) through the Article 2(4) of its Charter calls on all its member states "to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state." This principle, which reinforces states' sovereignty, has always represented a strong motivation for small states to join the UN. However, the lack of enforcement power of the organisation due to the veto power of the five permanent members of the Security Council makes the UN very often more a symbolic tool for small

states' foreign policy than an effective means to guarantee their security. This is especially the case in the current international environment, which is growing increasingly polarised and where multilateralism is increasingly under pressure.

However, the true power of international organisations is not so much in their protection of small states as in their ability to provide small states with ways to exert influence over their larger partners. Regulations, norms, and decision-making procedures in international organisations contribute to constraining larger states and therefore offer small states increased room for manoeuvre. This, combined with negotiations and leadership skills, can provide small states with maximal influence within international organisations if small states use them within the right coalition.[17] Small states can also use their reputation and perceived neutrality within international organisations to be norms entrepreneurs with the objective that the internationalization of their norms will compel other states to adopt them without external pressures on the one hand, and on the other, that great powers' policy will be influenced in directions that support small states' national interests.[18] A traditional example of norms entrepreneurship has been the active promotion of peace by the Nordic states as a cornerstone of their foreign and security policies.[19]

When a small state decides to prioritise autonomy in foreign and security policy, it can adopt a defensive security strategy that favours sovereignty. In this case, its security does not rely on the protection of major powers. This provides small states with more room of manoeuvre to stay out of others' wars but at the expense of being abandoned by great powers in times of threats to their security.[20] This strategic option is characterized by the adoption of a policy of neutrality.[21]

Neutrality can be defined as a "foreign policy principle whose purpose is the preservation of the independence and sovereignty of small states

through non-participation and impartiality in international conflict."[22] The law of neutrality has been codified in three conventions: Paris (1856), the Hague (1907), and London (1909). The law of neutrality recognises three basic obligations for the neutral states—abstention, impartiality, and prevention—but solely during wartime and only in case of interstate conflicts.[23] Thus, neutral states must not provide military support either directly (troops) or indirectly (mercenaries) to the belligerents. They must treat the belligerents impartially regarding the export of armaments and military technology, which means that they must apply equally to all belligerents the rules set up by themselves regarding their relations with the belligerents. Finally, the neutrals are obliged to maintain their territorial integrity and defend their sovereignty by any means at their disposal to prevent the belligerents from using their territory for war purposes. It is important to note that in case of intra-state war or civil war, the law of neutrality does not apply and therefore the neutral state's scope of action is unhindered and left to its own discretion.

As the law of neutrality only applies in wartime, if a state chooses to opt for neutrality also in peacetime it acquires the status of permanent neutral.[24] In this case, customary law provides the permanent neutral state with an additional duty which pertains to the impossibility of joining a military alliance.[25] This stems from the principle that a permanent neutral state "must not put itself in a position where in the event of a future conflict it could be led to violate the obligations arising from its neutral status."[26] In case of a military alliance, an attack against a partner would require military support on behalf of the alliance member and this would therefore breach the first duty of a neutral state, namely the duty not to participate in an armed conflict.

Except for this provision, the peacetime neutral state's behaviour is not subjected to any legal constraints. Each neutral state is therefore free

to determine the content of its neutrality policy defined as "the set of measures which a permanently neutral state takes on its own initiative and regardless of obligations relating to neutrality law in order to guarantee the effectiveness and credibility of neutrality."[27] The overarching goal of a peacetime policy of neutrality is therefore to build up credibility so as to ensure that neutrality in war is possible by convincing other states of its own capacity and willingness to remain neutral in the event of future armed conflicts. This is best achieved by the adoption of a comprehensive approach that coordinates all the political instruments of the neutral state: foreign and security policy, diplomacy, trade, and economic policy.[28]

This concept of not being a member of a military alliance is also commonly attached to non-alignment or military non-alignment.[29] Historically, however, non-alignment unlike neutrality is not a legal concept but a political one that meant adopting a policy aimed at avoiding entanglement in the superpower conflicts of the Cold War.[30] This understanding was formalised by the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement at the 1961 Belgrade Conference, and it notably included India, Indonesia, Egypt, Ghana, and Yugoslavia, among many others.

A third strategic option for small states is opting to forego the "security benefits of strong alignment in return for increased policy autonomy" by adopting a hedging strategy.[31] Hedging is "a class of behaviors which signal ambiguity regarding great power alignment, therefore requiring the (small) state to make a trade-off between the fundamental (but conflicting) interests of autonomy and alignment."[32] Whereas neutrality and alignment imply an unequivocal identification of the threats, hedging best addresses situations when small states face risks that are multifaceted and uncertain. These situations arise when the identification of friends and foes is difficult and adopting an alliance strategy could thus mean losing independence—or worse,

inviting unwanted interference from the great powers. The alternative of adopting a non-aligned position in this situation would run the risk of putting the small state at a disadvantage if the great power gains pre-eminence in the future.

It follows that in these situations, small states are likely to pursue simultaneous strategies of "return-maximising and risk contingency."[33] This is best achieved by band wagoning with a regional power while simultaneously balancing the risk through a bilateral alliance with the hegemon or the superpowers in the international system or with the regional power's adversaries. The function of bilateral alliances is to hedge against regional hegemons so as to prevent them from dominating as well as to limit the domestic influence of regional allies.

One could say that Qatar during the Qatar crisis (2017-2021) used a hedging strategy by allying with Turkey against the UAE and Saudi Arabia while maintaining a good relationship with the United States. Hedging is therefore a strategy that seeks "to offset risks by pursuing multiple policy options that are intended to produce mutually counteracting effects, under the situation of high-uncertainties and high stakes."[34] The ultimate objective of hedging is to reconcile "conciliation and confrontation in order to remain reasonably well positioned regardless of future developments."[35]

Due to their deficit of power, small states cannot adopt offensive strategies that combine exerting influence while guaranteeing autonomy as their security doctrine. This configuration of power is what makes states great powers, as only they have the power to influence the structure of the international system while guaranteeing their own security.[36] Or as Morgenthau stated, "a great power is a state which is able to have its will against a small state [...] which in turn is not able to have its will against a great power."[37] Although small states can sometimes use offensive strategies if they are confronted with smaller states, the core of their

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson meets with the Emir of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, at the Sea Palace in Doha, Qatar, July 11, 2017. Photo by State Department photo/ Public Domain (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Secretary_Tillerson_Meets_With_the_Emir_of_Qatar_in_Doha_%2835723769291%29.jpg).

global security strategies is nonetheless modelled on alignment, defense, or hedging. These strategies are the only way to compensate for their power deficit vis-à-vis more powerful states.

This brief overview of small states' strategic options shows that neutrality is only one security posture for small states. Dulles' statement was vindicated in the last three decades because, unlike the Cold War, "smaller states may now choose to involve themselves on an a la carte basis in a wide range of security commitments with an emphasis upon their own security requirements and those in the immediate vicinity."[38] Nonetheless, some small states decided to retain neutrality as the core of their security policy. The next section will examine the case of Swiss neutrality.

Swiss Neutrality over Time

As the sum of all the actions taken by the state to maintain and promote the credibility and effectiveness of its status as a neutral in the international community, the Swiss neutrality policy has undergone many evolutions since its inception.[39] As a response to global geopolitical developments, Switzerland has updated its policy of neutrality, a core instrument of its foreign and security policy, to fit the evolution of the geopolitical context while best protecting its national interests.

Swiss neutrality is widely attributed as beginning with its *de facto* application after its defeat in 1515 at the battle of Marignano. In 1815, neutrality was officially established at the Congress of Vienna and recognized by the European powers.[40] This

Anti-war demonstrators and Ukrainians living in Geneva walking in protest against the war from Place de Neuve to Place des Nations. Geneva, Switzerland, March 5, 2022. Photo by Marcio Cimatti (https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/geneva-switzerland-march-5-2022-antiwar-2132532529).

enshrined the concept of permanent armed neutrality, meaning that "Switzerland remains neutral in any armed conflict between other states, whoever the warring parties are, whenever and wherever a war breaks out," as well as the fact that Switzerland's neutrality is based on its willingness to use force to protect its territorial integrity and neutral rights.[41]

The First and Second World Wars entrenched this concept, while also seeing Switzerland evolve into a place for belligerent states to continue diplomatic relations, a base for humanitarian operations, and a conduit for the continuation in trade of certain essential materials.[42] During the Cold War, Swiss neutrality was ensured by dissuasion—convincing potential invaders that the cost of invasion outweighed the benefits. This put autonomy, and the armed forces, at the center of Swiss neutrality. Operating under a strict interpretation of the concept, Switzerland's neutrality policy spelled out that the country would refrain from entering into any military alliance or agreement on collective security so as to never expose itself to the risk of being pulled into a conflict.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the imminence and proximity of the Cold War threats disappeared and gave way to local and regional conflicts. In addition, European security became increasingly institutionalised through the development of cooperative security architectures. This meant that Switzerland very quickly encountered a dilemma: to maintain its traditional security through armed neutrality and isolation, as had been the predominant practice in the preceding decades, or through increased cooperation in the emergent European security architecture.[43] The 1990s were therefore characterized by a series of readjustments of Swiss neutrality practices and doctrine. For example, Switzerland imposed economic sanctions for the first time in 1991 against Iraq—aligning itself with United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions on non-military sanctions—all the while denying coalition flights the right to fly over Swiss airspace. This led the Swiss government to publish a report on neutrality in 1993 which underlined that the "traditional concept of security through neutrality

and independence" was to be supplemented with "security through cooperation."[44] Swiss security policy would rely on two pillars: a national conception based on permanent neutrality through national defence and an international dimension based on solidarity through peace promotion.[45]

While permanent neutrality was maintained, the report stated that "neutrality needs to be interpreted in light of the requirements of international solidarity and should be used to serve the international community and world peace."[46] The new understanding of the application of neutrality was thus reduced in the sole case of interstate wars that occur outside Chapter VII of the UN Charter. This instigated a still-ongoing period of greater involvement in global affairs on the part of Switzerland, joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 1996. In 1998, Switzerland would partially align itself with EU sanctions on Yugoslavia.[47] Overflight and passage through Swiss territory would, however, have to wait the cessation of hostilities and the adoption of UN resolution 1244. Lacking a UN mandate, the operation of the U.S.-led coalition forces in Iraq in 2003 fell under the traditional application of neutrality, and the Swiss government banned all overflights except for humanitarian and medical purposes.[48]

The early 2000s cemented Switzerland's orientation toward greater involvement in global affairs, notably with its accession to the UN in 2002 and the articulation of "active neutrality."[49] This resulted from an understanding that national realities were increasingly determined by foreign developments, which required Switzerland to enhance its influence and engage in multilateral cooperation.[50] This is concomitant with an uptick in interoperability goals with NATO forces. Still constrained by political realities, these interoperability goals mainly concerned the less controversial air forces

due to political sensitivity regarding participation of ground forces.[51] In 2011, Switzerland set in motion an accession to the UN Security Council with a non-permanent seat for the 2023-2024 term. This prompted the Federal Council to release a report on the candidature in 2015 which in part assessed the compatibility of a UN Security Council seat with Swiss neutrality. The report concluded that not only had other neutral states such as Austria and Finland already served terms in the Security Council—thereby setting a historical precedent—but also that a seat on the Security Council would "open up special opportunities for Switzerland to contribute to peace and security worldwide on the basis of its independent foreign policy," with its neutrality even serving as an advantage.[52]

The report further adds that coercive measures taken by the Security Council would be in line with Swiss neutrality. As the Security Council members are not state parties to a conflict, but "guardians of the world order tasked with preserving and restoring peace," the principle of neutrality is not applicable to coercive measures adopted by the Security Council.[53] As the highest body through which to achieve collective security, Switzerland's ascension to the Security Council (confirmed as of 2022) represents the culmination of Switzerland's efforts to be an active partner in global governance and to shape the events around it.[54]

Considering Switzerland's different reactions in 2014 and 2022, the conflict in Ukraine offers an interesting case that underlines the dynamic nature of neutrality policy, affected by both domestic and international contexts. When Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, Switzerland did not align itself with EU and U.S. sanctions, but it did take steps to make sure sanctioned individuals and institutions could not use Switzerland to circumvent those sanctions.[55] At the time, Switzerland was chairing the OSCE and was therefore playing a central role in conflict management. Hence, the prevailing thought was that

strict neutrality should be observed, lest Switzerland negatively affect its position and credibility as mediator. Switzerland's requirement of remaining impartial as chair of the OSCE and the lower severity of the breach of international law—compared to 2022—coupled with Russia's relative openness to a diplomatic solution all contributed to the Swiss decision not to impose sanctions.[56]

The February 2022 invasion of Ukraine represents a fundamental shift in European security and constitutes a severe breach of international law. Indeed, a 2022 complementary report analyzing the consequences of the Ukraine war on Swiss security policy—building on observations made by a 2021 Federal Council Security Policy Report which noted that "the security situation has become more unstable, unclear and unpredictable worldwide and also in Europe"—concludes that war reinforces these security trends which have already been apparent for some time, and that these trends are now even more considerable and far-reaching across the globe due to the war in Ukraine.[57]

The reality is that not only geopolitics, but the entire dynamic of the security policy landscape of international politics, is affected. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is certainly only the beginning of a larger "Cold War 2.0," and could even be considered as an inflection point for the global order.[58] In Europe, the consequences of this invasion—notably Germany's decision to raise its defense budget by €100 billion and Sweden's and Finland's decisions to join NATO—are clear indications of paradigm changes towards replacing cooperative security through alliance and a move away from the peace dividend period.[59]

These alignments in Europe sparked a nationwide debate over the extent to which Switzerland should align itself with the condemnation of Russia and how far—if at all—it should go in support of Ukraine. The severity of Russia's actions against Ukraine, coupled with strong support of Ukraine from the Swiss population as well as predictable

international pressures, led the Swiss government to align with the EU's sanctions package.[60] Indeed, a survey shows that support for sanctions is high among the Swiss population, standing at 77 percent.[61]

In line with its domestic law regarding the export of war materiel, the Swiss government, however, refused to allow the transfer of war materiel manufactured in Switzerland to Ukraine from a third party. This inevitably revitalized discussions on Swiss security policy, and the way in which neutrality fits in this newly "degraded" European context.[62]

The reality that armed conflict in Europe is no longer something from the past, as well as the lessons learned regarding how to survive a potential invasion, are leading Switzerland to re-evaluate some core tenets of its security policy, with consequences for the discussion on neutrality. While support for neutrality was still very high at 89 percent in July 2022 and 91 percent in January 2023, it is nonetheless lower than in 2021, representing the first decline in 20 years, and thus shows that Swiss people have become more critical towards neutrality and more open towards international cooperation.[63] Unlike Sweden and Finland, who have applied for NATO membership, the Swiss government reaffirmed that "a membership of NATO, which would mean the end of neutrality, is not an option for Switzerland."[64] This is also supported by two thirds of the Swiss population, while at the same time a majority of Swiss—55 percent—are in favour of a rapprochement with NATO, for the first time.[65]

In a way, the complementary 2022 report shows that the war in Ukraine is revitalizing the concept of armed neutrality, highlighting the importance of the armed forces in maintaining Swiss sovereignty. The self-defence requirement directly stems from the law of neutrality. Yet, more important, the report acutely highlights the importance of international support and cooperation to repel an invasion. Indeed it finds that it is very likely that in case of armed aggression, Switzerland would have to rely on international

military cooperation, and this must be exercised and prepared in peacetime.[66] An increase in international defence and security cooperation is therefore becoming central to Swiss security policy.

In a sense, the Swiss approach to neutrality since the February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine can be subsumed as a continuation of armed neutrality while simultaneously preparing for a world in which territorial integrity could be violated, and once attacked, the legal obligations of neutrality become obsolete. This entails a need to ensure broader interoperability of forces with neighbours and likeminded nations as well as the existence of pre-existent, and stronger, channels of cooperation, notably with NATO and the EU. While interoperability with NATO forces has been on the agenda since the late 1990s, it was mainly limited to technical elements and mainly at the tactical level.[67] The 2022 report suggests broadening interoperability to more domains relevant to defence and security policy by—among other things—exploring the possibility of participating in NATO exercises pertaining to collective defence.[68]

Extending Switzerland's participation in NATO exercises was one of the topics discussed by Swiss Defense Minister Viola Amherd when she met NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, on 22 March 2023.[69] From a conceptual perspective, the main consequence of the war in Ukraine for Swiss security and defence policy has been a gradual move towards a hedging strategy combining both maintenance of sovereignty through armed neutrality while guaranteeing that military cooperation is possible if the country should be attacked and no longer be in a position to defend itself alone. Domestically, the contentious nature of this interpretation has led discussions around a revised conception of neutrality—"cooperative neutrality." However, the results of these discussions are so far inconclusive, and the Swiss Federal Council elected to maintain its view of neutrality policy outlined in 1993.

Internationally, some voices have argued that Switzerland's reaction to the Ukraine war represents the end of its neutrality.[70] With the sanctions on Russia, Switzerland would presumably have created a precedent and broken with long-standing traditions. Russia, for example, refused to accept Swiss proposals to act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine, with the Russian foreign ministry spokesperson—referring to Swiss adoption of EU sanctions against Russia—stating that "Switzerland has unfortunately lost its status of a neutral state."[71] Additionally, some have pointed to the seeming inconsistencies in Swiss neutrality policy, as exemplified by the decision to impose economic sanctions on Russia, but a refusal to accept the transfer of Swiss ammunitions to Ukraine from third parties (notably Germany).[72]

A careful review of the history of Swiss neutrality shows that Switzerland has not broken with its tradition and is acting in line with its neutrality policy outlined in 1993. In fact, as seen, the imposing of sanctions due to a severe breach of international law has a precedent. Swiss neutrality policy stipulates that when used against states breaking the peace or violating international law, economic sanctions "have the function of restoring order and thus serve the peace."[73] Such measures "are in accordance with the spirit of neutrality"[74] and in line with the law of neutrality, which does not regulate economic sanctions. As stated in a 1993 Swiss White Paper on neutrality, the Hague convention "does not require equal treatment and leaves the neutral state free to conduct its international economic relations as it sees fit."[75] As such, there is no express requirement to observe economic neutrality.[76] In fact, Switzerland has implemented 28 different sanctions packages since its first sanctions in 1990. As of the end of 2022, Switzerland had 24 ongoing sanctions packages, stemming from both UN Security Council resolutions and in line with EU sanctions packages.[77]

The direct transfer of weapons or ammunition, however, is a breach of the international law of

neutrality, and the export and re-export of weapons and ammunition produced in Switzerland to a country involved in an international armed conflict is prohibited by Swiss domestic law under the Swiss War Material Act (art. 22a, al 2, let. a).[78] Hence, Switzerland has in fact broken neither legal nor self-imposed rules of neutrality with its actions regarding the February 2022 invasion. Furthermore, as seen, neutrality in Switzerland has never been, and will never be, an absence of values or opinion. Switzerland's choice was based on its assessment of the severity of Russia's violation of international law and what this meant not only for the international community, but for Swiss security as well. [79] However, the decisions of the Swiss government to refuse the requests of Germany, Spain, and Denmark to re-export weapons and ammunitions towards Ukraine have led to intense international pressure on Switzerland, as well as heated domestic debates in the Swiss Parliament.[80] Yet, the latter has so far refused to change the current legislation[81] even though a recent survey showed that a small majority (55 percent) of the Swiss population would be in favor.[82] To understand this, one has to look at the domestic function that neutrality plays in a country.

Neutrality and its Cultural Identity Function

The war in Ukraine has opened several conversations about the relevance of Switzerland's neutrality. Aside from the commentaries regarding the supposed novelty of Switzerland's 2022 sanctions on Russia, some have questioned the relevance of Switzerland's neutrality considering Sweden's and Finland's paths towards NATO membership. Phrases such as "the end of neutrality" are circulating around Europe and experts are juxtaposing Sweden's and Finland's decisions to abandon neutrality with Switzerland's maintenance of neutrality.[83] Such a direct comparison is of little value, as neutrality cannot be understood only as a security policy instrument.

To understand the transformation of the practice of neutrality, one needs to understand not only the geopolitical context of each neutral state, but also its national cultural identity.[84] Each country has its own strategic culture and perceives threats through theses lenses differently depending on its own unique vicinity to, relationship with, and ability to address each of these threats as well as its historical and cultural context. Thus, Sweden, Finland, and Switzerland, as well as other neutral countries, all perceive and react differently to the war in Ukraine and the changing world order partly because of their historical legacy. Some, for instance, argue that Sweden and Finland in fact gave up on neutrality a long time ago, with the discussions starting between Swedish political parties as long as 20 years ago.[85] Part of Sweden's and Finland's decision also has to do with the relationship between the two nations and their proximity to each other, not just their proximity to Russia.

When Finland submitted a report to parliament on "fundamental changes" in the foreign and security policy environment following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the authors weighed the strength of their move to join NATO if it was combined with that of Sweden and found additional benefits from its move to join NATO: "Should Finland and Sweden become NATO members, the threshold for using military force in the Baltic Sea region would rise, which would enhance the stability of the region in the long term."[86] Vice versa, Finnish strategy was significant for Sweden in its decision to join NATO, with experts crediting the interwoven political and military relationship between the two as a motivation that weighed heavily on Swedish policymakers and experts. "To be outside the alliance in the event of a Finnish membership would […] be completely untenable for political, geostrategic, and purely military reasons."[87]

For Switzerland, the role of neutrality as an identity provider as demonstrated by its constant very high approval among the Swiss population is key to understanding Swiss neutrality policy. Swiss

Iran nuclear deal: agreement in Vienna. "Neutral states can offer a contact, space, and even grounds for negotiation whenever the time for talks does come around." July 14, 2015. Photo by Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äusseres (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iran_Talks_14_July_2015_%2819680862152%29.jpg).

political identity implies being neutral.[88] It therefore follows that changes to neutrality policy are not only a function of changes in Switzerland's external international environment, but also of cultural and identity variables, which sometimes may constrain the course of action available to Switzerland to advance its foreign and security policy, even amidst widespread governmental and institutional support. For example, in 1994, the Swiss voters rejected a government initiative to supply peacekeeping forces for United Nations operations around the world because of concerns over the permanent maintenance of Swiss neutrality.[89] This law had broad government and parliamentary support and would have increased the flexibility of Swiss security policy.[90] However, the Swiss population's traditional interpretations of neutrality policy, as well as doubts about the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping operations trumped the government's security policy plans.[91]

Conclusions and Lessons for Ukraine

The war in Ukraine has opened a global conversation around neutrality on multiple levels concerning both existing neutral countries such as Switzerland and as a tool for small states in conflict resolution. Neutrality is a dynamic concept among small states' strategic options. It is a tool of foreign and security

policy which leaves the neutral state with a lot of room for maneuver to conduct its neutrality policy and ensure its security, while respecting the law of neutrality and therefore bolstering the international credibility of its neutral status.

Neutral states are very well positioned to offer an alternative route for solutions, especially when bloc formations begin to loom and two sides seem to split—the so called "good offices." Neutral states can offer a contact, space, and even grounds for negotiation whenever the time for talks does come around.[92] Switzerland is uniquely positioned to strongly advocate for respect of international law as well as international principles and commitments while keeping channels for exchange between non-like-minded actors open.[93] This is particularly important as we see the escalation of tensions between Russia and Ukraine spiral into potential use of nuclear weapons—with each further escalation the demand for risk-reducing measures grows, and this is an area where Switzerland can be particularly strong in a way many other nations in Europe cannot.[94]

The case of Switzerland exemplifies the ability to dynamically adapt a country's perception of how it understands, projects, and continues to maintain its neutrality in shifting geostrategic environments. With the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, arguably one

of the largest geopolitical tremors since the end of the Cold War, Switzerland continues to apply its neutrality in a way which maximizes its security, defends its interests and sovereignty, supports international law, and promotes peace. This will remain true for the future, as ultimately, neutrality as a tool of security policy is and always remains a conversation between the Swiss government and its population, cutting deep to the core of Swiss identity. As shown by the broad support for both sanctions (75 percent) and neutrality (91 percent), while Switzerland adjusts its security policy with more hedging elements, the Swiss population is not prepared to touch the legal core of neutrality.[95]

The war in Ukraine has also revived the conversation around Ukrainian neutrality as a possible way forward in peace negotiations and exit strategy for Moscow and Kyiv. This article has shown that neutrality is a way for small states to navigate contested geostrategic environments but also notes that a single model of neutrality does not exist and cannot be imported. Ukrainian neutrality would have to be uniquely customized to suit Ukrainian cultural and political contexts, as well as its grand strategy, while simultaneously balancing the specific security concerns of both sides. This means that a model of neutrality for Ukraine would need to be negotiated from scratch to fit Ukrainian security requirements as well as its national identity and grand strategy.

Some have argued that such a new, uniquely fitted model of neutrality could even help Ukraine establish a new, non-partisan national identity as it becomes no longer "East or West," but a neutral European country which can begin to strategically and culturally reposition itself.[96] This will prove to be very difficult, as both Russia and Ukraine have laid out hard, and opposing, proposals with non-negotiables on both sides that need to be navigated if neutrality is to be an option. If neutrality is to even be considered as an exit strategy, a solution is needed which takes into account and compromises between these proposals and which

treads the line between indivisibility of security and a freedom of security posture.

An option often seen appropriate to address these concerns is the Austrian model. Austria utilized a constitutional commitment to neutrality and a non-aligned foreign policy in order to slowly regain its sovereign status after World War II. Ukraine would have to engage in such a non-alignment neutrality policy by "self-limiting" and agreeing not to join NATO. At the beginning of the war, this seemed like a particularly likely route, especially when President Zelensky announced in March 2022 that he had come to accept that NATO membership for Ukraine is unlikely, even if Ukraine were to maintain its right to apply firmly engrained in its constitution as it currently is.[97] It is also clear from the Kyiv Security Compact that Ukraine wanted a harder approach to the protection it was previously granted. It deemed the Budapest Memorandum "worthless" and lacking sufficient legally and politically binding measures to deter Russian aggressions and declared that a repetition of Russian attacks like 2014 and 2022 could occur again if Ukraine is not provided with effective security guarantees.[98] This priority is further strengthened by the fact that Ukraine had previously adopted a non-aligned status which served little to its benefit. For neutrality to be considered a worthwhile security policy option by both the Ukrainian government and population, this conundrum would have to be solved as a priority and is very likely to face opposition from Moscow.

There is an argument to be made that this is where Ukraine's model of neutrality must diverge from the pre-existing ones in Austria, Switzerland, or elsewhere.[99] Experts have argued that the reason Austria did not receive security guarantees is because it did not need them: "Austria does not need security guarantees because there is no big threat to Austria. […] Therefore, membership in a collective defense system is not necessary."[100] The Russian aggression

against Ukraine and Moscow's unilateral and unlawful annexation of four Ukrainian provinces, followed by President's Zelensky's announcement of Ukraine's plans to officially apply to NATO, has significantly complicated the situation. [101]

Whatever the model, or the way in which it manifests itself, neutrality remains a relevant security policy instrument in today's geopolitical and geostrategic environment. However, as the Swiss model shows, for neutrality to work, it cannot be a quick fix. Neutrality must be seen as an acceptable solution for all the belligerents and great powers to serve a useful security function in the international system (for instance, good offices or negotiation space), while its operationalization is perceived as powerful enough to deter potential aggressions, and domestically supported by the majority of the neutral state's population. PRISM

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Eiffel Tower with Holy Trinity Cathedral: Russian Orthodox Church in the foreground. Paris, France, March 12, 2018. Photo by Caleda (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paris_orthodoxe.jpg).

NATO and Cultural Property
A Hybrid Threat Perspective

By Frederik Rosén

Recent armed conflicts, from the Balkans to Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali, Libya, Deash in Syria and Iraq, Yemen, and Nagorno-Karabakh, evidence how objects, places, and areas of significant cultural or religious value, so-called "cultural property" (CP), play an increasing role in conflicts.[1] Terrorists exploit the social power of cultural sites, from the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001 to recent attacks on places such as the Bataclan theater in Paris (2015), the Ariana Grande concert in Manchester (2017), and Christchurch in New Zealand (2019). Yet Russia presents us with the most daunting challenge in this matter.

Russia consistently integrates CP as part of cultural domain issues in national security strategies, foreign policy, and military practice. From the beginning of the illegal occupation of Crimea in 2014, Russia misappropriated and manipulated cultural heritage to establish cultural domination. Neither Ukraine nor allied nations had been prepared for the way Russia instantly started to exploit the cultural domain. While escalating its belligerence towards Ukraine, in 2016 Russia inaugurated a huge new-built Russian orthodox church in the middle of Paris at the Seine River close to the Eiffel Tower. Only a naïve person can consider this an innocent investment in church community. And since the 2022 invasion, Russia continues to destroy and loot Ukrainian cultural and religious places. In late October 2022, Russian forces looted the entire collection at the Kherson Fine Arts Museum. The overarching attitude framing these activities is an intense information warfare campaign[2] to rewrite history that ultimately boils down to claims about territories and the legitimization of mass atrocities and destruction as we see in Ukraine.

To be sure, it is difficult to speak about cultural groups and societies without speaking about what they regard as their cultural heritage as a territorial anchorage. Seeing the geopolitical link[3] between identity, society, territory, and cultural heritage makes it clear that cultural heritage easily becomes politicized and drawn into conflicts as markers of friend and enemy and territorial belonging and ownership.

While Russia, and before that the USSR, always viewed culture and CP as an issue of international security, Euro-Atlantic countries just recently started to recognise this nexus. Slowly, we are shifting our military

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focus on CP from the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) obligations of protection and preservation to consider the strategic and tactical value of CP during campaigns and operations against asymmetric armed groups and great military powers alike.

We have started to understand better how CP matters increasingly to international security and military operations.[4] As analyzed by a growing body of academic scholarship, belligerents use CP to display power, to draw up contours of security communities, and to mobilize action. They use deliberate destruction, misappropriation, and manipulation of CP to hurt opponents and undermine their cultural roots and societal resilience. They attack it to fuel rage and antagonism or protect it to showcase fidelity. And information warfare, at least in the case of Russia, targets the meaning of cultural property as anchors of historical narratives and territorial claims. Destruction and misappropriation of CP also forms a central part of genocidal politics and ethnic cleansing.

The security challenges related to cultural property in connection with armed conflicts have thus moved way beyond legal protection. Rather, CP has become a societal vulnerability that lends itself to irregular attacks and disinformation campaigns, and its destruction or misappropriation may trigger destabilization and eruptions of violence: it has become a frontier.

Accordingly, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has broadened its view on CP from LOAC to view it as an essential component of the broader security environment. The NATO Secretary General's 2019 Annual Report highlights that, "The protection of CP and common heritage has been a core NATO value since its foundation in 1949. As an essential aspect of the security environment, CP and its protection can constitute a crucial element in strategic, operational, and tactical considerations."[5] Similarly, the NATO Operational Policy Committee states that "NATO recognizes Cultural Property

Protection (CPP) as an essential consideration in the military environment and a critical indicator of community security, cohesion, and identity."[6]

To help develop the military perspective on CP, this article examines a particular aspect of NATO's outlook, namely NATO's linking of CPP with NATO's agenda on countering hybrid threats. It identifies how the misappropriation, manipulation, and destruction of CP can be understood as a hybrid threat[7] component in the cognitive domain to create political, strategic, or tactical effects in support of policy objectives. Furthermore, it aims to elaborate how a security-framed understanding of CP's importance can inform NATO's development of comprehensive, preventive, and response measures against hybrid threats, as well as help us understand the wider connection between CP and conflict.

To this aim, the article first outlines the NATO framework on CP. It then clarifies the concept of CP and its developing role in conflicts, recently described as the "heritage-security nexus," before turning to NATO's concept of "hybrid threats," and places CP in that context to advance a concept of CP as a hybrid threat issue.

The Evolving NATO Framework for Cultural Property

NATO's approach to CP—places, objects, and areas of significant cultural value—has been guided primarily by LOAC and issues related to legal protection and the avoidance of combat-related damage to CP. Until 2015, the only unit in NATO that focused on CPP was NATO's Environment Protection Working Group (EPWG). The EPWG functions under the Military Committee Joint Standardization Board, which reports to the Military Committee. This relatively small and powerless working group serves to further cooperation and standardization on environmental protection among NATO, partner countries, and international organizations. The EPWG's mandate was limited to

The tragic aftermath of violence and aggression, as a church stands in ruins from the horrors of war in Bogorodichne, Donetsk region. Photo by "Drop of Light" (https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/scars-war-tragic-aftermath-violence-aggression-2270219641).

monitoring any CPP developments in NATO without authorization to take any active steps.

From 2015 and onward, propelled by a NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Project on CPP,[8] NATO's attention to CPP started to move beyond LOAC. Building on lessons identified from NATO and non-NATO military operations, the focus on CPP shifted from environmental protection to viewing CPP as a separate cross-cutting issue placed along with other protection issues within the NATO Human Security Framework, and then towards a broader operational issue. Both of NATO's Strategic Commands, Supreme Allied Command Transformation (HQ SACT) and Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE), as well as NATO Headquarters, started to show an increasing interest in the topic.

NATO's recasting of CP as an element of the security environment and a challenge to be tackled at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of operational planning and execution is now reflected at the strategic command level, as enshrined in the NATO Bi-Strategic Command Directive, "Implementing CP Protection in NATO Operations and Missions," adopted in 2019.[9] The directive covers LOAC and financing of terrorism, as well as strategic issues related to navigation operations in geographical areas with culturally important places, including strategic communication.

In NATO Headquarters, allied nations attached the topic of CPP to the Human Security Unit, which is placed in the Office of the NATO Secretary General together with other protection issues (Gender, Children and Armed Conflict, Protection of Civilians, Human Trafficking). Hence, NATO does view CPP as integral to the Protection of Civilians (POC) agenda.[10] Yet, at the same time, NATO's rationalities for considering CP differ from

the humanitarian concerns about physical harm and suffering to humans underlying the other four topics of NATO's Human Security Framework, which are the protection of civilians, preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence, combating trafficking in human beings, and children and armed conflict.[11] Rather, the rationales underpinning NATO's approach to CPP concern *inter alia* LOAC, conflict escalation, troop protection, post-conflict stabilization, reconciliation, and resilience, as well as hybrid threats. On top of these come issues related to conflict economics including the financing of terrorism and armed groups. A policy is clearly needed to clarify and frame the topic.

CP: A Tool of Hybrid Warfare

Among the key rationales for establishing roles and responsibilities related to CPP across operational phases and functions, the 2019 NATO Bi-Strategic Command Directive on CPP mentions that "CP can be used as a tool of hybrid warfare. Attacks on CP may impact societal resilience and indicate an attempt to undermine national unity or identity. They may also impact the Alliance's cohesion. This reinforces the need for CP to be an integral part of NATO's continuous strategic awareness."

The directive also states that, "[p]owerful images of CP destruction, such as the destruction of World Heritage sites, have become tools of Information Warfare. Therefore, failure to protect CP may have tactical and strategic consequences" and that the "[d]estruction of CP may hamper reconciliation and healing of societies after conflict." The directive here echoes United Nations Security Resolution 2347 (2017), which stated that, "The unlawful destruction of cultural heritage (…) can

This image was taken in April 2017 during a UNESCO mission to Nineveh, Iraq, which was heavily destroyed and excavated by ISIS. Destruction of cultural heritage and archaeological looting is a global issue that threatens the preservation of our shared cultural heritage. Nineveh, Iraq, April 3, 2017. Photo by UNESCO (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:UNESCO_mission_to_Nineveh,_Iraq,_April_2017.jpg).

fuel and exacerbate conflict and hamper post-conflict national reconciliation, thereby undermining the security, stability, governance, social, economic and cultural development of affected States."

The Secretary General's 2019 Annual Report and the Bi-Strategic Command Directive indicate how NATO's attention to CP has moved beyond LOAC to embrace a wider set of tactical and strategic implications relevant for NATO operations. The development echoes the general turn in the international community and conflict analysis towards casting CP as an issue of international security.[12] It also echoes how the CP-related challenges NATO and its member states have encountered are not primarily about LOAC and protection.[13] The challenges to NATO rather lie with the various political implications related to CP in operational areas. The social power of CP has proved to be prone to exploitation by adversaries for the purpose of fueling antagonisms and spurring unrest, destabilization, and violence.[14]

One example is NATO's mission in Kosovo—KFOR—where destabilizing political issues related to CP remain one of the top three reasons for NATO to sustain the mission. NATO also tackled CP-related issues during Operation Unified Protector in Libya in 2011.[15] The Coalition Against Daesh benefitted from U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) CP database creation and CP decision-making support for targeting in Syria and Iraq,[16] and Daesh exploited CP for propaganda, recruitment campaigns, and financing. CP destruction became an iconic emblem of Daesh as the Taliban "trademarked" themselves by destroying the Bamiyan Buddhas in 2001.

And in recent decades, Iraq and Afghanistan have seen waves of suicide attacks on predominantly Shia mosques. Iraq offered plenty of examples of the challenges of navigating patrimonial places during urban fighting. Conflicts where CP formed parts of a territorial dispute include Ukraine, Yemen, Nagorno-Karabakh, Myanmar,

Cyprus, not to mention Israel-Palestine. However, CP forms part of the reality of violent conflicts all over the world, with Southeast Asia counting for the greatest prevalence of conflict-related attacks against CP.[17] It is a global challenge.

We have also seen how damage to CP can cause negative press and undermine the legitimacy of a mission. This was the case with the looting of the Museum in Baghdad after the U.S. invasion when U.S. troops drew considerable international attention and criticism for not safeguarding the museum, a stain which has still not been forgotten. Jihadi and other extremist religious groups also increasingly target CP, including places of worship (shrines, synagogues, mosques, churches) and places of significant symbolic value.

The Concept of CP

While NATO's strategic commands decided to link CP and hybrid warfare in a Command Directive, they failed to describe in which ways CP may be exploited for hybrid warfare purposes, or how it fits into NATO's evolving approach on countering hybrid threats. The first step towards a concept development on this matter is to demarcate the concept of CP and outline the developing role of such places and objects in contemporary security.

LOAC

LOAC provides a cornerstone for NATO's self-understanding and operations as all member states (apart from one) have ratified the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Its concept of CP is thus well established in NATO. The Hague Convention offers a wide definition of what kinds of objects and places can be considered "CP." These include historical buildings and other monuments of historic, artistic, or architectural significance, objects and places of scientific value, places of worship, movable objects from paintings to antiquities,

manuscripts libraries, art collections, archives, and even digital collections.[18] It also covers underwater cultural objects and thus applies to naval operations.

Furthermore, Additional Protocols I and II to the Geneva Conventions expanded the common interpretation of "places of worship" from religious buildings representing a cultural value to places that "constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples," thus including places of worship (shrines, synagogues, churches, mosques, etc.) by their contemporary use and reverence value. Hence, when we speak of "CP" in a military context we speak about the broader area of objects and places of significant cultural or religious value.

Before the adoption of the 1954 Hague Convention, the world had neither a legal category nor a political concept that grouped diverse places and objects of cultural interest within the same legal category. Compared to the killing of soldiers and civilians during armed conflicts—another key LOAC topic—the historical debates and norm developments related to CP and warfare appear very limited. Hence, the international legal definition of CP is what lawyers call progressive lawmaking. It is lawmaking that to some extent "creates" its norms and subject matter rather than codifying already existing norms. It is worth mentioning here that today the terms "cultural heritage" and/or "CP" are often used inter-changeably[19] in common language as well as in international law. [20]

"CPP"

In that regard it may be noticed that the concept of "CP Protection" (CPP), which is used in NATO along with other cross-cutting protection issues (i.e., protection of civilians (POC), children and armed conflict (CAAC), human trafficking), is not a legal term. The expression is no more than a descriptive label for a range of practices geared towards respecting and safeguarding CP in the event of armed conflict. Many of these practices are obligatory as

a matter of international law. Others may not be. Some of the practices may aim at protection. Others may aim at strategic and tactical issues, which may also include hybrid threat considerations.

From a commander's perspective, LOAC's wide definition of CP sometimes creates confusion about how to build an operational approach around the legal concept of "CP," because exactly what should be the scope of it, and what is the value threshold for triggering legal protection? The Hague and Geneva Conventions' broad legal definitions of places and objects that may be considered CP offers a wide prism for the purpose of identifying and discussing CP as a hybrid threats issue. It may also be helpful to look beyond LOAC definitions of CP—for instance, to UNESCO's concept of Cultural Landscape, which emphasises landscapes that are believed to hold important religious or cultural values.[21] The cases of Kosovo and Ukraine may partly be understood through that lens, not to mention the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

From a hybrid threats perspective, however, it does not matter whether an object or place is protected or not by LOAC. What matters is the perceived cultural value and the potential emotional reaction in a certain historical context, and how this cognitive dimension may be exploited as an effect-creating part of a hybrid strategy, and as a tool of mobilization, coercion, domination, and destabilization. LOAC must be viewed merely as one element in an array of norms and values that distinguishes and ascribes strategic and tactical meaning to CP.

Recasting the Notion of CP

To understand the socio-political power of CP and its role in conflicts, including those of a hybrid nature, we need to zoom in on societal values and collective sentiments and emotions, the constitution of *significant cultural value*, which constitutes CP in the first place. CP *becomes valued* as CP due to collective sentiments, attitudes, and the perceived value

Archeological remains of the Bamiyan valley; view inside an empty niche where a Buddha statue was destroyed by the Taliban. Bamiyan, Afghanistan. UNESCO World Heritage site, Photo by Pvince73 (https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/afghanistan-bamiyan-bamian-bamyan-cultural-landscape-2208864837).

of the object or place in question. What matters is the underlying symbolic or "sacred" dimension of such objects and places, the value that objects and places hold to major entities, including to their notions of nationalism, ethnicity, and religion.

These places and objects may function as referents that articulate a sense of belonging to a distinctive group, cause, or territory. They are often material anchors of culture, identity, and notions of belonging to a community and ownership of territories, with an ability to mobilize strong sentiments, politics, and action. People's care for CP can be inflamed to such an extent that they are willing to sacrifice privileges—or even in its most intense form, their lives—to preserve and protect it—or to conquer it.

Historical and contemporary examples of how destruction, desecration, appropriation,

vandalization, and misappropriation of *places and objects of significant cultural value* have fueled conflicts, been used to mobilize support for wars, and been exploited for the purpose of domination and destabilization should be researched and understood: the aim is never to destroy the enemy's military force or critical infrastructure, nor is the purpose to physically conquer territory or secure passageways. The aim is always to engage with feelings and affective dispositions of populations to steer the situation against a desired long or short-term end-state.

Therefore, from a hybrid threats perspective, "CP" becomes relevant as a cognitive domain issue with a propensity to spark strong emotional reactions. Regardless of its legal status, if destroyed, appropriated, vandalized, desecrated, or

9,494 objects of invaluable cultural value were stolen in March 2015 from the Idlib Museum in Syria. At the request of the INTERPOL Bureau in Damascus, a poster featuring six of the stolen objects has been issued to raise awareness of the theft and to facilitate their recovery. Image by INTERPOL (https://www.facebook.com/AssociationforResearchintoCrimesAgainstArt/photos/a.10150345543074554/10157845131094554/?type=3).

misappropriated, it may even incite violence. This propensity constitutes a societal vulnerability that adversaries may exploit, and therefore it has tactical and strategic implications.

The Heritage-Security Nexus

The rise of CP as a hybrid threat issue comes with a history. In 2006, Samuel P. Huntington envisaged, "In the coming decades, questions of identity, meaning, cultural heritage, language, and religion will play a central role in politics," alluding to the shift in association and antagonism among the countries he analysed in his 1992 book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.*[22]

Looking at current world politics and the role of CP in war and conflict, we can see how Huntington's prediction materializes: Belligerents and competing powers, states and non-state actors alike, today increasingly exploit the social power of CP to show moral superiority, induce fear,

provoke, destabilize communities and nations, escalate tensions and conflicts, and restructure the cultural dimension of geopolitical orders.[23] This has been noted by NATO, UNESCO, the EU, the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and academic scholars.

A range of mutually reinforcing developments shapes this agenda. These include, but are not limited to, the rise of identity politics as conflict drivers; the transnationalization and globalization of conflicts, and the ensuing turn to cultural belonging and group identity rather than nation-state borders to demarcate security communities; the extensive growth and spread of new norms and laws related to cultural heritage in armed conflict as well as more generally;[24] the urbanization of warfare and the rise of asymmetric and hybrid forms of warfare; developments in global social media; and the rapidly evolving transnational market for illicit antiquities, enabling armed groups to more easily profit from looting and trafficking antiquities.

While not entirely new in kind, violence against CP today implicates a new and "modern" power base and involves new legal, political, and moral complexities for populations, states, international organizations—and militaries. Scholars have coined the term the "heritage-security nexus" to refer to this new framing of CP (cultural heritage) as a broader security issue.[25] The concept of the heritage-security nexus joins the recent family of "nexus"-concepts (the "development-security nexus," the "climate-security nexus," the "migration-security nexus," etc.) coined to describe cross-sectoral challenges and cooperation to understand and address complex problems. For instance, international legal instruments that were previously dedicated just to protecting CP against looting and illicit cross-border trade have today become instruments in curbing the financing of terrorism, and thus the protection of society.

At the heart of the concept of the "heritage-security nexus" lies the observation that if CP can be viewed as a stabilizing factor for groups and populations by functioning as references for shared cultural dispositions and preferences, it may, congruently, be exploited for the purpose of societal destabilization, conflict escalation, and domination, including towards minorities, as a security or even a defense issue. Even if NATO employs a distinction between hard-core deterrence and crisis management and security governance to separate operational aims, "the continuum between security and defence is well understood. As a matter of fact, such a continuum has characterised NATO's evolution over the last 30 years, as illustrated by its operations in the Western Balkans and Afghanistan."[26]

NATO and Hybrid Threats

The Strategy on NATO's Role in Countering Hybrid Warfare, agreed to by Allies in 2015, offers a perspective on how state as well as non-state actors may exploit vulnerabilities, differences, and/or any other perceived grievances to incite coercion, domination, and destabilization.[27]

The globalization of the geostrategic environment and advancement of technologies created many opportunities and also vulnerabilities in our societies and structures. Our understanding of a hybrid threat is blurred, and our defenses are incomparably weaker than against conventional weapons. As far back as 1999, Chinese military strategists concluded that "anything that can benefit mankind, can also harm it. This is to say that there is nothing in the world today that cannot become a weapon,"[28]—and we can add CP.

The concept of hybrid warfare remains contested, and recent commentators describe it "[as] at best simply a neologism for tactical innovation." It can be argued that, from a history of warfare perspective, there is nothing new under the sun when it comes to asymmetry and creative approaches to undermining the enemy. Historically viewed, the range of means and tricks opponents have used to undermine each other is very wide.

Hybrid methods of warfare follow the same model as any other form of war: Our adversaries have clearly set goals and end-states, they have dedicated and designed weapons to fight, and they have carefully chosen battlefields to maximise the effectiveness of their campaigns and their weapons. Admittedly, the goals are less about territorial gains than about the coercion, control, and disruption of societal order at all levels. In this war, the adversaries' main goal is to influence the will and manipulate strategic choices of our citizens and decisionmakers to shape perceptions, alter consciousness, and challenge strategic calculus.

However, it is also true that states, analysts, and commentators alike have tended to focus mostly on brute force when it comes to military affairs, something that has shaped state attitudes as well as the outlook and capabilities of military organizations. The 'aha' experience with hearts and minds issues

and the role of culture on the battlefield coming out of Afghanistan reveals an amnesia towards these "regular irregular" cultural dimensions of armed conflicts.

From NATO's perspective, adversaries aim to undermine the mutual confidence of the NATO countries and dissolve it from within by attacking all the vital and weak points of the Alliance. While this aim has historically remained the same, available tools for attack in the 21st century have changed. They are far more dangerous, in part because we as societies and organizations have changed too. The speed, interconnectedness, and unruliness of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT), including social media, is one major shift.

For this very reason, within the NATO HQ the responsibility for understanding, identifying, and responding to hybrid threats is shared among a number of civilian and military divisions such as Joint Intelligence, Operations, and Emerging Security Challenges. Complex and multi-dimensional challenges require multi-dimensional solutions.

NATO's 2018 definition of hybrid threat is a "type of threat that combines conventional, irregular and asymmetric activities in time and space."[29] The focus of the hybrid threat perspective lies predominantly on the asymmetrical and irregular tactics that "can be overt or covert, involving military, paramilitary, organized criminal networks, and civilian actors across all elements of power."[30] It may include a range of non-military tactics for destabilizing adversaries from within, ranging from propaganda, deception, and sabotage, to trolling, targeted disinformation, cyber-attacks, and covert use of military force. It is most commonly applied in a "grey area" of conflict, just below the threshold of armed conflict.

In addition to speed, synchronization, ambiguity, and coercion stand as key features of hybrid threats as several methods of destabilization may be employed simultaneously, in a more or less synchronized manner. NATO's approach to countering hybrid threats is continuously broadening to include new types of hybrid threats and developing new responses to counter them.

The cognitive domain stands central to NATO's emerging approach to counter hybrid threats and is by some considered a key hybrid threats domain.[31] As stated by a recent study from NATO Supreme Allied Command Operations' Innovation Hub, "[b]ecause the factors that affect the cognitive domain can be involved in all aspects of human society through the areas of will, concept, psychology and thinking among others, so that particular kind of warfare penetrates into all fields of society. It can be foreseen that the future information warfare will start from the cognitive domain first, to seize the political and diplomatic strategic initiative, but it will also end in the cognitive realm."[32] NATO's 2020 High-Level Reflection Group also proposed among its key recommendations that "NATO and Allies must develop more capabilities for operating in the cognitive and virtual dimensions, including at the tactical level."[33]

CP as a Hybrid Threat Challenge

Hostile activities towards CP including disinformation campaigns always occur in tandem with other means of aggression. The question is how and to what extent the range of objects and sites broadly identified as "CP" may be exploited as a tool of coercion, domination, and destabilization within the range of conventional and nonconventional means that NATO addresses through the lens of hybrid threats. What are the various roles CP can play in hybrid threat scenarios, and how do they fit into NATO's approach to countering hybrid threats? What does the developing role of CP in conflicts look like from the hybrid threats lens?

Conceptual frameworks for increasing resilience against hybrid threats focus mostly on critical infrastructure, such as energy security and supply, space infrastructure, maritime security, public health, transport (aviation, maritime, rail), cyber

Huge fire scars beloved Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France, April 15, 2019. Photo by Godefroy Paris (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Notre-Dame_en_feu,_20h06.jpg).

security, communications, and financial systems. But "softer" vulnerabilities such as legitimacy, core values and liberties, societal cohesion, and minorities' rights have not yet been recognized and adequately protected against hybrid activities.

While not related to any conflict, the 2019 accidental fire that destroyed the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris offers an example to start from. Many immediate reactions suspected that the fire was an arson attack by jihadists. The overwhelming global reaction to the fire, the intense broadcasting by

regular media and social media fueling strong emotional response—including the instantly pledged almost $1 billion from private donations for reconstruction—indicates the socio-political power of CP. From a hybrid threats perspective, the question is what kind of response the Notre-Dame fire might have warranted if an armed group or even a foreign power stood behind it; perhaps as part of a broader subtle campaign including funding for right-wing organizations, cyber-attacks, terrorist attacks, and information campaigns.

What if the fire had been an arson attack by a group with links to a major paramilitary power and accompanied by synchronized hostile activities across Europe, including cyber-attacks, fake news campaigns, violation of airspace, and desecration of monuments and places of worship? If that had been the case the images of the Notre Dame ruin would no doubt have sparked even stronger emotional responses and become icons of a conflict escalation. It would have generated uncertainty and a feeling of insecurity in France as well as in Europe and beyond, and it would have triggered security responses at the highest level. It is not unthinkable that the event by itself or in combination with other hostile actions could have led to military responses and involved NATO.

Places of significant cultural value present us with a societal vulnerability. They are often easily accessible and easily destroyable places of great symbolic, spiritual, and political value. Yet, to constitute a vulnerability in the context of hybrid warfare, CP does not need to be as prominent as Notre Dame. What counts is that the effect of threatening, misappropriating, destroying, or attacking an object or place has an observable weight on security and stability. In other words, the effect must be of such an intensity that it reverberates with other conventional and nonconventional means.

A Cognitive Domain Issue

The impact that hostile misappropriation, manipulation, destruction, or attacks against CP may have on people is another valuable hybrid tool in the cognitive domain. Attacks on and manipulation of CP and its use for propaganda, mobilization purposes, or undermining political cohesion by amplifying divisions exploit the symbolic and emotional quality of CP as a shortcut for the mass consciousness and collective sentiments.

Furthermore, CP also typically provides the physical infrastructure for the organization of everyday cultural and spiritual life and the mindsets of groups and nations. A terrorist attack on, say, a church may thus all at once disrupt critical parts of local life, spark the outbreak of further violence, trigger global reactions, and be used to muster funds and terrorist recruits. The propaganda and mobilizing power of circulating iconic images of destroyed places of significant cultural importance on social media should not be underestimated. The effects of targeting CP as a cognitive domain element tend to reverberate across local, national, and global cognitive spheres.

Global news cycles and social media play a critical role by mainstreaming and dispersing images of destruction of CP with the potential of triggering strong emotions and reactions among people even living far from a conflict zone. Images of destruction travel easily on social media compared to those of human atrocities, which get filtered out. Similarly, combat related collateral damage to CP, no matter how unintentional, may entail considerable and complex strategic and tactical implications compared to collateral damage to places or objects without emotional timbre.

In that way we may say that CP spans the three hybrid threat domains: 1) the physical domain, as movable and immovable CP are physical places, things, objects, constructions; 2) the digital domain, as social media constitutes a main platform for spreading information from images of CP destructions to disinformation about historical ownership and meaning; and 3) the cognitive domain, that can be said to constitute the "main target area."

The overall effect of the impact of hostile misappropriation, manipulation, destruction, or attacks on CP will depend not only on its generally perceived value but also, and perhaps more important, on the political context. In an already tense situation, destruction or desecration of even less (emotionally) significant objects and places may polarize, destabilize, demoralize, fuel minority discontent, spark

conflict escalation, spread confusion (about who did it), and mobilize support among followers.

The effects of manipulation and destruction of CP as part of strategic cultural engineering as part of territorial conquest, as we see in Ukraine, are even harder to predict. Just as the value of CP escapes definitions, the effects of playing CP as a tool of hybrid warfare must be considered unpredictable and entirely contingent on the immediate political context.

Conclusion

The political gravity of CP and its tactical and strategic implications in relation to conflicts are likely to have some bearing on NATO operations and the Alliance's broader strategic agenda. This points at an added value for allied nations to further embrace CPP as a topic that warrants strategic, operational, and tactical considerations beyond LOAC. The question is, what would be the implications of understanding CP as a hybrid threat? What fails if we do not take this action? Currently, the best argument for urgently investing in capacities to handle CP as a hybrid threat issue is to match Russian policy and practice in this area. If not, Russia will remain one step ahead. Russia steams ahead with a national security driven view on CP while we contemplate LOAC and the meaning of CP. China also demonstrates growing interest in CP as a security issue, adding another argument for the Alliance to get up to speed. China has mapped cultural heritage sites in the South China Sea to support its maritime claims and argued that "archaeological findings prove that the Chinese people is the real owner of South China Sea Islands." One implication of the recasting of CP as a hybrid threat issue is that Human Security appears to be the wrong home for the topic in NATO and among allied nations. The kind of challenges this article has identified with regard CP requires an information-driven approach, a function that lies with intelligence branches.

Hence, viewing CP as a hybrid threat issue calls for a multi-dimensional approach anchored more firmly in Joint Intelligence, Operations and Emerging Security Challenges. PRISM

Notes

[1] See Claire Finkelstein, Derek Gilman, and Frederik Rosén (eds.) (2022): *The Preservation of Art and Culture in Times of War*. New York: Oxford University Press; Timothy Clack and Mark Dunkley (2022): *Cultural Heritage in Modern Conflict. Past, Propaganda, Parade*. London: Routledge; James Cuno and Thomas G. Weiss (ed.) (2022): *Cultural Heritage and Mass Atrocities*. Los Angeles: Getty Publications.

[2] Daniel Shultz and Christopher Jasparro (2022): 'How Does Russia Exploit History and Cultural Heritage for Information Warfare? Recommendations for NATO', Antiquities Coalition, Policy Brief No. 11.

[3] Carsten Paludan-Müller (2022): 'The Geopolitical Context of Cultural Heritage Destruction', in Claire Finkelstein, Derek Gilman, and Frederik Rosén (ed.) (2022): *The Preservation of Art and Culture in Times of War*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 414—447.

[4] 'NATO and Cultural Property Protection— Embracing New Challenges in the Era of Identity Wars', international conference organized by the Office of the Secretary General, Human Security Unit, in cooperation with the Nordic Center for Cultural Heritage and Armed Conflict, NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 15. to 16. of April 2019.

[5] NATO (2020): 'Secretary General's 2019 Annual Report', p. 77.

[6] NATO Operations Policy Committee (2021): 'Human Security Workshop', AC/332-N (2021)0013 (9 February 2021). Available at http://unescoblob.blob. core.windows.net/pdf/UploadCKEditor/Human%20 Security%20Workshops.pdf.

[7] The author recognizes the contested meaning of the concept of "hybrid warfare." However, as the concept figures in NATO documents as the broader context of the more elaborate NATO concept on and framework of analysis for "Countering Hybrid Threats" and is thus used in this article.

[8] 'Best Practices for CP protection in NATO-led Military Operations', NATO Science for Peace and Security Series of Advanced Research Workshop (2015-2018) in NATO, often referred to as the "NATO SPS CPP" directed by the then Nordic Center for Cultural Heritage and Armed Conflict (Denmark). See outcome report, 'NATO and Cultural Property. Embracing New Challenges in the Era of Identity Wars'. Copenhagen: Nordic Center for Cultural Heritage and Armed Conflict, 2017.

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10 Bernard Lebrun, Brigadier General, Head of the CIMIC Division of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) (2021): Presentation at NATO Protection of Civilians Workshop—NATO's Human Security Conference 2021, Friday 26th February.

11 North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Human Security," July 18, 2022, available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_181779.htm.

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13 Research conducted in connection with the NATO SPS CPP found no considerable combat related damage to CP in NATO-led operations. It found some harm related to base camp construction and military-led infrastructure projects.

14 Frederik Rosén (2020): 'The dark side of cultural heritage protection'. *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 27(4), pp. 495-510.

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16 NATO Science for Peace and Security Advanced Research Workshop / GIS Technical Workshop, 1-2 September 2016, New York, USA.

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27 Press statements by the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini (2 December 2015); see also NATO Topic Page https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm.

28 Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui (1999): *Unrestricted warfare.* Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House, p. 25.

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33 NATO 2030: United for a New Era. Analysis and Recommendations of the Reflection Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General', 25 November 2020, p. 46, <https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf>.

Challenges and Opportunities in Global Supply Chains
The Role of Critical Minerals

By Nayantara Hensel

T he strength and security of global supply chains are vital for the stability and growth of the global economy as well as for national security. However, supply chains, which form the foundations for a number of industries and products in the defense and non-defense markets. are highly dependent on a variety of factors and countries to provide key critical minerals as inputs.

The increasing demand for critical minerals in supply chains is driven by the growing needs for new and existing products from an expanding global population. Shortages in the supply for critical minerals are impacted by the time and cost constraints in developing the minerals in various countries; the role of global pandemics (such as COVID-19) on mining and product manufacturing; political instability in source countries; and transportation disruptions due to trade embargoes and blockages. Rising demand and shortages in supply can lead to higher prices, which contribute to rising inflation and slower global economic growth. Consequently, understanding the economic forces impacting the demand for and supply of these key inputs is important in developing current and future efforts to handle supply chain challenges. This article assesses the factors determining the supply and demand, as well as other challenges associated with these critical supply chain critical inputs and offers potential solutions.

The Role of and Demand for Rare Earth Minerals

Rare earth minerals are comprised of 17 elements (REEs),[1] and are used for key products in multiple sectors, including communications technology, energy, transportation, and defense. In the communications technology sector, yttrium, europium and terbium phosphors are used in flat panels and televisions, while lanthanum makes up as much as 50 percent of digital camera lenses, including smartphone cameras. In the medical sector

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The pit mine at the Molycorp Mountain Pass rare-earth facility in California's Mojave Desert in May. Image by John Gurzinski. From High Country News, June 16, 2015 (https://www.hcn.org/issues/47.11/why-rare-earth-mining-in-the-west-is-a-bust).

lutetium is used for hospital imaging through its inclusion in the detectors in position emission tomographs. In the energy sector, yttrium, europium, and terbium phosphors are used in many light bulbs, while europium is used in fluorescent lighting and gadolinium is used in rods in nuclear power plants.

The growing trend toward cleaner sources of energy and electric vehicles (EV's) has led to greater demand for magnets made from the neodymium and praseodymium alloys, which are used for wind turbine generators and electric vehicle traction motors.[2] Rare earths have uses in multiple industries—neodymium-iron-boron magnets are used in the communications technology sector in computer hard disks and CD–ROM and DVD disk drives, and they are also important in the transportation sector in several key subsystems within cars, including audio speakers, power steering and power seats, and electric windows.[3]

Rare earths are also very important within the defense sector. Praseodymium is used for satellites and aircraft engines, while neodymium is used for missile guidance systems. Promethium is used for batteries in missiles, while samarium is used for lasers and nuclear reactor control rods. Lanthanum is important for night vision goggles and the lenses of cameras that are used in reconnaissance, intelligence, and surveillance. Europium is used for plasma displays and LEDs, as well as nuclear reactor rods. Yttrium is used for microwave emitters and LEDs. Gallium is used for light-emitting diodes and computer chips. Not surprisingly, every F-35 jet has around 920 pounds of rare earth elements, especially for their targeting systems.[4]

Two types of permanent magnets which use rare earths are samarium-cobalt magnets and neodymium-iron-boron magnets. Samarium-cobalt magnets can survive higher temperatures and are used in aircraft, smart bombs, and precision-guided missiles. Neodymium-iron-boron magnets are lighter and smaller and are used in various weapons systems. Magnets using neodymium, praseodymium, samarium, dysprosium, and terbium are used in guidance and control electric motors and actuators in Tomahawk cruise missiles, the Predator unmanned aircraft, the Joint Air to Ground Fin Actuators, smart bombs, and Joint Direct Attack Munitions. Rare earths are used in radar, sonar, radiation and chemical detection technologies, in laser targeting devices, and for density amplification/energy storage in directed energy weapons and electronic warfare devices.[5]

The increasing demand for rare earths, as well as the impact of COVID-19 on production facility closures, led to the average rare earth export price increasing by 36 percent from November 2020 to November 2021. These higher input prices had a significant impact on the supply chains of finished products. The prices of terbium and dysprosium increased by 50 percent in 2021, while neodymium prices increased by around 80 percent. Partially due to the reduced impact of COVID-19 in 2022, many rare earth prices declined from their earlier heights. For example, neodymium prices peaked in February 2022, but, by December 2022, had declined 14 percent from the beginning of 2022, although this only partially offset the significant price gain from the previous year.[6]

Significant Sources of Supply for Rare Earths

While China continues to be the leading producer of rare earths, there are significant opportunities for growth in supply as demand increases, which can mitigate price increases. As Figure 1 suggests, China produced 70 percent of rare earth mining in 2022, followed by the United States at 14.3 percent, Australia at 6 percent, and Myanmar at 4 percent. Although China had the highest share of both global reserves (33.8 percent) and global production (70 percent), there are substantial opportunities for growth and investment in other countries. Indeed, Vietnam and Brazil have low shares of global production (1.4

percent and 0.03 percent, respectively), however, they each have 16-17 percent of global reserves. On the other hand, the United States and Australia have the second and third highest shares of global production but have lower shares of global reserves (1.8 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively).

Although China's rare earth mine production increased from 105,000 metric tons in 2014 to 210,000 metric tons in 2022 (Figure 2), its share of global output declined from 86 percent in 2014 to 70 percent in 2022.[7] Much of this decline was due to the growth of U.S. rare earth mine production. Indeed,

Figure 1: Share of Global Rare Earth Production and Share of Global Rare Earth Reserves by Country: 2022
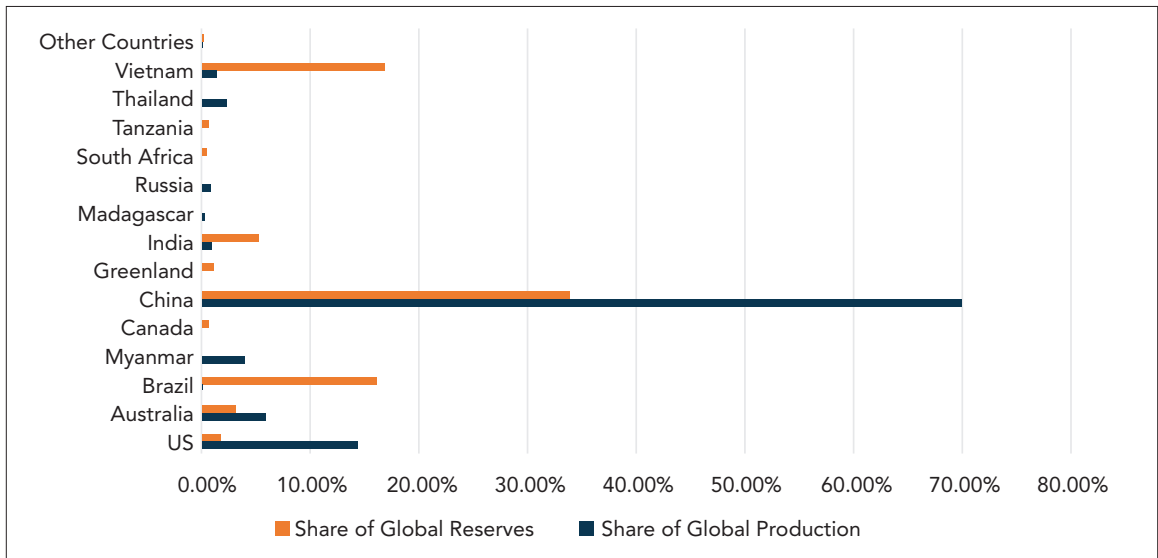
Source of underlying data: *USGS Mineral Commodity Summaries 2023*, p. 143.

Figure 2: Rare Earth Mine Production in China: 2010-2022
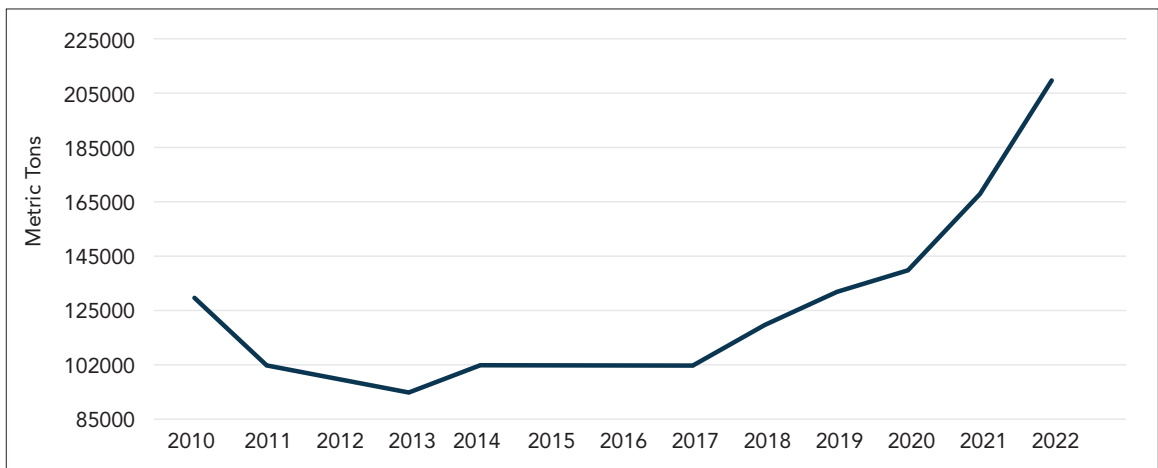
Source of underlying data: *USGS Minerals Yearbook, 2019, Volume III*, Area Reports--International; *USGS Mineral Commodity Summaries 2022*, p. 135; *USGS Mineral Commodity Summaries 2023*, p. 143; Statista Database.

Figure 3: Growth in Rare Earth Production: 2018-2022
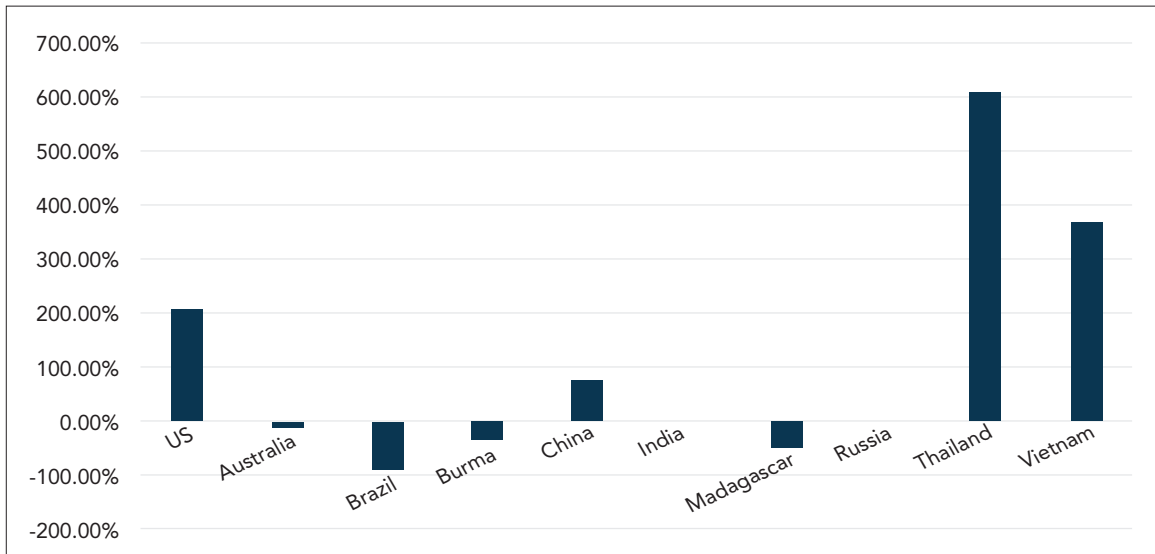
Source of underlying data: *USGS Mineral Commodities Summaries, 2018*, pp. 132-133; *USGS Mineral Commodities Summaries, 2019*, pp. 132-133; *USGS Mineral Commodities Summaries, 2020*, pp. 132-133; *USGS Mineral Commodities Summaries, 2021*, pp. 132-133; *USGS Mineral Commodities Summaries, 2022*, pp. 134-135; *USGS Mineral Commodities Summaries, 2023*, pp. 142-143.

as is evident in Figure 3, while China's rare earth production increased by only 75 percent between 2018 and 2022, rare earth production in the United States increased by over 200 percent. Moreover, some countries with small, rare earth mining capacity, such as Thailand and Vietnam, grew significantly at their relatively low base levels.

China

The largest mine in China, located in northern China in Inner Mongolia, is the Bayan Obo deposit, which produces 70 percent of China's light rare earth deposits. It is the largest deposit of rare earths globally, has been in operation since 1957, and contains 40 million tons of rare earths reserves.[8]

China plays an even greater role in processing/refining than in mining. In 2021, China made up 85 percent of global REE refining, followed by the rest of Asia at 13 percent and Europe at 2 percent. While China's share of global mining of neodymium,

which is important for magnets, was 62 percent in 2021, its share of global refining for neodymium was 84 percent. China currently dominates the worldwide permanent magnet market, controlling 87 percent of it.[9]

Since China has had more competition in the mining portion of the rare earth sector from other countries in recent years, it has increased its purchases of mined rare earths from other countries for refining/processing where it has much less competition. As a result, it has become more reliant on rare earth mining from other countries for both light and heavy rare earth oxides. Domestically mined and separated light rare earth oxides comprised around 90 percent of China's separated light rare earth oxides in 2015, but this share had declined to 70 percent by 2021. About 85 percent of heavy rare earth oxides developed in China in 2015 were from Chinese mines, but this declined to 53 percent in 2021.[10] Consequently, China is a monopsonist as the

primary buyer of mined rare earths due to its role as (close to) a monopolist in the refining sector. The Chinese purchases from overseas mines include output from the United States and Australian mines, which currently have little or no refining processes since refining processes have environmental and health risks which involve the extraction of radioactive thorium from rare earths.[11]

The Chinese government has been engaging in consolidation of its rare earth industry to enable it to better influence prices, as well as to enable greater efficiency.[12] Consolidation efforts in 2016 led to the development of six licensed groups whose production and refining have been controlled by the Chinese government through granting annual quotas. Further consolidation of rare earth units from Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOE's) in 2021 was part of the Chinese government's plan to enable the creation of a large rare earth SOE in the south and one in the north. In December 2021, the China Rare Earths Group, located in the Jiangxi province in southern China, was formed through the merger of Aluminum Corp of China (Chinalco), China Minmetals Corp, and Ganzhou Rare Earth Group to control rare earth production in the south regarding the heavy and medium rare earths. Indeed, it would control 62 percent of the supplies in heavy rare earths. The Chinese government intends to further consolidate the firms in northern China, which focus on light rare earths.[13]

Myanmar

In recent years, China has outsourced some of its rare earth mining to Myanmar due to Myanmar's cheap labor and has focused more on refining, which has resulted in Myanmar becoming the fourth largest global producer of rare earths at 4 percent in 2022. Unfortunately, however, as of March 2022, the Kachin state of Myanmar had 2700 mining collection pools in about 300 separate locations which creates significant environmental hazards. Moreover, political instability can disrupt

Myanmar's supply chains; indeed, Myanmar's revenues from rare earth mining have been a source of funding for the leaders of groups supporting Myanmar's military regime.[14]

Between May 2017 and October 2021, Myanmar exported over $1 billion of rare earths (over 140,000 tons) to China. Companies, such as Minmetals and Rising Nonferrous Metals, are partially dependent on Myanmar's heavy rare earth mining and subsequently supply their processed rare earths to large Chinese magnet companies, such as Yantai Zhenghai, Magnetic Material, JL MAG, and Zhong Ke San Huan, which, in turn, provide their magnets to global automobile manufacturers, electronics companies, wind turbine manufacturers, etc.[15]

Australia

Australia, which currently provides 6 percent of global rare earth mining, has a growing rare earth mining industry with a number of rare earth firms, 35 of which were traded on the Australian Stock Exchange as of early November 2022. The largest is Lynas (market value of $7.9 billion), followed by Iluka ($3.8 billion), Arafura ($530 million), and Hastings ($450 million). Both Lynas and Iluka are in the S&P/ASX200.[16]

Lynas is the second largest producer of neodymium-praseodymium globally and extracts its rare earths from the Mt. Weld mine in western Australia, which is the largest non-Chinese rare earth mine and possesses among the highest-grade rare earth deposits in the world. Mt. Weld's production of neodymium-praseodymium has shown significant growth in recent years. The ore undergoes some processing at the concentration plant at Mt Weld, and then the rare earth concentrate is sent for greater processing to the Lynas material plant near Kuantan, Malaysia. Lynas relies, however, on China to turn its oxides into metal. In an effort to meet the rising demand for rare earths by further expanding rare earth supply, Lynas is developing a

new Kalgoorlie Rare Earths Processing Facility in western Australia, as well as developing a separation facility in the United States.[17]

Iluka, the second largest Australian rare earth mining company, is also developing a processing facility for rare earths and received a $1.2 billion loan to develop a refinery in Eneabba, which is north of Perth. [18]

Arafura Resources is developing the Nolans mine in northern Australia which is focused on both mining and processing neodymium-praesodymium (NdPr) oxides and is expected to open in 2024. The $1 billion facility has received $300 million in government funding. In November 2022, Arafura completed an agreement to provide Hyundai and Kia Corp with NdPr oxides, as well as an agreement in July 2022 with GE Renewable Energy to provide key inputs for its wind turbine manufacturing. Arafura also signed an agreement to further assist South Korea in its rare earth supply with the Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation (KOMIR). [19]

Hastings Technology is developing two rare earth mines in western Australia—the Yangibana mine, with a substantive NdPr content, and the Brockman mine. Hastings hopes to begin production in 2024 and has signed agreements with the German companies Schaeffler and Thyssenkrupp.[20]

Australian Strategic Materials (ASM) plans to develop a complete supply chain for rare earths and is developing a Dubbo mine in New South Wales, which contains rare earths, as well as other key minerals. The mine is expected to be in operation by 2025. As is the case with Arafura, ASM is collaborating with South Korea, which is trying to reduce its dependence on China for rare earths. In November 2021, ASM announced the commissioning of a metals

Infographic by and with permission from the National Mining Association.

Workshop of a rare earth production enterprise in Jiangxi province, central China. China is the largest source of rare earth imports to the United States. Photo by Humphery (Shutterstock Stock Photo ID: 1410095642).

plant in South Korea, and in December 2021, ASM formed a joint venture with Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation (KOMIR).[21]

Australian rare earth mining firms have followed several different strategies for funding. First, several Australian firms have obtained government support, such as the Australian government's $1.2 billion loan to Iluka. Second, Australian firms have collaborated with each other—indeed, Iluka will also process rare earths from other Australian companies, including Northern Minerals. Third, Australian firms have collaborated with other non-Chinese nations. Following the unofficial export ban that China briefly imposed on Japan in 2010, the Japanese government, in an effort to reduce its exposure to Chinese rare earths, provided funding for Lynas' development of the Mount Weld deposits, as well as funding the development of Lynas' processing plant in Malaysia.[22] Fourth, Australian firms have received funding from other overseas companies, as is evident

in Arafura's agreements with General Electric and Hyundai to supply rare earths for the production of wind turbines and EVs.

United States

The United States, the second largest rare earths producer, provides 14.3 percent of global rare earth mining, but it lacks refining facilities. MP Materials' Mountain Pass Mine[23] in the northeast portion of the Mojave Desert is the only rare earth production mine in the United States.[24] With the substantial increase in global demand, MP Materials produced the highest levels of rare earth concentrate in its history in 2022 at 43,000 metric tons. Nevertheless, due to the lack of separation and refining facilities in the United States, the United States imported about 74 percent of rare earth metals and compounds on average from China during 2018-2021. Moreover, about 7.7 percent of MP Materials is held by China's Shenghe Resources.[25]

MP Materials hopes to develop a complete rare earth supply chain by 2025 which would include mining, separation, refining, and magnet making. MP Materials received $35 million from the Department of Defense (DOD) to build a processing facility for heavy rare earths at Mountain Pass, California in February 2022, as well as $9.6 million to develop a processing facility for light rare earths in 2020. By 2024, MP Materials plans to create around 350 jobs in the magnet supply chain and is also investing $700 million.[26]

In April 2022, MP Materials began construction of a rare earth magnet facility in Fort Worth, Texas, and hopes to begin developing neodymium alloys in late 2023 and to develop completed neodymium magnet production by 2025. MP also signed an agreement with GM to provide the magnets for 500,000 GM EV's annually. The rare earths used at the Fort Worth manufacturing plant would come from the Mountain Pass mine.[27]

The U.S. government also funded Australia's largest, rare earths mining company, Lynas, to develop both a heavy rare earths and a light rare earths separation facility in Texas using rare earths extracted from its Mount Weld mine in western Australia. In 2021, DOD provided Lynas with $30.4 million to build a light rare earths processing facility in Texas in partnership with Blue Line Corp. In June 2022, DOD provided Lynas with an $120 million to develop a heavy rare earth separation facility in Texas which is expected to open in 2025.[28]

As in Australia, companies in the United States are expanding into the rare earth sector as global demand increases. American Rare Earths has undertaken preliminary analysis of its mining sites in Wyoming and Arizona, which suggests that they could be the two largest U.S. rare earth sites, with key rare earth elements (neodymium, praseodymium, dysprosium, and terbium) that can be used in wind turbines and in EV's.[29] In mid-October, 2022, Ucore Rare Metals completed an

agreement with the State of Louisiana to develop a rare earth separation facility.[30]

Other Countries

The global demand for rare earths has further stimulated the development of sources of supply in several other locations. One example is Canada, whose reserves were estimated at over 14 million tons as of 2021. The Australian firm Vital Metals owns the only operating rare earth mine in Canada, the Nechalacho mine, located in Canada's Northwest Territory, which began mining in June 2021. By 2025, Vital Metals hopes to produce 5000 tons of rare earths from the Nechalacho Mine, which contains neodymium and prasesodymium. Vital Metals is also developing a rare earth processing facility in Saskatoon and plans to ship the rare earth carbonates from the Saskatoon mine to its partner, REEtec, which has separation / purification facilities in Norway. Canada also has a number of rare earth projects at different stages of development.[31]

A second example is the purchase by Australian firm Neo Materials in August, 2022 of the rare earth mining rights for the Sarfartoq deposit on Greenland's western coast, thus enabling Neo, which produces technology products,[32] to reduce its exposure to the fluctuations in global rare earth ore prices.[33]

A third example is the discovery by the Swedish mining firm LKAB in mid-January 2023 of what may be the largest deposit of rare earths in Europe (1 million tons of rare earth oxides) in the Per Geijer Deposit located in north Sweden (20 miles from the Arctic Circle). In collaboration with REEtec, the plan is to extract the minerals and then have them separated in REEtec's Norwegian facility, however obtaining permits may take up to 10-15 years due to environmental concerns.[34]

A fourth example is the discovery in Norway of significant offshore deposits in the manganese crusts in the Greenland Sea and the Norwegian Sea

in late January 2023. The estimates of rare earths include 1.7 million tons of cerium, and, possibly, yttrium, neodymium, and dysprosium, as well as other minerals (magnesium, copper, cobalt, and zinc), many of which are on the European Commission's list of critical minerals.[35]

Finally, a fifth example is in Africa, where there are several existing rare earth mining operations, as well as mining operations under development. The existing mine operations include the Namibia Critical Metals' Lofdal heavy rare earths mine, which contains deposits of terbium and dysprosium, and the Steenkampskraal mine in South Africa which contains 86,900 tons of rare earth oxides, including significant deposits of praseodymium and neodymium.[36] Australia's Peak Rare Earths Limited is developing the Ngualla Tanzania Rare Earth Project in southern Tanzania with mines containing neodymium and praseodymium deposits, as well as the Teeside refinery in the UK for processing these deposits.[37] The UK firm Pensana is developing the Longonjo mine in neodymium and praseodymium in Angola and has been exploring the adjacent areas in Coola and Monte Verde. It is also developing a rare earth processing facility in the UK.[38] The Guernsey-based Rainbow Rare Earths has two African rare earths projects—the Phalaborwa Project in South Africa and the Gakara Project in Burundi, East Africa.[39]

National Security Issues

The dependence of the United States and other countries on China for rare earths enables China to use rare earth exports controls/bans as a strategic weapon. As a result, the concerns of various countries regarding China's potential bans have led them to increase their efforts in developing alternative sources of rare earths.

The expansion of Japan's sources of rare earths was partially driven by the Chinese government's blockage of all rare earth exports to Japan in June 2010 as tensions increased over a fishing trawler incident in the East China Sea. The ban was subsequently lifted, but it led to Japan reducing its rare earth imports from China by diversifying its import sources and by developing domestic sources. Japan's imports of rare earths from China declined from 90 percent of its rare earths in 2010 to 60 percent by 2021. Japan currently imports 11 percent of its rare earths from France and 19 percent from Vietnam, as well as has provided funds for Australia's Lynas Mt. Weld development. Japan is also developing a rare earth extraction project near the Ogasawara islands.[40]

The incident between China and Japan provides lessons to the United States and other countries in developing strategies to diversify rare earth risk and expand reliable overseas and domestic sources of rare earths. A second incident, which further emphasized for the United States the need to develop its domestic rare earth sector, occurred in 2019 when China considered using rare earth export controls as part of its trade war, but ultimately did not implement them.[41]

A recent incident which further heightened the risk of U.S. supply chain dependencies on Chinese rare earth inputs occurred in the fall of 2022. DOD had to suspend deliveries of F-35 fighter jets in September 2022 because its aircraft engine (manufactured by Honeywell) contained a magnet with a samarium and cobalt alloy from China which was not in compliance with U.S. procurement laws. In early October 2022, deliveries resumed due to the passage of a waiver which allowed these alloys from China to be included in the engine. While the Pentagon suggested that alternatives could be considered in the future, China currently produces 70 percent of samarium-cobalt rare earth magnets and 85 percent of neodymium magnets. The need for these magnets for a variety of military purposes can lead to China in the short- and medium-term developing stricter export controls on rare earths to increase their bargaining power.[42]

Further concerns have arisen regarding the U.S. dependence on China for rare earths since this could limit the ability of the United States to apply economic pressure on China if China escalates its pressure on Taiwan. Indeed, in February 2022, China placed sanctions on Raytheon and Lockheed Martin and suggested that this could include their imports of rare earths, in response to the U.S. approval of the two firms providing $100 million in maintenance services to Taiwan's missile defense systems.[43]

The Role of Other Critical Minerals in Supply Chains and the U.S. National Defense Stockpile

While rare earths are key in supply chains for a number of industries and products, other critical minerals are also very important; these include lithium, nickel, cobalt, graphite, and manganese. Indeed, the USGS 2022 List of Critical Minerals included these five minerals, as well as 16 of the 17 rare earth minerals.[44]

The National Defense Stockpile

The stockpiles for critical minerals in various countries are particularly important in managing the risk of price increases driven by shortages in global supply. Selling stockpile reserves can lower the prices of critical minerals used by manufacturers as inputs, but the decline in reserves would need to be replenished in the future. Consequently, since stockpiles only provide protection in the short- and medium-term, it is important to develop domestic production in critical minerals in mining, separation, refining, processing, and recycling.

The Bayan Obo mine located in the Inner Mongolia region of China is the world's biggest rare-earth element mine. The U.S. depends on China for 80 percent of its rare-earth metal consumption. Photo by Google Earth, March 8, 2021.

Global rare earth element (REE) mines, deposits and occurrences (May 2021)

British Geological Survey

○ REE mine
○ Deposit/occurrence

• Carbonatite-associated
• Alkaline igneous rock-associated
• Iron-REE deposit
• Hydrothermal deposit
• Marine placer
• Alluvial placer
• Palaeoplacer
• Ion-adsorption clay
• Ash-fall placer
• By-product of tin mining

1 Bokan Mountain, USA	20 Green Cove Springs, USA	39 Lovozero and Khibina complexes, Russia	58 Okorusu, Namibia	77 Maoniuping/Dalucao, China
2 Alay, Canada	21 Mountain Pass, USA	40 Tomtor, Russia	59 Eureka, Namibia	78 Miaoya, China
3 Rock Canyon Creek, Canada	22 Gallinas Mountains, USA	41 Gornoe Ozero, Russia	60 Kalkfeld, Namibia	79 Xunwu/Longnan, China
4 Thor Lake, Canada	23 Pajarito Mountain, USA	42 Khamna, Russia	61 Ondurakorume, Namibia	80 Nam Xe, Vietnam
5 Nisikkatch, Canada	24 Sierra de Tamaulipas, Mexico	43 Ditrău, Romania	62 Steenkampskraal, South Africa	81 Dong Pao, Vietnam
6 Hoidas Lake, Canada	25 Morro dos Seis Lagos, Brazil	44 Kizilcaören, Turkey	63 Zandkopsdrift, South Africa	82 Northern Myanmar
7 Elliot Lake, Canada	26 Catalão I, Brazil	45 Aksu Diamas, Turkey	64 Pilanesberg Alkaline Complex, South Africa	83 Thai Peninsula, Thailand
8 Saint-Honoré, Canada	27 Araxá, Brazil	46 Tamazeght complex, Morocco	65 Naboomspruit, South Africa	84 Perak, Malaysia
9 Strange Lake, Canada	28 Serra Verde, Brazil	47 Bou Naga, Mauritania	66 Phalabowra (Palabora), South Africa	85 Eneabba, Australia
10 Snowbird, USA	29 Pocos de Caldas, Brazil	48 Nile Delta and Rosetta, Egypt	67 Richards Bay, South Africa	86 Jangardup, Australia
11 North Fork, USA	30 Barra do Itapirapuã, Brazil	49 Karonge (Gakara), Burundi	68 Chavara, India	87 Mount Weld, Australia
12 Lemhi Pass, USA	31 Sarfartôq, Greenland	50 Mrima, Kenya	69 Amba Dongar, India	88 Brockman, Australia
13 Bald Mountain, USA	32 Motzfeldt, Greenland	51 Wigu Hill, Tanzania	70 Sarnu, India	89 Browns Range, Australia
14 Bear Lodge, USA	33 Ilimaussaq, Greenland	52 Kangankunde, Malawi	71 Orissa, India	90 Nolans Bore, Australia
15 Iron Hill, USA	34 Fen, Norway	53 Songwe Hill, Malawi	72 Wajiertage, China	91 Mary Kathleen, Australia
16 Wet Mountains, USA	35 Bastnäs, Sweden	54 Congolone, Mozambique	73 Mushgai Khudag, Mongolia	92 Olympic Dam, Australia
17 Pea Ridge, USA	36 Norra Kärr, Sweden	55 Ambohimirahavavy, Madagascar	74 Lugin Gol, Mongolia	93 WIM 150, Australia
18 Hicks Dome, USA	37 Olserum, Sweden	56 Mandena, Madagascar	75 Bayan Obo, China	94 Dubbo Zirconia, Australia
19 Carolina placers, USA	38 Sokli, Finland	57 Etanero, Namibia	76 Weishan, China	95 Fraser Island, Australia

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The National Defense Stockpile, which receives its funding from the Treasury Department but is managed by the Defense Logistics Agency, is key for critical minerals in the supply chain. Concerns have arisen regarding the reduced capacity of the National Defense Stockpile to cover DOD's needs during global supply chain disruptions or other geopolitical challenges, including with China. The risks in the stockpile have been evident in its decline in value, which has been due to the selloff of key materials. The value of the stockpile has declined from almost $42 billion in 1952 to $21.9 billion in 1989 to $888 million as of 2021.[45]

In February 2022, DOD, DOE, and the State Department issued an agreement to collaborate in rebuilding the critical material stockpiles for defense and energy needs. Moreover, the strategic stockpile received a $125 million investment in FY 2022 from DOD, and $253 million was proposed for FY 2023, with the objective of providing $1 billion to the stockpile in future years.[46]

Key Minerals in the National Defense Stockpile

Under the authority of the Defense Production Act (DPA), the Biden administration in March 2022 requested that DOD designate lithium, nickel, cobalt, graphite, and manganese as vital to national security and provided authorization for increasing their supplies domestically.[47]

Lithium is a key input in supply chains in a variety of products, however its most important usage currently is in batteries—80 percent of lithium is used in batteries for electric vehicles. Global lithium mining increased over 20 percent between 2021 and 2022 partially due to the growth in the market for lithium-ion batteries. Lithium prices also increased significantly; U.S. lithium carbonate prices in fixed contracts almost tripled between 2021 and 2022. Australia is the leading lithium mining producer, followed by Chile, China, and Argentina. The United States has one commercial-scale lithium brine operation in Nevada and only two companies in the United States produce downstream lithium compounds. During 2018-2021, U.S. lithium imports averaged 51 percent from Argentina and 40 percent from Chile.[48]

Of the estimated global total of lithium deposits of 98 million tons, Bolivia has the greatest amount of lithium deposits for exploration at 21 million tons, followed by Argentina at 20 million tons.[49] The United States has 12 million tons of lithium deposits; those in Imperial County in California are among the largest global lithium deposits. Due to the growing demand for lithium, Berkshire Hathaway Energy Renewables, EnergySource Minerals, and Controlled Thermal Resources (CTR) have been developing lithium extraction facilities in Imperial County. The United States is also developing lithium battery recycling programs—Redwood Materials is partnering with Ford and Volvo in lithium battery recycling.[50]

Nickel plays a crucial role in the growing demand for batteries (especially lithium-ion batteries) in electric vehicles, in addition to its traditional role in stainless steel production. Although earlier lithium-ion batteries only used cathodes comprised of 1/3 nickel, the new lithium-ion batteries are using cathodes comprised of at least 60 percent nickel to increase vehicle range and increase the energy density of the batteries. The United States mines 0.5 percent of nickel globally through the Eagle Mine in Michigan; its nickel concentrate is exported to Canada and overseas since there are no U.S. processing facilities. Although Indonesia is the largest producer of nickel and mines at 48 percent globally, U.S. primary nickel imports during 2018-2021 averaged 45 percent from Canada, followed by Norway, Australia, and Finland.[51]

Recent supply chain disruptions involving nickel have been partially driven by political tensions in Russia. Although Russia mines 6.7 percent of global nickel overall, it is the largest global producer of class I nickel needed for batteries. While the United States is less dependent on Russia's nickel, Russia is the source of around 15 percent of global nickel exports to countries such as Finland and the Netherlands.[52] The average annual nickel price on the London Metals Exchange (LME) increased significantly between 2021 and 2022; indeed, its substantial increase in March 2022, partially due to the concerns regarding the Russia/Ukraine crisis, resulted in a halt in trading for a week.[53] Concerns over nickel and its role in lithium-ion batteries for EV's have led companies to find alternatives, such as the lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries, which don't use cobalt or nickel.[54]

Cobalt is used in the cathodes of lithium-ion batteries in both defense and non-defense products, in alloys which are temperature-resistant, and which are used in DOD's jet engines, in the magnets used in electronic warfare and stealth technology, and in the alloys found in munitions. The United States uses about 40 percent of its cobalt for superalloys (largely in aircraft gas turbine engines) and 35 percent is used in a variety of

chemical applications. The value of cobalt consumed in the United States grew from $340 million in 2021 to $530 million in 2022. The largest consumer of cobalt, however, is China; 80 percent of its consumption is used in the production of rechargeable batteries. While almost 70 percent of cobalt is mined in the politically unstable Democratic Republic of Congo, 80 percent of it is consumed by China, where it is refined and processed.[55]

DOD does not rely on Chinese cobalt due to the "specialty metals clause" in 10 USC 4863 which requires DOD suppliers and contractors to buy cobalt-based alloys and steel products—with over 0.25 percent cobalt—which are produced in the United States or by other allies. Michigan's Eagle Mine, which produces nickel and copper, also produces cobalt-bearing nickel concentrate which is exported for processing to Canada and other countries. The United States is also developing a cobalt-copper-gold mine and mill in Idaho. During 2018-2021, U.S. imports of cobalt averaged 22 percent from Norway, followed by Canada, Finland, and Japan.[56]

The United States has 1 million tons of deposits, with the bulk of them located in Minnesota. Various companies, such as U.S. Strategic Metals, Glencore, Electra, and Jervois have been developing cobalt mining projects in the United States. Global sources of cobalt deposits include Congo and Zambia; moreover, over 120 million tons of cobalt exist beneath the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans.[57]

Graphite is key in supply chains for advanced semiconductors and high-capacity batteries for EV's (including in the production of lithium-ion batteries) and is used extensively in brake linings, batteries, and lubricants, as well as in steelmaking, refractory applications, and powdered metals.[58] China produces 65 percent of graphite globally, followed by Mozambique (13 percent). Ukraine's halt in production between February and August 2022 due to the conflict with Russia led to a decrease in its production from 10,000 tons in 2021 to 3,000 tons in 2022.

Since 1990, the United States has completely relied on import sources and does not produce graphite domestically. During 2018-2021, U.S. imports of graphite averaged 33 percent from China, 18 percent from Mexico, and 17 percent from Canada. Nevertheless, about 95 companies in the United States used 72,000 tons of natural graphite in 2022 (an increase from 45,000 tons in 2021). Not surprisingly, the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency in October 2021 added graphite to the list of minerals needed in the government stockpile. U.S. companies are showing greater interest in developing the market—Graphite One is developing graphite extraction from its mine in Alaska, which is the largest U.S. source of graphite.[59]

Manganese is largely used in steel production. While there has been no U.S. production of manganese ore[60] since 1970, the U.S. imports of manganese during 2018-2021 averaged 67 percent from Gabon, followed by 19 percent from South Africa. South Africa has about 38 percent of global manganese reserves, while the United States has low grade deposits which are likely to have significant costs of extraction.[61]

Solutions to Critical Material Challenges

The supply chains of a variety of products face similar challenges regarding input shortages of critical minerals, which can result in shortages of completed products and higher prices. These higher prices can contribute to rising inflation and slower economic growth. In recent years, the impact of tensions with China, as well as shortages driven by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and COVID-19, have motivated governments and companies to develop solutions.

U.S. Government Support of Critical Inputs

In February 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14017 to assess the weaknesses in critical supply chains and to develop strategies. The

Members of the Oklahoma National Guard walk in the Strategic National Stockpile Warehouse. Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Kasey Phipps/OK ANG.

Executive Order required a detailed 100-day supply chain review regarding critical input risks from several key government agencies, including DOD (with an emphasis on the strategic stockpile), Department of Commerce (including an emphasis on risks in semiconductor manufacturing), Department of Energy (with an emphasis on critical input needs for high capacity batteries, including EV batteries), and the Department of Health and Human Services (including an emphasis on risks with pharmaceutical ingredients).[62]

In the June 2021 follow-up and assessment of February's EO 14017, the Biden administration announced a number of initiatives, including that: (a) the DOE would release a National Blueprint for Lithium Batteries; (b) DOI, USDA, and EPA would identify sites where critical minerals could be manufactured in the United States; (c) DOD would issue grants for critical materials under DPA Title III; (d) DOE would provide $3 billion in loan guarantees for energy technologies; (e) Department of Commerce would provide $75 billion to the semiconductor industries, and the United States would strengthen collaboration with Japan, South Korea, and other allies in semiconductor chips; and (f) a Supply Chains Disruptions Task Force would be established across agencies to evaluate supply and demand challenges.[63]

In February 2022, the Biden-Harris Plan to Revitalize American Manufacturing and Secure Critical Supply Chains focused on new efforts to strengthen the security of mineral supply chains.[64] Moreover, the Biden administration's national security strategy, published in October 2022, identified the importance of developing critical mineral supply chains.[65]

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act provided over $135 billion for building the EV sector, including battery manufacturing and critical minerals. The $7 billion from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is intended to support critical minerals and key inputs for EV battery manufactures, while the Inflation Reduction Act provides tax credits for using U.S.-based battery and critical mineral components for the EV's or components from U.S. trade partners, instead of China. In October 2022, DOE awarded $2.8 billion in grants from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to 20 manufacturing and processing companies for projects across 12 states which supported the development of lithium, graphite, and nickel for EV batteries. Moreover, the American Battery Material Initiative provides federal funds to support battery supply chains, including critical minerals.[66]

Global Collaboration

Global collaboration between countries through joint cooperation initiatives, as well as through providing funds to other countries, is important in mitigating supply chain challenges. The Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment is an example of global cooperation among the G7 countries. The Partnership supports low- and middle-income countries in developing infrastructure investment, including mining, refining, and processing critical minerals. Similarly, the Mineral Security Partnership, between Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Commission has been established to develop strategic opportunities in the supply chains by stimulating government and private sector investments.[67]

Another aspect of global collaboration is through providing funds to other countries and firms. For example, the European Commission completed an agreement with Kazakhstan in November 2022 for Kazakhstan to provide green hydrogen and critical raw materials, including rare earths, cobalt, and lithium.[68] Similarly, the United States provided funds to Australia's Lynas to expand the U.S. rare earths sector; Japan funded Australia's Lynas; and South Korea invested in Australia's Arafura and ASM. Overseas corporate investments have also helped in diversification of sources, as was evident in the investment of Australia's Neo Resources in Greenland, the investment of Australia's Peak Rare Earths Limited and the UK firm Pensana in Africa, and the investment of Australia's Vital Metals in Canada.

Alternative Technologies and Substitutions

The challenges regarding the shortages of critical inputs can partially be addressed through: (a) the development of alternative technologies which would create similar inputs and/or would reduce environmental risks; and (b) the substitution of critical inputs which are in short supply with inputs that have a greater supply.

A Northeastern University team is creating alternative technologies through artificially developing the tetrataenite mineral, with magnetic properties that can replace the use of rare earths in magnets. This project has been supported by a $2.1 million DOE grant. Similarly, Austrian scientists and a University of Cambridge team are making tetrataenite by adding phosphorus to the iron-nickel alloy.[69] Moreover, a Chinese group has developed a method that uses electric currents in rare earth separation via electrokinetic mining to minimize the risks of radioactive contaminants, which can limit rare earth production.[70]

The substitution of one critical input with another can assist companies with challenges of higher costs from input shortages. This is evident in the efforts to substitute lithium-ion batteries that use nickel in EV's with the lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries, which do not use cobalt or nickel as inputs

and cost less. The substitution helps to mitigate the shortages in nickel and the increases in price, which have been partially driven by the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Moreover, the development of EV batteries which use less cobalt can reduce geopolitical risks since a significant share of cobalt is mined in the Congo and refined in China.

Another option to handle shortages of critical inputs involves recycling. GM has collaborated with Ultium Cells LLC and Li-Cycle in recycling battery materials, which include cobalt, nickel, lithium, graphite, copper, manganese, and aluminum. Other battery recycling firms include Redwood Materials. [71]

Conclusions

Critical inputs in supply chains have faced significant challenges in recent years, which have been driven by rising demand for their usage in new products, as well as by supply shortages. These supply shortages have been impacted by the time and funding needed for critical input development, geopolitical tensions with key source countries (including China and Russia), and COVID-19's impact on production and transportation networks. Countries and companies have focused on the need to develop domestic supply chains for products, ranging from the initial mining of the critical inputs to the production of the final products, as well as the diversification of their global sources of inputs. Rising input prices have affected final product prices, however, which have contributed to overall inflation in many countries and slower economic growth. Consequently, solutions to the challenges facing critical inputs are key in supporting global stability and economic growth.

The support and collaboration between countries and firms is important for reinforcing critical input development because each faces limitations: countries providing funds for critical resource development also face overall budgetary constraints, while investments by firms are limited by financial constraints. Nevertheless, despite limitations in the short- and medium-term, the benefits of diversifying and strengthening the global supply chain in the longer-term outweigh the costs.

Cross-country and domestic collaboration between governments and companies in providing financial support and in locating critical input sources enables companies to manage their risk in the short-term to enable a positive return in the longer-term. Strategies which can create benefits in the longer-term include: (a) the development of domestic sources for mining, refining, and processing inputs, as well as stable transportation networks; (b) the development of alternative, reliable, non-domestic locations for critical inputs to diversify geographic risk; (c) the creation of new technologies to handle environmental constraints and input shortages; and (d) the development of substitutions between critical inputs.

The strength and stability of global supply chains, which are significantly impacted by the availability of critical inputs, provide the foundation for global economic growth, stability, and security. The rapid demand for new types of products requiring critical inputs, ranging from electric vehicles and computers to weapons systems, as well as the capabilities to meet the growing needs for these products, highlights the important role of current efforts in handling supply chain challenges, as well as the potential impact of these efforts on the future global economy. PRISM

Notes

[1] These include yttrium, scandium and the 15 lanthanide elements (cerium, dysprosium, erbium, europium, gadolinium, holmium, lanthanum, lutetium, neodymium, praseodymium, promethium, samarium, terbium, thulium and ytterbium. (Calam, Chris. "Can You Name All 17 Rare Earth Elements?" *ThermoFisher Scientific*, March 3, 2016. https://www.thermofisher.com/blog/mining/can-you-name-all-17-rare-earth-elements/; Mitchell, Jason. "China's stranglehold of the rare earths supply chain will last another decade." *Mining Technology*, April 26, 2022).

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An Ancillary Duty?

The Department of Defense Approach to Women, Peace, and Security in Security Cooperation Programs

By Barbara Salera Lopez

I t has been six years since the passage of the Women, Peace, and Security Act, which aimed to increase the "meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention and conflict resolution processes" in order to "promote more inclusive and democratic societies" globally.[1] This act institutionalized the United States' approach to furthering the United Nations Security Council's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. After the Act passed in 2017, the Department of Defense (DOD) instituted its own framework—the Strategic Framework, and Implementation Plan (SFIP)—to organize and outline DOD efforts to achieve the objectives of the 2019 U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).[2] The SFIP outlines three major objectives: "model and employ WPS principles," "promote partner nation women's participation," and "promote protection of partner nation civilians."[3] The SFIP applies to the entire Department of Defense and will require the DOD not only to coordinate internally and across agencies, but successful implementation will require engagement with civil society sectors in partner countries to develop a whole-of-society approach. The National Defense and Authorization Act FY2020 further reinforced the WPS framework by legislating that the DOD incorporate "gender perspectives and participation of women in security cooperation activities to the maximum extent practicable."[4]

The purpose of this article is to provide an overview of the Department of Defense's efforts to integrate WPS objectives into security cooperation activities since the passage of the 2017 legislation. Most other research has focused on the benefits of integrating women into the security sector, but not on tracing the experience of how that has been done. This article is meant to help fill that gap between theory and practice. In addition, this article will provide a brief overview of the theoretical space that underwrites the

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Women, Peace and Security: Security Council Open Debate, October 19, 2019. Photo by UN Women/Ryan Brown (https://www.flickr.com/photos/unwomen/48982235008).

WPS agenda, how it has been conceptualized and implemented in the DOD, and limits to the current implementation approach.

From Feminist Theory to WPS Practice

While the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda may seem like a recent invention, how best to incorporate and consider women's insecurity has been on the forefront of the UN agenda since it declared 1975-1985 the decade of women. With roots in the feminist critiques of international relations during the post-Cold War period, international society actively sought to integrate women into "full and equal participation in all human affairs,"[5] to include security. Beginning with Cynthia Enloe's *Banana's Beaches and Bases*, many researchers also began to ask "where are the women?"[6] The research that emerged found that when women are included in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, it "enlarge[s] the scope of those agreements to include a broader set of critical societal priorities and needs required for lasting peace."[7] Further research into the role of women in the security sector found that the inclusion of women in peace and security operations served as a force multiplier for the partner nation and the United States in the operational planning and execution of these activities. Women, as half the population,[8] have active roles in the security sector and are therefore instrumental in peacebuilding, though they often do not have a seat at the table. The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on 31 October 2000 in order to rectify that issue.[9]

The passage of UNSCR 1325 has had a profound impact on member states, as each is urged to integrate gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations[10] and invite gender training "in their national training programmes (sic) for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment,"[11] leading to the development of National Action Programs (NAP). In later years, the United Nations passed resolutions

1820, 1888, 1960, 2106, 2133, and 2242 to further elaborate the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.[12] For the United States, this agenda culminated in the 2017 Women, Peace, and Security Act.

The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 was the catalyst for formally establishing the integration of gender and gender-based criteria into security cooperation activities. Subsequent legislation followed, such as the 2018 Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act and WPS provisions in various National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) as a requirement for certain programs. The Women, Peace, and Security Act itself is also authoritative guidance on how the DOD should implement the WPS agenda. Specifically, this legislation has sought to increase the participation of women in the security sector through the integration of gender perspectives in various activities, such as development, diplomacy, and security cooperation. The act also has an education requirement, as the Department of Defense is to ensure training of "relevant personnel" on the importance of meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and various other security sector activities.

Subsequent NDAAs sought to further institutionalize WPS objectives by requiring the integration of a "gender perspective" in security cooperation activities. Though the SFIP identifies three defense objectives, they can be condensed into one overarching goal—to increase the meaningful participation of women in the security sector, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution and to ensure the protection of women's rights, especially during times of conflict in the United States and abroad.

According to the 2022 United States Women, Peace, and Security Congressional Report,[13] the DOD has stated it has made significant strides towards achieving WPS objectives. Some of the accomplishments highlighted by the DOD have been the integration of Gender Advisors (GENAD)

into geographic combatant commands and the hiring of other WPS personnel among the joint staff. The DOD has also established policies and programs to advance the WPS agenda, such as the integration of WPS objectives and gendered analysis into security cooperation activities. The DOD implemented WPS-focused training of military personnel and qualified personnel to train GENADS. The Congressional Report also highlighted the classes offered to military personnel about women in the security sector, and the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU) contracted staff to "design, develop, and deliver WPS training and education."[14] There is also a wider effort in various Professional Military Education (PME) institutions to integrate gender into mainstream curricula, and many offer gender studies courses as electives.

What is missing is data on how effective this integration has been, and in fact personal experience and feedback on classes has demonstrated a low-level backlash on the integration of gender training. This article is based on surveys of those tasked with implementing the WPS agenda and focuses on how it affects the security cooperation enterprise. Security cooperation as a focus was chosen because, as highlighted by the WPS Congressional Report, many of the strides made in the DOD were in integrating WPS into security cooperation activities. To be clear, security cooperation is defined as DOD activities "to build and develop allied and friendly security capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, provide the armed forces with access to the foreign country, and build relationships that promote specific United States security interests."[15] What makes the U.S. security cooperation (SC) approach worthy of study is that in the integration of WPS principles in SC activities, it also, in essence, requires foreign nations working with the United States to address the WPS agenda. This makes implementing the WPS agenda an important aspect of American foreign policy.

Methodology and Data

Research, including surveys and interviews with individuals who have participated in educating, or implementing Women, Peace, and Security objectives within the DOD or have served as GENADs in combatant commands reveal that each respondent had a different interpretation of how to operationalize the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. In fact, one respondent commented, "it is always interesting to me observing the Gender Advisor's struggle to operationalize gender in the defense and security environment." Others saw operationalization as "raising WPS awareness," but another respondent stated that operationalization should be "what we [the United States] already do" by leading through example, i.e., highlighting to our partner the number of U.S. women in high-ranking positions in the U.S. military.

These different conceptualizations may be rooted in the fact that there is very little guidance within DOD on how to operationalize the WPS agenda, much less gender. In fact, Jody Prescott argues "the U.S. military [fails] to consider gender as an operational factor."[16] Doctrine and other guidance documents often use gender neutral language. In her analysis of U.S. Joint Civil Affairs doctrine, Prescott concludes that "The lens through which the operational environment is analyzed is male, apparently based on the assumption that what is applicable to the men…is equally applicable to women."[17] However, since Prescott's article JP 5-0 Joint Planning has been revised to include "gendering analysis" as an important aspect of depicting the operational environment. There is also an appendix to JP 3-20 Security Cooperation that provides a tool for gender analysis specifically for security cooperation. It should be noted that this tool was released in 2022. Prior to this, there was very little guidance, and many respondents have interpreted incorporating WPS principles simply as adding women personnel. For example, in some geographic combatant commands, well-meaning security personnel

Woman in South Sudan Army. Photo by Jaroslav Šmahel (https://pixabay.com/photos/africa-army-women-south-sudan-1331327/).

have focused on getting partner nations to increase the number of females attending American-led military training activities, organizing one-off "women in the military" workshops, or as one respondent put it, "random acts of WPS." The respondent further stated these type of activities "make us feel great," but do not lead to lasting change.

As discussed, many combatant commands have hired GENADs to help address these issues. However, there are a few issues with this approach. For one, often GENADs are not additional personnel, but people already working—regularly female personnel—and given the title of GENAD as an

ancillary duty. In addition, those given this duty often are not subject matter experts in gender analysis, and they may or may not receive subsequent training once in the position. As one respondent stated, one of the biggest impediments to the current DOD approach to WPS implementation is that it is an impermanent, informal approach in which female officers are given this "extra duty." The respondent then indicated that there is also an uneven recognition of the importance of the WPS agenda, and their first duty is often to convince command that the WPS framework is value-added to the mission. As another respondent put it, WPS is

viewed as a "distraction or a pet rock" and command "doesn't understand how it can improve operational effectiveness."

A common critique often cited is that gender leads or GENADs are most often "the nearest woman" chosen under the assumption "you are female, you should know about WPS" or "you are female, you should be able to do gender analysis" without paying attention to expertise or even an acknowledgment that gender analysis does not mean strictly an analysis of "womenandchildren."[18] This further confuses what GENADs or gender leaders are to do, other than advocate or consider women's rights or increase the number of female participants.

This interpretation of "gender considerations" required by the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 oversimplified as advocating for women's rights seems further reinforced by some education security cooperation personnel. Lessons are not focused on defining or teaching how to integrate gender considerations, or even what meaningful participation of women would look like in security cooperation, other than providing an overview of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 or other pieces of American legislation or policies. This is often done without nuance to the student audience, as international officers, security cooperation officers, and security cooperation planners are often shown the same information. For each of these lessons the focus is on advancing Women, Peace, and Security objectives without indication of what those are, or how these objectives map to common security cooperation activities or wider strategic objectives.

The lessons do not adequately answer the questions of what WPS does for security cooperation, or how it assists both the United States and foreign nations in reaching common security objectives. For example, one respondent indicated that many males "made [negative] facial expressions" when teaching the WPS lesson to foreign security cooperation personnel. While the women were interested, many males sat with "their eyes glazed over." Even American student audiences expressed skepticism with WPS information, as both female and male students expressed integrating WPS "as just another thing we have to do" when they are already so busy. Still others taking the Security Cooperation Officer (SCO) course did not understand why the course focused so much on one single program, WPS, among many other security cooperation programs. This indicates that steps should be taken to increase reception of WPS information and adoption of WPS principles by adjusting the approach to teaching WPS principles. Instruction should focus on the mission benefits of integrating WPS principles and conducting gender analysis, rather than simply the legal requirements to do so.

Mixed reactions to WPS lessons mirror wider concerns respondents had when integrating WPS objectives into security cooperation plans and activities. One respondent indicated that part of the issue is that the reaction even among American military personnel to integrating WPS is almost seen as "political correctness" run amok. Other respondents indicated they felt uncomfortable with this overt integration of WPS into security cooperation activities, as it seemed like "we impose Western beliefs on another country." Another educator argued that,

> As we are already seeing in some countries, the U.S. is being accused of ignoring the 'culture' of that country. We [the US] are being 'preachy' and Russia and China are gaining a strategic edge in those countries. We should be leading by example but not forcing this [WPS] on other countries. Our country did not reach the stage we are at overnight, we evolved to where we are today.

Some respondents further argued that the way the DOD has sought to integrate WPS has also been rather "ham-fisted" and only served to reinforce the

notion that only women should be concerned with WPS and that only women benefit from WPS. As one respondent argued, the Department of Defense makes many assumptions when seeking to integrate WPS objectives. These are:

> 1) *You are a female, you should know about WPS.*
>
> 2) *You are a female, you should be the lead for WPS.*
>
> 3) *You are female, you should be able to do a gender analysis.*
>
> 4) *All-male, authoritarian, autocratic [partner nation's] military leadership will listen to the one US military woman in the delegation about WPS concerns.*
>
> 5) *[Partner nations] care about incorporating WPS into their military.*
>
> 6) *[Partner nations] will include women in their military forces.*
>
> 7) *[Partner nations] will allow women to fill leadership roles in their military.*

These assumptions further reinforce the notion that the WPS framework is about women only, and only women should be "doing" WPS. Additionally, this further adds to the burden on a small number of military women who are "volun-told" to do WPS" as a "check the box" event, especially if they cannot demonstrate the immediate value-added of WPS requirements towards the mission or toward achieving wider security objectives over the long term. This matches the experience of other females working in the security sector outside the United States. Nina Wilen found that if WPS-integrated security cooperation activities did not appear to immediately benefit the mission or strengthen the relationship between the United States and the partner nation, it ended in a "backlash of women's participation altogether" and added to the burden of requirements for female peacekeepers to conduct WPS activities.[19]

Many respondents also indicated they simply "lack the resources" in terms of both people and training to pay adequate attention to implementing the WPS agenda within security cooperation. Respondents also indicated that the manner in which WPS objectives were implemented lacked the nuance to context to ensure lasting change within partner nations. As one respondent argued, "some countries require implicit [subtle] versus explicit inclusion of WPS in [security cooperation] programs." Another respondent argues that taking a context-driven nuanced approach may be better done if it refrained "from going in one direction with highlighting women issues as a priority." As opposed to Women, Peace, and Security, the respondent preferred that the initiative be presented as 'human peace and security' to set the pace for integration processes "in all directions, as opposed to the past behavior of taking part in one single way" meaning focusing only on women.

While the American legislation (WPA of 2017, NDAA FY22) does specifically focus on increasing the meaningful participation of women, it also highlights the need for "gender considerations." Focusing on integrating gender considerations may be one way in which the United States can work towards increasing the "meaningful participation of women" without doing what respondents have categorized as forcing "Western beliefs on another country." Taking into account gender considerations imply that for security cooperation programs, SC implementers should analyze how effects of said SC activity or initiative may affect men and women differently. Program implementation can then be adjusted according to this analysis to ensure that women can participate by understanding male- or female-specific barriers to participation.

Changing the focus to "gender perspective" highlights the needs of both men and women in any given context. This will allow security cooperation planners and implementers the flexibility to tailor

The Ukrainian military is defending its positions. Brothers in arms man and woman at war. Photo by Dmytro Sheremeta (Shutterstock Photo ID: 2197766007).

initiatives to all segments of the population in partner nations. This approach, because it is not widely understood in the DOD, requires adequate education on gender and conducting gender analysis. Unfortunately, WPS lessons to American military and security cooperation personnel often focus on the "what" rather than the "how." It is important for the American security cooperation workforce to understand policies. However, little guidance is provided on how security cooperation practitioners can integrate a gender perspective in ways that can prove meaningful in their daily work. Often, students are given scenarios and then instructed to "integrate WPS" without being given practical tools on what this means or how to do it. Because of this, students often default to "just add women and stir," meaning seeking to increase the presence of women. In addition, the scenarios presented only reinforce women as victims, or the integration of women into peacebuilding based on stereotypical cases, such as kidnapping or human trafficking.

This approach fails to consider how women are more than just victims or peacebuilders. They can be combatants, part of insurgencies, or regular members of the partner nation's military. This instrumentalist approach to the integration of women, as Yaliwe Clarke[20] argues, "treats them either as overlooked beneficiaries or as sources of knowledge and skills which will enhance the world of the security structures."[21] This approach only serves to limit the transformational benefits of integrating a gendered perspective by limiting it to increasing a women's "token participation in stereotypical roles"[22] or in a stereotypical manner.

WPS lessons aimed at the security cooperation sector often take a "cookie-cutter" approach, demonstrated by using similar slides for different student audiences, without contextualizing for different cultural contexts, educational contexts, or the needs of the students. Martin-Brule and others, when researching gender training in international

peace and security, found that when training lacks contextualization to the needs of the audience, it "fails to convince the audience about the necessity and relevance of the material presented; at worst, it can cause those who may be unconvinced about the need for integrating gender perspective to feel a sense of 'normative imposition.'"[23]

Educators, gender leaders, gender advisors, security cooperation planners and implementers have all expressed some degree of this sense of normative imposition when integrating WPS into security cooperation activities. In contrast to a policy-based cookie-cutter approach, WPS trainings should focus on familiarizing participants with what a gender perspective means, beyond just "womenandchildren" and contextualizing this to the student's daily work. For security cooperation planners, security cooperation officers and other American security cooperation personnel, lessons should also seek to provide a set of tools and principles for "integrating gender into their daily work."[24] Education should also focus on providing information on how integrating gender perspectives can have both short-term and long-term positive benefits, increase success of the security initiative, and help achieve mission objectives. Most important, it should increase the understanding that WPS principles are not a security cooperation program. Legislation may make it seem like "another SC program," but by integrating WPS principles into the daily work of the DOD as a whole, it provides the United States a cutting edge over near peer competitors such as Russia or China. As opposed to just appealing to a country's leaders, by integrating WPS objectives the United States can demonstrate why its actions within partner nations are beneficial to all segments of a country's population, further cementing the meaningfulness of continuing a relationship with the United States. In addition, by changing the focus from "women" to "gender" and by training DOD security cooperation practitioners

to undertake a gender analysis that is meaningful to their daily work, this will begin to change the paradigm that equates a gender perspective with women and women only. This would also serve to provide tools to security cooperation officers, implementers and planners that work with partner nations to contextualize WPS initiatives to the culture to avoid an overly paternalistic approach to integrating women in the security sector of partner nations.

Conclusion

It has been over five years since the passage of the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, and it seems the DOD is following the same path as the lackluster progress in integrating the WPS agenda within the UN. In the case of the UN, it has been over twenty years since the passage of UNSCR 1325, and researchers are still unsure of the progress made in institutionalizing the role of women in the security sector. As noted by Cheryl Hendricks, "there is little substantive progress in increasing women's participation in peace and security structures and processes and in creating greater security for women."[25]

The approach to implementing the WPS agenda in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the UN, and other countries has moved little beyond "add women and stir."[26] Speaking with security cooperation implementers within the DOD, this seems to also be the case in the United States. In addition, the implementation of WPS for the whole of the DOD has fallen disproportionately on the shoulders of DOD women as key implementers or GENADs. This poses many problems. Not only are there a limited number of qualified GENADs but, as discussed above, sometimes the GENAD was just the "nearest woman" who did not necessarily have subject matter expertise. In addition, because of a lack of training, often this "gendered perspective" is interpreted as "advocating for women's rights" or getting a higher percentage of women into training,

as opposed to the more nuanced "assessing gender roles in a given society and applying those assessments to mission analysis."[27]

Because of a lack of resources and education, integration of WPS objectives into security cooperation activities and education has been informal, ham-fisted, not contextualized to local conditions, and viewed as an afterthought or burden. The burden of carrying out WPS objectives has disproportionately fallen on female security cooperation personnel, because, in general, it seems "the nearest women" are given the task of implementation as an added ancillary duty. Because of both a lack of resources and an overt focus on women as key beneficiaries of WPS initiatives, little progress has been made towards increasing the "meaningful participation of women" beyond the goal of increasing the number of female participants in security cooperation activities.

If the Department of Defense is focused on making real gains towards achieving WPS objectives with partner nations, it should give security cooperation personnel the tools to apply a tailored and culturally appropriate approach. This might begin with switching the focus from WPS policy to "gender" in WPS- affiliated trainings. In addition, being a gender lead or GENAD should move beyond being an ancillary duty and given to individuals with the appropriate subject-matter expertise regardless of gender. Placing more men in these roles can also further decouple gender perspectives from advocating for women's rights or women as beneficiaries only. A tailored, gender-focused approach led by both American female and male security cooperation personnel may not only lead to greater acceptance of WPS objectives by partner nations, but also to a transformational change that will increase meaningful participation of women in the security sector over the long-term, both within the United States and in the partner nations. **PRISM**

Notes

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[15] National Defense Authorization Act. U.S.C. Title 10 § 301 (2017).

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[19] Wilen, Nina. 2020. "Female peacekeepers' added burden" *International Affairs*, 96.6, p. 1602, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaa132.

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[21] Ibid., p. 368.

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[25] Hendricks, p. 365.

[26] Antonijevic, Zorana. 2022. "How We Have Won the Battle and Lost the Peace; Women, Peace and Security Agenda Twenty Years After." *Journal of Regional Security* 17.1; 5-24, p. 8.

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Military incursion in the valley area of the Apurimac, Ene and Mantaro rivers (VRAEM) where drugs such as cocaine are produced. Apurimac, Peru, November 26, 2011. Photo by David Human Bedoya at Shutterstock ID: 1961528875.

Organized Crime as Irregular Warfare

Strategic Lessons for Assessment and Response

By David H. Ucko and Thomas A. Marks

O rganized crime both preys upon and caters to human need. It is corrosive and exploitative, but also empowering, and therefore pervasive. Indeed, though often out of sight, organized crime is every-where: wherever governments draw the line, criminal actors find profitable ways of crossing it; wherever governments fail to deliver on human need, criminal actors capitalize on unmet desire or despair. For those excluded from the political economy, from patronage systems or elite bargains, organized crime can offer opportunity, possibly also protection. On aggregate, it amounts to an illicit form of governance, furnishing alternative services to a wide range of clients—be it the vulnerable and weak or a covetous elite. Reflecting the strength and resilience of this illicit order, those who stand in its way—individuals, institutions, even states—find themselves corrupted, co-opted, or violently eliminated.

The breadth of organized crime, its clandestine nature, and its blending of creative and destructive effects present acute analytical and policy-related challenges. Much like the response to the threat of terrorism post-9/11, our efforts to counter organized crime are stymied by 1) conceptual uncertainty of the problem at hand; 2) an urge to address the scourge head-on without acknowledging its socioeconomic-political context; and, therefore, 3) unquestioned pursuit of strategies that miss the point, whose progress is difficult to measure, and which may even be counterproductive. Thus, despite occasional operational success, the global illicit economy continues to grow so that, by 2021, 80 percent of the world's population lived in countries with high levels of crime and low levels of resilience to its effects.[1]

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In the case of counterterrorism, *irregular warfare* (IW) emerged as a corrective lens, in that it framed terroristic violence within its essential political context and as a component of a broader struggle of legitimacy. This approach has encouraged a more politically informed understanding of terrorism, insurgency, and other irregular challenges. Might a similar lens also improve our understanding and approach to organized crime? The convergence between the two phenomena suggests a way forward.

First, much like terrorism and insurgency, organized crime is a scourge that survives due to the functions and benefits it provides to desperate populations with few other options. Second, both are intensely political—if not in motivation, then certainly in origins, activities, and effects. Third, much like irregular threats, organized crime is oppositional to the rule of law and feeds on the state's vulnerabilities. Fourth, both problems expose deep cracks in an international system supposedly governed by capable states exercising sovereignty over their peoples and lands. Fifth, both phenomena have a clandestine facet but are enmeshed with the licit world in often unpredictable ways. Thus, much like counterinsurgency, efforts to counter organized crime must operate both underground and above-ground, both counter a threat and address its drivers, and proceed with far greater awareness of what constitutes success—and for whom.

Based on these commonalities, this article applies the insight of IW to the study of and response to organized crime. The argument is divided into three parts. First, the paper makes the case that, despite key differences, organized crime shares fundamental features with other irregular challenges—principally insurgency. Second, the paper lays out six major lessons of irregular warfare, informed by the bruising campaigns associated with the "War on Terror." Third, the paper applies these lessons to various state efforts to counter organized crime. The analysis challenges how organized crime is typically understood—its character, expression, and purpose—and encourages a more politically informed way of assessing and responding to this threat.

The Overlap: Organized Crime and Irregular Warfare

Much like terrorism, organized crime is at once easy to intuit but difficult to define. If policymakers can be accused of adopting too narrow a focus on the criminal behavior itself, academics often overtheorize the concept to the point of irrelevance. For the purposes of this analysis, organized crime is defined as *any group, with some degree of structure, whose primary objective is profit and whose methods include illegal activity, ranging from the use of force, to the corruption of public officials and predation of civilian populations*. This definition captures some of the phenomenon's key components: its 1) collective nature; 2) pecuniary objective; 3) illicit ways; and 4) exploitative effects.

These components allow organized crime to nest conceptually within irregular warfare. The U.S. Department of Defense defines irregular warfare as "a struggle among state and non-state actors to influence populations and affect legitimacy." It adds that "IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will."[2] In other words, irregular warfare like organized crime, is concerned with 1) collective action, that 2) uses violence among other illicit methods, and 3) which has corrupting, or outright destructive, effects on society.

As a rubric, IW comprises principally the challenges of insurgency and terrorism. The contribution of the IW lens is that it posits these threats as components of a contest for legitimacy, wherein violence merely supports a political struggle. In contrast to the "regular wars" that, supposedly, are won just through military means, irregular actors combine several lines of effort, weaponize narratives

to gain or erode support, and exploit societal, economic, and political weaknesses to build strength and sustain the challenge. This is the playbook of insurgents, forcing governments to respond in kind, via political and informational channels and with security forces in support.[3]

The major difference between organized crime and IW actors is the objective: insurgents or terrorists pursue a political or ideological objective whereas criminals are thought to be concerned solely with profit. Still, much like insurgents, actors involved in organized crime shape the surrounding political landscape to maximize profit, be it through corruption, the erosion of institutions, or their insistence on impunity. In effect, the organized criminal element is engaging in a "struggle among state and non-state actors to influence populations and affect legitimacy." The goal is to align behavior with the criminal business model, so that an illicit alternative emerges to the rule of law. In this way, criminal enterpises come to determine "who gets what, and when," which is the very essence of politics.[4]

Given these commonalities, the response to organized crime and to insurgency should also overlap. In suggesting counterinsurgency theory as a crime-fighting tool, a caveat is immediately needed given the term's military connotations. The point is not to militarize further the response to organized crime. Instead, counterinsurgency *in its theory* is a political activity. Its contribution to consideration of organized crime is to cast the phenomenon as fueled by specific political and social drivers which must, alongside the criminal actors, also be addressed— perhaps as the primary focus. In a similar vein, the purpose of irregular warfare (despite its allusion to *war*) is to position the competition of legitimacy and influence over contested populations as the primary concern, and the violence as a contingent component of the overall struggle.

The discussion of legitimacy requires two clarifications. First, the state cannot in any way assume to hold legitimacy merely because it is "duly constituted" or has legal status. The tendency to view the state unquestioningly as a provider, and its enemies as the threat, wishes away the very heart of the problem: a lack of government legitimacy and split loyalties among the population. Legitimacy is subjective, fluid, contextual, and contested; nothing can be taken for granted.

Second, legitimacy in irregular warfare is not a popularity contest but speaks instead to the "right to lead." Winning legitimacy means controlling or co-opting contested populations, or shaping the "beliefs and attitudes of the affected actors regarding the normative status of a rule, government, political system or governance regime."[5] Popular views can be shaped mainly through coercion, but sustaining cooperation is made easier if co-option also plays a role. Either way, gaining legitimacy means more than emotive affinity; it also involves a self-interested calculation that such loyalty is likely to pay off. This is, indeed, what is meant by winning both hearts *and* minds.

The Lessons of Irregular Warfare

So much for the theory. It is no secret that counterinsurgency, as practiced by the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, has not adhered to the ideals laid out in doctrine. It would be facile to suggest that the theory remains valid even if practice falls short. Such a defense shields theory from criticism and generates unfalsifiable assertions. The better source of insight lies precisely in the accumulated experience from the field—ours and that of others, both negative and positive. Six major lessons stand out.

The Socio-Economic and Political Context

It became clear soon after the 9/11 attacks that the United States and many of its European allies had unlearned whatever they might once have known about irregular warfare, particularly the matter

at hand: terrorism. In responding to attacks by al-Qaeda, no real distinction was made between the use of terrorism *as part of a strategy* and the use of terrorism *as a strategy in and of itself.* As Wieviorka and others have argued, most groups use terror as one of many "methods," yet for others it becomes all-consuming, that is, the entire "logic" of the political project.[6] We can term the former *insurgents* and the latter *terrorists*—in the end, the labeling is secondary to the implications raised.

Indeed, with *terrorism* (also known as "pure terrorism"), armed politics is divorced from the purported mass base in whose name action is undertaken. These groups have so isolated themselves structurally that they have no social standing and can only express themselves via attacks, with minimal political follow-up. In such circumstances—really, a "failed insurgency"—the state can focus on the perpetrators themselves because these clandestine actors are the sum total of the "movement." With *insurgency*, however, a focus on "rooting out the terrorists," to the exclusion of political mediation, often leads to new cycles of violence.[7] It then becomes important to understand the functions that insurgency serves among its constituents and to design a response that addresses these aspects along with the use of violence.

The American-led response to the 9/11 attacks seldom made this differentiation. It did not concern itself with the reasons for isolated yet significant pockets of support for al-Qaeda or the factors that might spread it further.[8] A similarly narrow approach characterized early operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the latter, U.S. forces were certainly capable of defeating the Taliban but it proved far more difficult to address the continued instability in the country, never mind the geostrategic factors that sustained the insurgent struggle. In the former, the U.S. military initially treated the Iraqi insurgency as if its members were both finite and few—as if taking out enough "dead-enders" would do the job.[9]

Any gains made in this manner failed to change the political motivation for insurgency or the opportunities of mobilization.[10]

Missed in both cases were the political and social drivers of insurgency. The purpose of security forces should be to provide the shield behind which the government enacts the policies necessary to mobilize support, thereby marginalizing violent hardliners. This attempt at social engineering, all while bullets are flying, is also what makes counterinsurgency so difficult. In many cases, political elites are more interested in retaining power and privilege than addressing the reasons for strife. Even where there is political will and the right policies have been identified, one cannot overstate the challenges of sequencing, of balancing short- and long-term goals, of pushing change through a bureaucratic system, and of measuring progress appropriately—all necessary steps. Of course, the complexity is compounded where the state is weak or never exercised sovereign control to begin with.

Militarization of Response

Counterinsurgency emerged as a corrective to the narrower counter-terrorist lens of the War on Terror, yet a review of its application in the 2000s and 2010s reveals the second major lesson, namely the tendency to militarize even "whole-of-government" endeavors. In Iraq and Afghanistan, counterinsurgency, at best, shaped only *military* operations. Outside of the Pentagon, even the term *counterinsurgency* was problematic, given its military connotations. Within the Pentagon, it was not seen as real warfighting and as worthy of institutional investment.

In the end, this approach deprived the efforts of political content, leading to the eventual failure of the (mostly military) "surges" in both countries. In Iraq, despite improved security, the United States could never truly address the sectarian Shia elements it had anointed the future leaders of the country.[11] This political contradiction undid the

hard-won gains of the surge and fueled violence well beyond the departure of U.S. troops. The jury is still out as to whether the latest mowing of the grass—the military dismantling of the ISIS counter-state—will be politically sustained or have a more transient effect.[12]

In Afghanistan, no political plan emerged to address the conflict's regional dimension or to resolve contradictory Western aims.[13] Despite a strategy that hinged on the legitimacy of the Kabul government, its corruption and the abuses of its security forces persisted with impunity. Similarly, the political plan constructed in the West paid scant attention to Afghan norms, resulting in a highly centralized national government that ran counter to the fragmented nature of the Afghan state. It did not help that, in both theaters, the United States gave counterinsurgency only two or three years to work, betraying faith in this concept as a quick military fix to deep-rooted political problems.

The charge of militarization in the U.S. and allied response should not be taken to mean the military has no role to play in countering political violence. There is a clear need for security forces to target predatory actors and provide security for contested populations. The issue is that strike operations typically receive far more resources than security, and that neither are linked to a viable political process that gives military activity strategic meaning.

Mirror-Imaging: State, Society, Interests

A third lesson, from Afghanistan and Iraq, but also elsewhere, lies in the tendency to confuse the interests and norms of the intervening states with those of the state where the conflict unfolds. Mirror-imaging takes many forms. Militarily, the United States and allied partners have typically evinced insufficient understanding of the abilities and needs of the institutions they seek to support, and assistance therefore defaults to the norms and practices of the intervening institution.[14] A conventional

military approach to these conflicts is rarely appropriate, and yet, as Greentree notes, "It is hard to get around the fact that militaries can only attempt to transfer what they know."[15]

More fundamental is political mirror-imaging, or where an intervening government assumes its interests are shared by the frontline governments through which action is to be taken. The United States long presumed that both it and the fledgling Iraqi government were united in seeking representative democracy, and yet the sectarian parties thus elevated were also those running radical Iran-backed militias.[16] The entire surge was based on the political desire of Maliki to reconcile with the Sunni tribal leaders and political elite, but it did not occur.[17] In Mali, the West's counter-terrorism assistance presumes that the political elite will move to spread "good governance" in the areas most affected by extremism. Instead, it has proved extremely challenging to sway the "indifferent political elite in Mali," which some perceive as having done "the bare minimum ... to invest in the violence-wracked north and central regions of the country."[18]

In Afghanistan, NATO and the international community were so uncertain of their political aims that counter-terrorist prerogatives often conflicted with, or eclipsed entirely, efforts to stand up local institutions capable of sustaining peace and security.[19] In the midst of this confusion, it was never clear which goals, if any, enjoyed buy-in in Kabul. Certainly, Karzai's theft of the 2009 election and his government's complicity with organized crime suggested significant divergences on two of the campaign's major fronts.[20] Given this brittle political foundation, NATO's mission too often devolved into peripatetic charity services in the rural hinterland in the hope of thereby winning hearts and minds (but for what?).[21]

At the broadest level, this concerns not only divergent political interests but completely different conceptions of the state. In Nigeria, Mali and indeed most of the Sahel, in Mozambique, the Democratic

Republic of Congo, and—in Asia—Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Philippines, insurgencies drag on in part because the areas most affected are not those of concern to the elite. Efforts at "state-building" do not often acknowledge this reality and instead assume a level of local ownership that does not obtain.

Even in Colombia, where counterinsurgency helped beat back FARC, entrenched schisms in the state have hampered the crucial political consolidation of the neglected hinterland. There are undeniably compelling arguments for any government to focus on the western *sierra* region, where the major cities are located and 95 percent of the population lives, rather than the more vulnerable minority, which resides in FARC's former stronghold and where violence, drug trafficking, and insecurity still prevail.[22] Still, given the lack of alternative livelihoods, the profits of the drug trade, and the power of local gangs, there are also compelling arguments for the rural population to return to coca cultivation. Thus, the schism endures—something that should inform grand plans to unify the state.

Indeed, the case of Colombia raises the crucial question whether "state-building" and "good governance" are at all realistic approaches to conflict termination. In Colombia, the counterinsurgency effort benefited from professional security forces, generous U.S. military aid, and a tradition of democracy reaching back to the late nineteenth century. Even then, the incentives of electoral democracy and the strict limitations on national resources made truly unifying the country a fleeting priority. For international attempts to advise less stable or less coherent nation-states, the implications are deeply inauspicious.

Community Mobilization

Despite overall success, the Colombian counterinsurgency strategy points to a key political lesson: the need for more creative ways of tying the periphery to the center, all as part of a stable political compact.[23]

If a government evinces no political will to exercise sovereignty in line with Weberian norms, how can it nonetheless fend off insurgency and limit insecurity? Some scholars suggest an alternative order—one that reflects the fissiparous nature of statehood yet retains sufficient central oversight to avert conflict. Ken Menkhaus terms the approach a "mediated state," one wherein "the government relies on partnership (or at least coexistence) with a diverse range of local intermediaries and rival sources of authority to provide core functions of public security, justice, and conflict management in much of the country."[24] Others call such arrangements "hybrid political orders" and laud this lens as a pragmatic recognition of how many states function in reality rather than in theory.[25]

This approach not only acknowledges the artificiality of the state in many insurgency-threatened contexts, but also that, in such contexts, the attempted imposition of the state can be deeply counterproductive. In Somalia, a major reason for popular resistance to the strong state sought through various Western interventions is that, historically, that very same state has acted as "a catalyst for criminality, violence, and communal tensions."[26] In Afghanistan, local communities rejected central authority in part owing to vivid memories of abuse, injustice, and cruelty perpetrated by the state.[27] In Iraq, the continued empowerment of an increasingly sectarian Shia government to deal with a Sunni insurgency led to predictable outcomes, with death squads in government uniforms cleansing entire neighborhoods and pushing their Sunni compatriots into the arms of al-Qaeda.[28] Here and elsewhere, "more state" is no recipe for more stability.

This insight reveals the limitations of counterinsurgency theory, which aims to expand governance to previously "ungoverned areas." For one, while the theory emphasizes that government control spreads like ink spots across paper, it does not display much concern for what was on that

Men, women, and children work and live from what they find in the Juarez garbage dump. They collect what they find for themselves or to sell. Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, September 1, 2021. Photo by David Peinado Romero at Shutterstock ID: 2035787651.

paper before the ink reached it. In fact, the analogy is critically flawed, as there really is no societal equivalent to a blank piece of paper. Instead, each human locality heaves with activity, intrigue, and politics, and the challenge lies in understanding and engaging with this local level.[29]

The point matters, because how these areas are understood determines how they are handled. If seen as places where institutions are absent, the go-to solution will be to quickly impose the state to fill the void. More promising is to engage with the local structures that regulate life away from the state, so that they may be co-opted to benefit both center and periphery within the context of a loosely unified national compact. Be they systems of governance, security, or justice, these local institutions are often seen as more legitimate by the local population. In

Afghanistan, for example, the thin spread and many deficiencies of the national courts meant that most Afghans preferred informal bodies—such as *jirgas* and *shuras* of local elders—for conflict adjudication.[30] In Mali, popular trust in traditional structures by far exceeds that placed in the police and national courts.[31] In post-conflict Timor Leste, rural areas beyond the state's administrative reach are governed through "customary forms of community organisation." As Bjoern Hofmann notes, state-based institutions "acknowledge these forms of self-governance and work alongside them, while at the same time aiming to strengthen the new administrative structures staffed by elected representatives."[32]

Combining top-down and bottom-up initiatives in this manner may be the best political model for several insurgency-threatened states.

The burning question is what level of decentralization to accept, and at what cost. Even if authority is ceded to the periphery, the state must nonetheless be capable of intervening when local-level mechanisms turn predatory and risk the legitimacy of the arrangement and of the state. The key lies in the state underwriting and empowering informal variations on the periphery, thereby satisfying local needs, empowering local political allies, and contributing to a desire to be part of, rather than resist, the state at the heart of it all. Needless to say, while the mediated state provides a more realistic lens, it does not significantly simplify the task of achieving justice and peace.

Lack of Strategy

For American and other soldiers, the discovery of counterinsurgency promoted an understanding of war more "as is" rather than "as imagined." Particularly instructive were various "counterinsurgency principles" that emphasized the importance of political understanding, of unified command, of intelligence-led operations, of population control and support, and of using only the appropriate use of force for campaign objectives.[33] For a conventionally minded force, this guidance—though banal—was also important, highlighting the limited utility of military force in the absence of legitimacy.

The issue was that the guidance came to fill a function that it could not possibly play—that of strategy. In Afghanistan in particular, military units let the necessarily broad principles of counterinsurgency become the campaign plan—not least because of pervasive confusion as to the actual strategy in place.[34] The problem was not necessarily the absence of actual strategic goals but rather their multiplicity, contradictions, and lack of ordering.[35] Instead of achieving clarity at this level, the general conception was that, if the counterinsurgency principles could just be upheld, stability would ensue, allowing U.S. forces to withdraw.

Clearly, "best practice" is not "best strategy." Strategy—in this instance—can be defined very simply. Eliot Cohen casts it as "the art of choice that binds means with objectives." He elaborates, "It is the highest level of thinking about war, and it involves priorities (we will devote resources here, even if that means starving operations there), sequencing (we will do this first, then that), and a theory of victory (we will succeed for the following reasons)."[36] Plainly, a counterinsurgency field manual cannot address these difficult questions or resolve the attendant trade-offs, though it may provide some guidance on how to think and engage with the modern battlefield.

Strategic clarity would have required two broad steps. First, the essential foundation is political understanding of the problem. What type of war are we embarking on, asks Clausewitz. French Marshal Ferdinand Foch put it in similar terms: *de quoi s'agit-il?*—or, "What is it all about?".[37] What the military calls mission analysis, also known as a "strategic estimate," is crucial, because it unpacks a complex situation, places it in political context, and maps the strategies and interests of its various players, thereby to examine and critique our own approach.[38]

This step was all but absent in Afghanistan and only fleetingly applied in Iraq. In Afghanistan, it took too many years to appreciate the geo-strategic context of the Taliban's struggle, the resistance to a central state, the roles of corruption at the central and local levels, and the exact relation between the Taliban and America's actual target, al-Qaeda.[39] In Iraq, during the surge years, it was finally acknowledged that within a sectarian Shia-controlled political context, the Sunni community had some legitimate grievances and were pushed toward al-Qaeda on account of government predation. The compacts made with Sunni partners on the ground, to protect them from both Shia death-squads and al Qaeda coercion, stemmed from this estimate.[40]

An in-depth estimate produces a viable foundation for the second crucial step, namely the formulation of strategy. The key requirement here is a theory of success, or an accounting for how proposed methods will achieve desired outcomes. This theory requires awareness of national interests, existing and needed legal authority, the assumptions necessary to enable planning, and the risks created both by the plan's implementation and by its possible sources of failure. Most difficult, perhaps, is the need to track progress, neither confusing that which is measurable for what to measure nor confusing activity with progress.[41] As Cohen put it above, strategy is "the highest level of thinking about war,"—and about peace—and yet if it fails our efforts are almost certainly doomed.[42]

The Black Box of Political Will

If the art of strategy offers a way out of darkness—a method to structure the response—its countervailing force is the lack of political will for precisely such action. How good are concepts, theory, and best practices if the government that is to act prefers to go in a different direction? By way of illustration, only a handful of the forty-seven countries that deployed troops to Afghanistan authorized them to operate at an intensity appropriate for the campaign. Others imposed caveats on where and how their troops could be used. In Mazar-e-Sharif, a provincial reconstruction team (PRT) of 500–600 soldiers was responsible for stabilizing four provinces and a combined 2.5 million people. What does this say about the contributing states' political will? Can any strategy, or any field manual, truly change the likely outcome of such an investment?

Political will eats strategy for breakfast, as the saying goes. Where it is lacking, the search for better practice and more enlightened approaches appears simply to chase the shadow of a larger problem. Still, an inadequacy of political will is not a dead end. First, how does one measure it? In the absence of some gauge, the main sign of its absence will be the lack of progress, yet such analysis turns circular: failed operations reflect inadequate will whereas successful ones do not. Political will then becomes a catch-all, purely retrospective argument, both unfalsifiable and meaningless. Second, political will is not static. It fluctuates according to events on the ground, domestic developments, electoral interests, and understandings of foreign affairs.[43]

Thus, while acknowledging political will, those concerned with effecting change must also consider how to shift opinion accordingly, or how to operate effectively within the constraints at hand. Either way, it would seem necessary to focus analysis on *why* states engage in irregular campaigns, how they perceive their adversaries, and the balance of interests that determines both commitment and approach. The lack of honest engagement in these questions—particularly vis-à-vis Afghanistan—lies at the root of the very poor performance seen in that campaign.

Lessons of IW Applied to Organized Crime

The above review of IW lessons argues for more comprehensive analysis of informal political economies and better proficiency at strategy development. What is striking is that any review of state efforts to counter organized crime reveals a similar set of lessons. The precise context differs, but the same tendencies obtain.[44] This commonality speaks to an apparent pathology in how we frame and respond to irregular problem-sets, organized crime included.

The Socio-Economic and Political Context

Much as with irregular challenges, efforts to counter organized crime struggle to internalize the socio-economic and political context in which this phenomenon unfolds. Rather than a self-standing problem of illicit behavior, criminality is enmeshed within social and political networks that must be incorporated in analysis and response. On the latter, it becomes necessary to query and address the

drivers that lead people to participate in or rely on crime, not least when the state is unwittingly or otherwise contributing to the problem.

Though this advice may appear commonsensical, it seldom informs praxis. Efforts to combat wildlife crime in sub-Saharan Africa generally frame the poachers as the problem to be suppressed and fail to consider the local embeddedness of this practice. And yet, in northern Kenya, for example, poaching occurs within a context of "cattle rustling, road banditry, and inter-communal conflict," and therefore requires a broader, political response.[45] For similar reasons, "commercial poaching" must be distinguished from "subsistence poaching," because while both threaten local fauna, each has its own drivers.[46] Where poaching is perceived locally as a coping mechanism due to the state's failure to govern, a response targeting the activity in isolation may bring further polarization, desperation, and—potentially—conflict.[47] Similarly, state efforts to counter corruption must account for its social and political acceptance in contexts where the licit order is failing. Where patrimonialism and nepotism are simply the way to get things done, suppressing these practices risks displacement and chaos.[48]

Here, and elsewhere, organized crime provides a safety valve for populations with few other options. The cultivation and trade in narcotics—in Afghanistan, Peru, and Colombia—stem fundamentally from the vulnerability of abandoned communities. As Buxton describes, these circumstances make the cultivation of drugs an obvious choice, given the minimal start-up costs or technical requirements, the durability of the product, the ease of its transport, and—of course—the reliability of its market.[49] Absent viable alternatives, crop eradication is unlikely to affect this coping mechanism; indeed, it may only exacerbate vulnerability and thereby incentivize exactly the criminality that it seeks to prevent.[50]

Similarly, people smuggling is rooted in profound global inequalities and insecurity in the origin countries. To crack down on the illicit service provided by smugglers, rather than address its demand, is to gamble that those fleeing death or desperation will stop trying at the first sign of difficulty. Basic supply-and-demand economics suggest otherwise. If populations are desperate for the service, smugglers will find new countermeasures and increase their prices accordingly, all while their clients do whatever they can—crime, prostitution, or predation—to source the needed funds.[51]

Criminal gangs, too, can be enmeshed in their community.[52] In Rio, Comando Vermelho blends coercion with co-option, providing employment, some degree of government service, and even entertainment to the disadvantaged citizens of the city's *favelas*. In a dynamic seen in other contexts, enforcement against the gang therefore is interpreted as an attack on the community, not least due to the "collateral damage," further alienating it and elevating the gang as local heroes.[53] Given this social embeddedness, Skaperdas recommends viewing inner-city gangs as "essentially part of the larger problem of the successful integration of such areas into mainstream society and the modern nation-state."[54] This lens, then, generates a different response.

The overriding lesson is that organized crime "is *not* an extension of a foreign body to the existing system, country or infrastructure. If anything, it is the product of a country's history, its social conditions, its economic system, its political elite and its law enforcement regime."[55] It must therefore be asked why the social contract and political settlement are fueling organized crime. This is not an invitation to moral relativism. Instead, the framing should help distinguish between crime as coping mechanism and crime as exploitation—and query the state's role in enabling either. It should also encourage a distinction between foot-soldiers, who in dysfunctional conditions can readily be replaced, and the organizers of criminal activity, who are more inaccessible and may even enjoy some level of state protection.

As a positive example, the nations involved in patrolling the Gulf of Guinea have come to recognize the need not just for coordination at sea but also a comprehensive approach to the push factors on land that are fueling the problem of piracy. As Ralby explains, "Focusing on three pillars—security, development and stewardship—this non-traditional military effort seeks to combine operational security matters with efforts to safeguard the marine environment and improve the quality of life on land. Food security, economic security, energy security, and environmental sustainability are all part of this effort."[56] Of course, the more comprehensive the strategy, the more challenging its implementation.

Similarly, the strategy adopted by the Contact Group on Piracy of the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) purposefully went beyond the purely military considerations to focus as well on "the financial networks behind the individual groups of Somali pirates…the masterminds, or kingpins, and the funders."[57] Going further, in some Somali communities, the creation of viable economic alternatives caused local elites to repel rather than shelter pirates.[58] This is the type of systemic response needed, borne out of a full mapping of the problem and players involved.

Within a globalized environment, such "mapping" must extend transnationally. For example, it is unclear how the Philippine government can combat drug use without addressing the transnational connections of that archipelago nation, not least to the lawless parts of Myanmar where the product is cultivated, or to the seas over which it is shipped. To kill an ever-growing number of poor Filipino drug users, or even low-level operators, is to strike the wrong target, at devastating human cost.[59] Similarly, naval patrols in Southeast Asia can catch the low-level pirates, but their bosses, investors, and fixers sit in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore and can easily replace lost earners.[60] Many of the poachers arrested in South Africa are from the lowest rungs of an

enterprise overseen by evasive crime lords, who keep their distance, benefit from political and business protection, and won't so easily be caught.[61]

Taking embeddedness one step further, the illicit world is enmeshed within its licit counterpart, the state's systems and institutions. Indeed, in many cases, because of the large sums involved, the threat of violence, and the weakness of institutions, the ultimate enabler of criminal activity can be found within the very institutions charged with response. This situation not only challenges the supposedly bright line that ought to divide "coppers" from "robbers," but highlights another way in which strategies of response must go beyond the criminal activity itself and also consider its drivers and roots.

Militarization of Response

Much as with campaigns of irregular warfare, the struggle against organized crime typically takes on a militarized form. "Militarization" does not speak exclusively to the use of military forces—though this happens—but rather to a purely suppressive strategy. The theory is that success is achieved by increasing the costs on active criminals and deterring would-be emulators or those relying upon their services. Be it in counterinsurgency or counter-crime, unless these efforts also address the *reasons* behind the behavior, they typically confront the "hydra effect" of eliminating one target only to find another. Also, as the threat adapts to avoid imposed costs, the response must give chase, leading to a spiraling game of cat-and-mouse.

On America's southern border, the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has adopted an "enforcement-only" strategy that relies on "a single concept—*deterrence*."[62] CBP is not a military unit, but it is the "largest police force in the world"—accounting for 60,000 personnel in 2014, with a fleet of some 250 planes and other aerial assets. Yet, as Erickson explains, deterrence "failed to address the complexity behind peoples' decision to move, struggled to measure success in relation to

Boy sitting on destroyed tank on the hills over Kabul City in Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan, 2012. Photo by Karl Allen Lugmayer at Shutterstock ID: 1710655522.

recidivism and reaped immeasurable human costs and daunting economic ones."[63] It has also made the services provided by smugglers more lucrative.[64] Similar outcomes can be seen in the use of warships to fight smugglers in the Mediterranean, Australia's detention of migrants in off-shore detention centers, Turkey's military deployments on its beaches, and the mining of the Turkish-Syrian border.

Likewise, anti-poaching efforts often apply the same search-and-destroy method as seen in the "War on Terror," resulting in hunting expeditions to target those who themselves hunt. On the seas, well-intended expeditions to stop the poaching of whales follow the same logic—that by locating the actors involved and obstructing their business model, the activity will stop or at least be reduced. In both cases, a necessary (but often absent) component would

be to address the political economy sustaining the market. Unless it is addressed, our countermeasures risk making crime more profitable, as those involved claim higher premiums due to elevated risks.[65]

As a final illustration, various counter-gang operations in Central and South America have revealed the futility of force as a self-standing strategy. Operating from tightly packed slums where opportunity is lacking, the gangs use the local population as labor, creating a symbiosis— but also a human shield to deter enforcement. When states do intrude into these areas, the operations are hugely dislocating to the local community and ineffectual in weakening the gangs. Typically, they either empower the gang by cementing its bonds with a beleaguered population or create a power vacuum that new gangs fight

to control. Even so, these strategies are common, as seen in the periodic *mano duro* (firm hand) or *cero tolerancia* (zero tolerance) strategies adopted by Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, and El Salvador.[66]

The causes of militarization are manifold. First, crime invites traditional policing, and the police forces are designed to stop and deter crime. In criminology, deterrence requires the *credible* threat of *swift* and *severe* punishment, leading therefore to increasingly punitive strategies.[67] Second, in a crisis, there is undeniable appeal in how quickly security forces can be deployed to "deal with it." A comprehensive response requires more generous timelines, more resources across more agencies, and more coordination, all of which presumes great capacity and leadership. Finally, once a security response is deployed, it is all-too tempting for governments to consider the crisis "managed" and move on, rather than transition to that longer-term, less reactive, and more effective approach. As such, what was intended as crisis-response becomes the whole strategy.

Militarization of response is not just ineffective; it can also lead to harm against non-combatants and violations of due process. In response to mounting abuse and corruption within CBP, the Obama administration created an Integrated Advisory Panel (IAP) to professionalize the force. The body's interim and final reports spoke of a vast entity of uncertain standards that, despite progress, struggled with containing the power and resources handed to it. Indeed, stories from the southern border reveal the mass dehumanization of migrant populations (more correctly, refugees), as the response seeks to make their experience increasingly difficult. As the provider and user of criminal services are conflated, and the focus remains punitive, the result can be mass targeting and incarceration (or worse) of entire populations.

Because these strategies do not work, there is also a danger of spiraling costs and commitment. In the United States, "Congress continues to channel more U.S. taxpayer dollars to immigration enforcement agencies (more than $28.6 billion now) than all other enforcement agencies combined, including the FBI, DEA, ATF, US Marshals, and Secret Service."[68] Over time, such commitments become entrenched, perhaps even irreversible, particularly if they have led organized crime to escalate in response.[69] There are also political costs involved, as militarized strategies provide the semblance of decisiveness and poll very well (the same applies within the context of counter-terrorism). In the Philippines, for example, a drug war that has caused at least 6,000 deaths (and possibly four times that), and which has patently not solved the drug problem in the country, nonetheless meets the approval of 81.6 percent of the population.[70] *In extremis*, militarization creates a nation at war with itself.

The problem of militarization does not mean that enforcement measures should be avoided altogether. "Escalation dominance" is often crucial to strategic effectiveness. Where states seek to address gang problems without such leverage, via negotiations or non-violent measures such as "Community Violence Reduction" (CVR) programs, they have found themselves hemmed in by the gang's authority. As International Crisis Group notes, bargaining with a gang assumes, at least implicitly, that it is willing to "abandon extortion and other criminal practices, and eventually disarm and demobilize"—and this is unlikely when the state is in a position of weakness.[71] As to CVR, aimed at providing employment and political inclusion, such initiatives face strategic and ethical hazards when attempted in gang-owned territory. In effect, they must choose between working *with the gangs*, even paying them off, and seeking to avoid them altogether—and thereby missing the most at-risk demographic.[72] Many crime experts therefore question the impact of violence-prevention initiatives in contexts of chronic insecurity.[73]

For coercion to gain strategic meaning, it must be integrated within a broader approach, one that addresses the push and pull factors of organized crime *as well as* its manifestations. Much as with

irregular warfare, this requirement raises questions about the type of force needed and alongside what other actors it should operate. As in counterinsurgency, the force should understand the strategically appropriate level of force and how it relates to "political primacy." Typically, the lack of strategic aptitude and of non-military support almost ensure that these conditions are not met, resulting in more insecurity, illegitimacy and the felt need for more enforcement.

Mirror-Imaging: State, Society, Interests

Much as with irregular warfare, efforts to counter organized crime often involve a better resourced state assisting one less able. Also in both contexts, such relationships can do much good but also be undermined by mirror-imaging, whereby the interests and norms of the donor are confused with those of the recipient. Such confusion can be counter-productive—even disastrous.

The root of this problem is that not all states are similarly seized by the problem of organized crime. Reflecting the very weakness that triggered external attempts to help, some states come to arrangements with criminal groups so that they, and the state, can both function. It is not lost on the government that the criminal group may hold more power, be it in terms of "wealth, organization, communications," or "weaponry," all of which "can create qualitatively different bargaining relationships."[74] Given the dangers of confrontation (and to what end?), striking a pact may appear the better option, not least in states where organized crime fills national coffers (40 to 50 percent of national income in some contexts).[75]

Where third-party states overlook such arrangements, their efforts will disappoint. The role of corruption looms large. As many have stressed, corruption can mask "a vast and intricate system of patronage," and so "to assail it (especially without proffering any alternative framework of political access or economic redistribution) is to endanger the livelihood of millions of people, including those who otherwise denounce corruption stridently."[76] A starting-point is to interrogate the local political economy and norms; to appraise what constitutes "societally approved of, or at least socially ignored, forms of corruption."[77]

The lack of such understanding contributed to policy failure in Afghanistan. When the West belatedly came to appreciate the problem of corruption, it found a host-nation government that viewed the issue very differently. Ironically, it was initially the United States, for reasons of counterterrorism, that invited into the Afghan government the very warlords who would haunt its later state-building efforts. Still, when the United States sought to undo this damage, it only gradually dawned upon it that its partner in Kabul was itself a main impediment. Warlords that the United States wanted to marginalize were invited back in by the Karzai regime. Major targets for counter-corruption, such as Ahmed Wali Karzai, the president's half-brother, were effectively untouchable.[78] Stephen Hadley, Bush's one-time national security adviser, put it starkly: "Karzai was never sold on democracy and did not rely on democratic institutions, but instead relied on patronage." Christopher Kolenda also reflects the American frustration, recalling that by 2006 the Afghan government had "self-organized into a kleptocracy."[79]

This frustration reflects not just the teething pains of largely improvised "nation-building" but the compromises that each state makes in relation to organized crime. In Nigeria, for example, the state elected to pay off armed groups in the country's oil-rich south rather than address their grievances of neglect and abuse.[80] In Russia, write Finckenauer and Voronin, organized crime includes gangsters but also businesspeople and government officials.[81] It "has penetrated all layers of society and the economy."[82] In Dubai, and in Marbella, Spain, local authorities are known to turn a blind eye to booming organized crime to avoid confrontation and soak

up the cashflow.[83] Whereas conventional wisdom frames criminal enterprises as "an easy and convenient villain," such a lens can lead to "sloppy analysis and a false diagnosis." As Peter Andreas further notes, "Pointing an accusing finger at illicit business also tends to deflect attention and blame away from the deeper political roots of conflict and motivation for international intervention."[84]

Absent a mapping of state involvement in organized crime, external investigators will fail to understand why their view of this scourge will also differ. Some will view the problem as inherently evil. Others will seek to protect criminal institutions if they make the system work or legitimize their privilege. The attempt to wish away such divergences is likely to be unproductive, forcing those seeking change to balance the preservation of order and the quest for justice. Rather than proceed based on unfounded assumptions, the interests and incentives at play—within both the intervening and host governments—must be carefully accounted for.[85]

Community Mobilization

Where governments are enmeshed within organized crime, or otherwise uncommitted, one response is to shift from top-down to bottom-up approaches and to proceed through the community rather than the state. This method relies upon mobilizing those most affected by the problem and those with the highest interest in a solution, so as to build resistance and resilience at the local level.[86]

Human smuggling provides a potent example of where "the debate…and the locus of responses need to be shifted from the state level to a grassroots debate."[87] The reason, Reitano explains, is that many of the states from which migrants and refugees hail are too mired in conflict to respond or are themselves responsible for the problem. Hoping to address the top-down failures with more top-down assistance—as was attempted with both Sudan and Eritrea—is to put the foxes in charge of the henhouse.[88] Absent

unlikely reform, such interventions compound the problem and make both donors and recipient governments complicit in continued criminality.

Conversely, anti-poaching initiatives in northern Kenya illustrate what can be achieved through the local level. Amid scarce socioeconomic opportunity, minimal interest in conservation, and continued resource-based conflicts, criminal groups found a perfect environment within which to operate. Over time, however, community-based initiatives have challenged their grip. Through UK and U.S. assistance, local-level conservancies have gained assets to gather and share intelligence on poaching with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), which is more trusted than the country's security agencies. Not only is this partnership informing anti-poaching operations, but the conservancies are also emphasizing the need for local buy-in. Thus, community policing is undertaken by local rangers with local knowledge and support. Counter-poaching policies are also being complemented with "socioeconomic development programmes and land-reform initiatives," providing clinics, schools, and inter-ethnic conflict-resolution mechanisms. As MacGuire explains, "these programmes have both fomented alternative livelihoods to poaching, and reduced deterioration of rangelands and resource conflict."[89] Though progress was disrupted by climate crises and national-level political instability, it points to the potential of community involvement.

As Gastelum Felix and Tennant note, community mobilization has also been used in counter-gang efforts. In Chicago, as part of the so-called "Cure Violence" program, civil society leaders and community members mobilized against gang activity, with "violence interrupters detecting and preventing shootings in communities, mediating conflicts between gangs or gang members, identifying and engaging with high-risk individuals and encouraging community mobilization and behaviour change."[90] In 2004 in Palermo, Italy,

student activists created the AddioPizzo campaign to encourage businesses and consumers to fight extortion by the mafia. As well as raising awareness, the organizers provided legal support to targeted businesses and educated for change, especially among the youth.[91] Informed by such programs, the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime is engaging in local resilience efforts worldwide, aimed at identifying, organizing, engaging with, and empowering civil society to take on local challenges ignored or abetted by the state.[92]

This approach can work, but it faces the same obstacles as local security efforts in irregular-warfare settings. In the absence of state buy-in, community-led initiatives are often limited by a lack of coordination, funds, and protection against powerful adversaries.[93] Also, because of the informality of these initiatives, there is no guarantee that they will play to the progressive and community-oriented tune hoped for by international donors. Though the "local level" is at times imagined as a refuge from politicking—as an "authentic response of 'civil society' to the predation, manipulation and violence of outsiders," this lens can be misleading.[94] In Tancítaro, Mexico, for example, the local, homegrown response to the predation of gangs was a militia, commanded by warlords, that ruled violently and without accountability.[95] In Rio's *favelas*, a local response to CV, noted above, is vigilante paramilitary units, structured around ex-police, that provide some degree of security but also extort and target the local population as well as engage in crime.[96] In Colombia, the "local" response to FARC's guerrilla war and narco-trafficking was a paramilitary force that grew to control 50 percent of the drug market, became as violent as the insurgents, and engaged in extortion, kidnapping, and massacres.[97]

Beyond the need to know your partner, a second consideration: organized crime is infamous for its "balloon effect," as criminal actors simply move on to where the environment suits them. Thus,

whereas community empowerment can inoculate it against criminal infiltration, crime lords can readily find other communities on which to prey With piracy off Somalia, it quickly emerged that the local coastal communities were not the key beneficiaries or enablers of the problem but rather an underpaid labor force exploited by political elites inland.[98] The latter are also those with the start-up capital to entice other communities to cooperate should one prove resistant. Similarly, while enlightened, community-oriented efforts to stem poaching in Kenya's rangelands have shown promise, those higher up in the ivory-trafficking market remain untouched, adapt, and proceed with widespread impunity.[99]

Lack of Strategy

The latter point speaks to the difficulties of combating organized crime over space and time. Much as with irregular warfare, the problem mutates, involves so many players, and touches upon so many interests that precise interventions and clear definitions of success are unlikely. In both contexts, ineffective strategies lead to reactive policies that go on despite falling short. In terms that capture the counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, Rademeyer describes the "war on poaching" as "an unwinnable war"—the same could be said for the "war on drugs."[100] Still, the wars drag on, much as it did in Afghanistan, with "bureaucracy doing its thing."[101]

In Afghanistan, an expeditionary counterinsurgency effort lacking strategic direction fell back on principles and slogans that offered some guidance but no prioritization or trade-offs. In the world of countering organized crime and corruption, practitioners looking for strategy come to rely "on 'best practice' tactics and solutions whether appropriate or not, or whether they are actually working."[102] The kingpin strategy in Mexico, for example, was clearly intended to reduce the power of the drug lords by targeting them directly, and yet did not question the effects of a leadership void in an insecure

U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel along with DOD personnel secure the San Ysidro Port of Entry against attempts to illegally enter the United States from Mexico. November 25, 2018. Photo by Mani Albrecht. Photo ID: 4926432 VIRIN: 181125-H-VJ018-9025

and criminalized environment.[103] Similarly, the Transnational Institute suggests the "high homicide rates" in Central America's northern triangle stem in part from security forces 'successfully' disrupting the gangs and their markets, which generates a violent competition for the spoils.[104]

The point is that organized crime requires the same strategic process as other irregular-warfare challenges. Again, this process calls for a Strategic Estimate, focused on the nature of the political problem, its contextual drivers, the contending narratives that motivate involvement and usage of criminal networks, and the strategies these actors use to shape their environment, overwhelm opponents, and secure profit. A final question concerns the role of the government response in addressing this problem, or in contributing to it—as may be the case.

Such an Estimate will encourage a more comprehensive mapping of the problems raised by organized crime. It would also help inform a more effective response, one that addresses the full extent of the problem. Such a lens is crucial, in that organized crime is adaptive and will respond rapidly to changes in the environment. Policymakers and strategists must therefore consider very carefully what it is that they seek to achieve and measure progress appropriately. Questions must, for example, explore whether the purpose of an intervention is to halt the crime itself (say, human smuggling), or to target its violent enablers (the smuggling network), or to manage those who rely upon their services (the migrants). Where criminal activity is targeted, strategy must account for the local desire for the functions it provides, be it basic governance in the

favelas, a livelihood through poaching or drug cultivation, or a yearning to escape insecurity and fear.

Much as with irregular threats, the effort to counter organized crime requires skill and methodological discipline. A first step is arriving at a broad concept of response, informed by a theory of success—one that can explain how the anticipated inputs will lead to identified outcomes. From then on, crafters of strategy must consider the assumptions—both explicit and implicit—that are incorporated in their plan, as well as the legal authority to proceed as suggested. To balance trade-offs and compromises, a phasing construct can assist in showing how incremental steps are to be achieved over time, to reach—gradually—desired objectives. As with any change in policy, a risk assessment, and discussion of how to mitigate these risks, also becomes necessary. These are the basic foundations of crafting strategy, and yet the task is too often approached with neither the skills nor situational awareness required.

The Black Box of Political Will

Given these difficulties, it is unsurprising that—much as with counterinsurgency—the political will to counter organized crime is sometimes lacking. Not only is organized crime deeply socially embedded, so that interventions are likely to cause extensive "collateral damage," but—as seen—many governments are also enmeshed with the phenomenon, through bribes, corruption, or outright complicity.[105] Unfortunately, political will is also indispensable. Thus, much as with irregular warfare, we confront the same obstacle: how to get governments to act and—when they do—to do so in the most strategically appropriate manner.

First, political will is not static. It cannot become, as it oftentimes does, a self-fulfilling alibi for not trying. A better approach is to dissect exactly what shapes the prevailing interest in finding solutions. Malena provides a useful framework, casting

will as a function of political *want*, political *can*, and political *must*—leaders must desire the change, believe that they can achieve it, and believe that doing so is necessary.[106] The breakdown hints at potential levers for how political will can be built up—or destroyed. For example, rather than stop the discussion at political *want*, progress might be possible by illustrating issues of opportunity (*can*) and motivation (*must*).

Starting with the latter—the *must*—much can be achieved through "public pressure and citizen engagement, organisational rules and regulations, and a personal sense of civic duty."[107] From the bottom up, avenues of communication can allow victims of organized crime to access their political leaders. Particularly as concerns corruption—which typically is where the state comes in—there is merit in adopting a "victim perspective," not least because corruption is often mistaken as a "victimless" crime.[108] As Marquette and Peiffer argue, by demonstrating how corruption diminishes democracy and "the downstream violence that may occur in chains of activities that corruption facilitates," it might be possible to generate the allies needed to spark a movement.[109]

Top-down, the international community can play a valuable role in proscribing behavior and reinforcing norms, though enforcement will clearly remain a challenge. In a four-year period starting in 2000, the international community passed a flurry of measures to address transnational crime and corruption.[110] These have since been complemented by more agency-specific conventions. The activity is tremendous, and yet—much as with the UN's sprawling architecture for counter-terrorism—it suffers from a lack of coordination. The bigger problem is that these conventions ask states to engage productively with politically sensitive areas, where policy is determined by conceptions of interest and fear—not the entreaties of international action plans. There are instruments to ratchet up external

pressure, but does the international community itself have the political will to impose itself on an unwilling government?

International engagement is also relevant to the political *can*. Donors must be able to determine whether the lack of political will stems from a dearth of motivation or a lack of capacity. Where there is a felt need to respond, security cooperation and the building of partnership capacity (BPC) can help generate the needed foundation. As seen, good intentions can easily be subverted through mirror-imaging or a lack of local understanding. Progress presupposes agreement on what are truly common interests (rather than those pushed by outsiders) and mechanisms to ensure implementation. Much as with irregular warfare, it is also critical that BPC be more than episodic, go beyond enforcement agencies, and be tracked carefully in terms of outcomes. Indeed, to avoid militarizing the response to organized crime, those assisting must similarly demilitarize their own guidance and advice.

However political will is broached, it is a crucial factor in strategic design. As with efforts to counter insurgency and terrorism, the response to organized crime must acknowledge the limitations on political will and operate within them, to best possible effect, or take on the task of altering conceptions of will by creatively targeting the sources of resistance and actors involved. Just reacting to the crime itself will almost certainly be insufficient.

Conclusion

Terrorism and crime are both scourges of society. Both are illegal and conducted by clandestine actors challenging the status quo. The two phenomena share at least one further trait: our response to both is bedeviled by the complexity of the threat, its social and political embeddedness, and the difficulty of mustering political will. Faced with this complexity, governments often focus narrowly on the scourge itself, with inadequate attention paid to its social and

political drivers and the functions it plays. Strategies tend toward the reactive and palliative, producing cycles of desperation that ultimately benefit those who feed on despair.

Based on these commonalities, and others, this article has enumerated the lessons gained in two decades of engagement in irregular warfare, particularly in Afghanistan, and applied these to the countering of organized crime. There is a tendency, in both arenas, to militarize the response or to let it be governed by a purely suppressive logic. There is a tendency to neglect the functions of organized crime and to engage in mirror-imaging, mistaking particular interests and norms as universal. There is also a common need to mobilize bottom-up networks and work alongside communities as crucial partners, particularly where national governments are absent or uninterested. And in both cases, there is a need to engage more closely with what produces political will and with how calculations of elite interest can be shaped over time.

Given these common difficulties, there is a final common requirement—for strategy. Rather than fall back on principles, on best practices, and on conventional wisdom, there is a need for strategic competence. Such competence implies an ability to precisely identify the nature of the political problem underpinning the crime, its contextual drivers (be they political, economic, or societal), and the contending narratives that sustain it. It involves an ability to map not just the strategy of the criminal entity but, equally, the limitations of the state's own response and its role in fueling the problem. Based on such analysis, strategic competence denotes the skill set necessary to craft strategy—one driven by a theory of success, aware of its own legal authorities, assumptions, and risks, and presenting therefore a phased and measurable plan for change via an admixture of ways and means.

Crafting such a strategy is a skill that should be emphasized in professional education and training,

and also in security cooperation, because, as one key strategist puts it, while plans are worthless, "planning is everything."[111] To date, education in strategic planning focuses almost exclusively on military audiences, which explains why the most sophisticated frameworks for planning are found within its many field manuals. Because the most vexing security problems are far more than military in nature, this is an education that must be broadened and also elevated from the military domain to the strategic. There are crucial precedents in how this can be achieved, and frameworks for the type of learning that it involves, but the investment in education is lagging and, therefore, so is our performance.[112] PRISM

Notes

[1] Global Initiative, 'Global Organized Crime Index 2021', September 2021, 8, 12, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/GITOC-Global-Organized-Crime-Index-2021.pdf.

[2] U.S. Department of Defense, 'Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy' (Arlington, VA, 2020), 2. Though the DoD is redefining the term, this conceptualization is—in our opinion—the most helpful and accurate. For discussion, see David H. Ucko and Thomas A. Marks, 'Redefining Irregular Warfare: Legitimacy, Coercion, and Power', *Modern War Institute*, 18 October 2022, https://mwi.usma.edu/redefining-irregular-warfare-legitimacy-coercion-and-power/.

[3] David H. Ucko and Thomas Marks A., *Crafting Strategy for Irregular Warfare: A Framework for Analysis and Action*, 2nd edition (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 2022), 6–13.

[4] Harold D Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958). This dynamic is explored in Douglas Farah and Marianne Richardson, 'Gangs No Longer: Reassessing Transnational Armed Groups in the Western Hemisphere', Strategic Perspectives (Washington DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, May 2022).

[5] Cord Schmelzle, 'Evaluating Governance: Effectiveness and Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood', SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, 16 January 2012), 7, https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1986017.

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[23] Ucko, chap. 6.

[24] Ken Menkhaus, 'Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping', *International Security* 31, no. 3 (2006): 78.

[25] Volker Boege et al., 'On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: What Is Failing—States in the Global South or Research and Politics in the West?', in *Building Peace in the Absence of States: Challenging the Discourse on State Failure*, ed. Martina Fischer and Beatrix Schmelzle, Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series 8 (Berlin: Berghof Forschungszentrum für Konstruktive Konfliktbearbeitung, 2009), 15–36.

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Grant W. Walton, 'Is All Corruption Dysfunctional? Perceptions of Corruption and Its Consequences in Papua New Guinea', *Public Administration and Development* 33, no. 3 (August 2013): 175–190, https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1636."ISBN":"978-1-84277-563-9","language":"eng","number-of-pages":"298","publisher":"David Philip","publisher-place":"Cape Town","source":"K10plus ISBN","title":"Everyday corruption and the state: citizens and public officials in Africa","title-short":"Everyday corruption and the state","editor":[{"family":"Blundo","given":"Giorgio"},{"family":"Olivier de Sardan","given":"Jean-Pierre"}],"issued":{"date-parts":[["2006"]]}}},{"id":2350,"uris":["http://zotero.org/users/3008661/items/76HAUUS9",["http://zotero.org/users/3008661/items/76HAUUS9"]],"itemData":{"id":2350,"type":"article-journal","container-title":"Governance","DOI":"10.1111/gove.12311","ISSN":"09521895","issue":"3","journalAbbreviation":"Governance","language":"en","page":"499-514","source":"DOI.org (Crossref

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[59] Stephen Marche, 'This Man Is the Jeff Bezos of the International Drug Trade', *Toronto Life*, 1 November 2021, https://torontolife.com/city/this-man-is-the-jeff-bezos-of-the-international-drug-trade/; Tom Allard, 'The Hunt for Asia's El Chapo', *Reuters*, 14 October 2019, sec. Special Report, https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/meth-syndicate/.

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[61] Julian Rademeyer, 'An Unwinnable War: Rhino Poaching in the Kruger', in *Militarised Responses to Transnational Organised Crime*, ed. Tuesday Reitano, Lucia Bird Ruiz-Benitez de Lugo, and Sasha Jesperson (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 53–54.

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[71] International Crisis Group, 'Miracle or Mirage? Gangs and Plunging Violence in El Salvador', Latin America Report (Brussels, 8 July 2020), 32.

[72] Moritz Schuberth, 'To Engage or Not to Engage Haiti's Urban Armed Groups? Safe Access in Disaster-Stricken and Conflict-Affected Cities', *Environment and Urbanization* 29, no. 2 (October 2017): 425–442, https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247817716398.it is not clear how to deliver aid to those who need it the most without further strengthening predatory armed actors. Drawing on extensive fieldwork in Haiti, this article contributes to the emerging debate on the engagement of non-state armed groups in the context of disaster-stricken and conflict-affected cities, by presenting new empirical evidence on how humanitarian and development actors negotiate safe access in Port-au-Prince's gang-ruled neighbourhoods in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. While some major development agencies have struggled to minimize the

unintended – yet potentially harmful – consequences of their activities for beneficiaries, the approach of the Brazilian NGO Viva Rio offers important lessons for more effective humanitarian response to urban crises in comparable contexts.","container-title":"Environment and Urbanization","DOI": "10.1177/0956247817716398", "ISSN":"0956-2478, 1746-0301","issue":"2","journalAbbreviation":"Environment and Urbanization","language":"en","page":"425-442","source":"DOI.org (Crossref

[73] International Crisis Group, 'El Salvador's Politics of Perpetual Violence', 20.

[74] John Bailey and Matthew M. Taylor, 'Evade, Corrupt, or Confront? Organized Crime and the State in Brazil and Mexico', *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 1, no. 2 (August 2009): 9, https://doi.org/10.1177/1866802X0900100201.dynamic markets, and public policies; governments adjust their behavior according to shifting perceptions of the benefits offered, threats posed, and strategies adopted by criminal groups. When governments attempt to control or repress their activities, criminal groups employ various tools and instruments that might be grouped into three categories: evasion, corruption, and confrontation. The paper draws on recent cases from Brazil and Mexico with respect to tactical and strategic choices by governments and criminal groups, seeking to address three broad questions. What factors disrupt the state-criminal group equilibrium? Under what circumstances do disruptions produce significant levels of violence (as opposed to evasion or corruption

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[76] Heather Marquette and Caryn Peiffer, 'Corruption and Transnational Organised Crime', in *The Routledge Handbook of Transnational Organized Crime*, ed. Felia Allum and Stan Gilmour, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2022), 476.

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[78] Whitlock, *The Afghanistan Papers*, 123.

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[82] Serguei Cheloukhine, Vitaliy Khan, and Nessibeli Kalkayeva, 'Transnational Organized Crime and Corruption in Russia: Its Origin and Current Development', in *The Routledge Handbook of Transnational Organized Crime*, ed. Felia Allum and Stan Gilmour, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2022), 105–106.

[83] Nacho Carretero and Arturo Lezcano, '"A United Nations of Crime": How Marbella Became a Magnet for Gangsters', *The Guardian*, 20 May 2021, sec. News, https://www.theguardian.com/news/2021/may/20/a-united-nations-of-how-marbella-became-a-magnet-for-gangsters; Karen Greenaway, 'How Emirati Law Enforcement Allows Kleptocrats and Organized Crime to Thrive', in *Dubai's Role in Facilitating Corruption and Global Illicit Financial Flows*, ed. Matthew T. Page and Jodi Vittori (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2020), 67–78.

[84] Peter Andreas, 'Symbiosis between Peace Operations and Illicit Business in Bosnia', in *Peace Operations and Organized Crime: Enemies or Allies?* ed. James Cockayne and Adam Lupel, Cass Series on Peacekeeping (London: Taylor & Frances, 2011), 43.

[85] I am grateful to Tom Rodwell for informing our thinking on this point.

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[87] Reitano, 'Smugglers Inc: The Illicit Industry in Human Migration', 213.

[88] Nick Grinstead, 'The Khartoum Process: Shifting the Burden', *Clingendael*, 22 February 2016, https://www.clingendael.org/publication/khartoum-process-shifting-burden.

[89] Maguire, 'Kenya's "War on Poaching"', 77.

[90] Felix and Tennant, 'Community Resilience to Organized Crime: Building Back Better', 493.

[91] Comitato Addiopizzo, 'Who we are', accessed 19 March 2022, https://www.addiopizzo.org/index.php/who-we-are/; Guillermo Vazquez, 'Saying No to Extortion in Central America: Lessons Learnt from Italy', *Global Initiative*, 13 July 2020, https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/saying-no-to-extortion/.

[92] Lucia Bird and A Gomes, 'Building Civil Society Resilience to Organized Crime in Guinea-Bissau' (Global Initiative against Trasnational Crime, March 2022).

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[94] Mats Berdal, *Building Peace after War*, Adelphi 407 (London; New York: Routledge, for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009), 127.

[95] Max Fisher and Amanda Taub, 'Building a Mini-State With Avocados and Guns', *The New York Times*, 18 January 2018, sec. World, http://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/world/americas/mexico-drug-war-tanci-taro.html.

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[97] David J Spencer, *Colombia's Paramilitaries: Criminal or Political Force?* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2001).

[98] Anja Shortland, 'Treasure Mapped: Using Satellite Imagery to Track the Developmental Effects of Somali Piracy', Africa Programme Paper (London: Chatham House, January 2012); Stig Jarle Hansen, *Piracy in the Greater Gulf of Aden: Myths, Misconceptions and Remedies* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, 2009).

[99] Maguire, 'Kenya's "War on Poaching"', 78.

[100] Rademeyer, 'An Unwinnable War: Rhino Poaching in the Kruger', 54.

[101] Robert W. Komer, 'Bureaucracy Does Its Thing: Institutional Constraints on U.S.-GVN Performance in Vietnam' (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1 January 1972), https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R967.html.CA: RAND Corporation, 1 January 1972

[102] Marquette and Peiffer, 'Corruption and Transnational Organised Crime', 473.

[103] Jeremy McDermott, 'Militarisation of the Drug War in Latin America: A Policy Cycle Set to Continue?', in *Militarised Responses to Transnational Organised Crime*, ed. Tuesday Reitano, Lucia Bird Ruiz-Benitez de Lugo, and Sasha Jesperson (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 266.

[104] Pauline Metaal and Liza ten Velde, 'Drugs and Violence in the Northern Triangle—Two Sides of the Same Coin?', *The Broker*, 3 July 2014, https://www.thebrokeronline.eu/drugs-and-violence-in-the-northern-triangle-d48/.assumptions on cause and effect are frequently flawed or blurred. While 2014 may present new opportunities in the growing global debate on alternatives for the failed War on Drugs – for example, Guatemala's initiative to discuss the outcome of an OAS-led study, which considers a series of options for drug policy reform, at a meeting in Guatemala in September 2014, and the ongoing preparations for a Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS See also Douglas Farah, 'The Maduro Regime's Illicit Activities: A Threat To Democracy In Venezuela And Security In Latin America' (Washington, D.C: Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center, Atlantic Council, August 2020).

[105] Iffat Idris, 'Political Will and Combatting Serious Organised Crime', SOC ACE Evidence Synthesis Paper (Birmingham, UK: University of Birmingham, 2022), 17–18.

[106] Carmen Malena, ed., 'Building Will for Participatory Governance: An Introduction', in *From Political Won't to Political Will: Building Support for Participatory Governance* (Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press, 2009), 19. For adaptation to organized crime, see, Marquette and Peiffer, 'Corruption and Transnational Organised Crime'.

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[108] Graham Brooks, *Criminology of Corruption: Theoretical Approaches* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 5.

[109] Marquette and Peiffer, 'Corruption and Transnational Organised Crime', 477.

[110] New instruments signed in this period include the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC, in 2000); the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2000); the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2000); Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (2001); United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC, in 2004).

[111] Dwight Eisenhower, as cited in William M. Blair, "President Draws Planning Moral," *New York Times*, November 15, 1957, available at <www.nytimes.com/1957/11/15/archives/president-draws-planning-moral-recalls-army-days-to-show-value-of.html>.

[112] See for example the experience of the College of International Security Affairs (CISA), within the U.S. National Defense University, which (under the authority of the Regional Defense Fellowship Program) teaches senior practitioners from across the government in strategic assessment and planning for irregular challenges as part of a one-year accredited Master's degree. See https://cisa.ndu.edu/ for details. A key pedagogical framework crafted for this purpose can be found here: Ucko and Marks, *Crafting Strategy for Irregular Warfare: A Framework for Analysis and Action*.

NATO's New Center of Gravity

By Michael Miklaucic

"Russia considers the Baltic states to be the most vulnerable part of NATO…." This is the conclusion of a recent report by Estonia's Foreign Intelligence Service.[1] The three small Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, have a 1,360-kilometer border with Russia and its client state Belarus. With a joint population of just over 6 million and 47,000 active-duty armed forces the Baltic states are on the frontline of any confrontation with Russia. Their vulnerability is keenly felt having all been under brutally oppres-

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sive Soviet occupation until quite recently; many still living recall that oppression that lasted until the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. Russia's unprovoked February 2022 invasion of Ukraine has reminded Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians of the horrors of occupation, and rekindled fears of what until recently was considered unimaginable—a land war of territorial aggression in Europe—a contingency for which the Baltic states are urgently preparing.

Each of the Baltic states has adopted a national security posture based on the principle of total or comprehensive defense; a whole-of-nation approach to defending their respective homelands with all elements of society mobilized to protect their national sovereignty. In the words of Estonian Minister of Defense Hanno Pevkur, "Every bush shoots!"[2] The Baltic three are among the handful of NATO members that have exceeded NATO's 2 percent target of gross domestic product on defense spending with significant investments in new capabilities and dramatic increases in armed personnel. All three are acutely aware of Russian efforts to subvert social stability using its hybrid warfare toolbox, including influence campaigns, mis- and disinformation, cyberattacks, the weaponization of migration, and economic or energy dependencies. Through total or comprehensive defense Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have been building up social resilience and preparing their respective populations to actively resist occupation.[3]

Since joining NATO in 2004 the Baltic states have pinned their security planning on the collective defense principle at the heart of the Alliance, with the expectation that in the case of a Russian attack Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty would be invoked thus bringing the full power of the Alliance to their defense. That is the basic promise of deterrence by punishment. The current war in Ukraine, however, shows that should the threat of deterrence by punishment fail, even if military victory is

ultimately achieved, the cost to the victim country can be catastrophic in terms of human lives, economic infrastructure, and cultural heritage.[4] During whatever period of time it would take Allied forces to defeat and repel a Russian invasion of the Baltics, the damage done would be devastating. Punishing the perpetrator may be too late for the victim.

To mitigate this risk Baltic leaders and others along the northern and eastern flanks have helped move NATO military thinking toward a more forward posture built upon the Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroups to be upscaled to full combat-ready brigades if, "where and when required."[5] According to Latvian Minister of Defense Ināra Mūrniece though NATO is now committed to "defending all NATO territory from the very first centimeters and the very first seconds of a potential conflict," she adds "We need a more robust military presence on the eastern flank of NATO."[6] To further strengthen the Baltic defensive wall NATO could consider posting full brigades in their entirety to each of the three countries. In addition, NATO might pre-deploy more key weapons into these three states to reduce the time for reservists to fall in on their weapons. This would also help with mobility challenges (moving weapons forward) in times of crisis. For their part Baltic leaders are fully committed to robust though costly host nation support. Through these measures the Baltic states will be able to deny Russia the possibility of a quick military fait accompli that leaves it in possession of significant strategic gains.

Preparations for total or comprehensive defense throughout the region are being supplemented by enhanced regional collaboration, including joint planning, exercises, and procurement to take advantage of economies of scale. Along with Enhanced Forward Presence, the regional defense plans agreed at the recent NATO summit in Vilnius will further integrate the Baltic region into the NATO defense architecture.[7] The new NATO force model (with

regional strategies and specific requirements for each NATO nation), improving upon the NATO Response Force, "will resource and modernize the NATO Force Structure," "will ensure reinforcement of any Ally on short notice," and will "help to prevent any aggression against NATO territory by denying any potential adversary success in meeting its objectives."[8]

Each of the Baltic states has taken a firm stance in support of Ukraine. Latvian Defense Minister Mūrniece says, "that Ukraine must win this war with Russia, and that Russia must suffer a strategic defeat. Without those two conditions there will be no peace in our part of the world." According to Lithuanian Minister of Defense Arvydas Anušauskas Russia's war against Ukraine "is a way of testing whether democracies will defend themselves."[9] Estonian Defense Minister Pevkur says, "people must be held accountable for these criminal acts and the war crimes that have been committed," and "When Putin goes to any country that is a member of the ICC they must accept the decision of the ICC and bring Putin under ICC jurisdiction."

The Baltic states are making important efforts to adapt to threats not seen since the height of the Cold War. With Finland's recent accession to NATO and Sweden's accession imminent northern Europe will present Russia with daunting strategic choices. Other Allied and partner states and regions should carefully examine this strategic adaptation with an eye to their own security, stability, and sovereignty. These small states are hitting significantly above their weight class and setting standards for defense readiness that are worthy of emulation. Their collective prescience in recognizing the Russian threat early-on, and their resolute commitment to enhancing collective defense through building resilience, preparing for resistance, and intensive collaboration have transformed their region arguably into NATO's new center of gravity. PRISM

Notes

[1] International Security and Estonia 2023, Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, February 8, 2023, Tallinn, Estonia, <https://raport.valisluureamet.ee/2023/en/>.

[2] See interview with Estonian Minister of Defense Hanno Pevkur in this issue of PRISM.

[3] PRISM V.10,N.2, National Defense University Press, March 2023, Washington, D.C., <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/PRISM/PRISM-10-2/>.

[4] Updated Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Assessment, The World Bank, March 23, 2023, Washington, D.C., <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2023/03/23/updated-ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-assessment>.

[5] Madrid Summit Declaration, NATO, June 29, 2022, Madrid, Spain, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_196951.htm>.

[6] See interview with Latvian Minister of Defense Ināra Mūrniece in this issue of PRISM.

[7] Vilnius Summit Commmunique, NATO, July 11, 2023, Vilnius, Lithuania, < https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_217320.htm>.

[8] Madrid Summit Declaration, NATO, June 29, 2022, Madrid, Spain, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_196951.htm>.

[9] See interview with Lithuanian Minister of Defense Arvydas Anušauskas in this issue of PRISM.

Interview with the Honorable Hanno Pevkur

Minister of Defence of Estonia

PRISM: Sweden has Total Defense and Finland has Comprehensive Defense. What are the fundamental principles of Estonia's strategic paradigm?

Pevkur: We are quite like Finland in the sense that we have a clear understanding that everyone must be involved in protecting the country. We have a conscript service for the reserve army. This is mandatory for all men and voluntary for women. What we have changed since the full-scale war in Ukraine is that we have increased the number of wartime structures. We had 31,000 fighters before, but now we have almost 44,000. Most of those come from the Volunteer Defense League. The Estonian army is based on the regular army, the reserve army, and the Volunteer Defense League which at the moment has 30,000 people of which 10,000 are combatants. This will be increased this year to 20,000, which brings us to 44,000 combatants in our wartime structure.

PRISM: How long would it take to mobilize the full 44,000 strong force?

Pevkur: We train for that constantly, so again like Finland our mobilizing time is very short. We just finished our biggest spring exercise called "Spring Storm," together with our allies, where we had 14,000 combatants in the forests and the villages. Our approach has always been that we train where we fight. We do not train only in training areas, but we also train in the cities, in the villages, and in the forests. For instance, when a rapid training or exercise is announced, within 15-20 minutes we have our first people where they are supposed to be. Within 24 hours basically everyone is in place.

PRISM: Sweden's Total Defense and Finland's Comprehensive Defense involve both companies and even individuals with specific roles should war come. Is that also true in Estonia?

Pevkur: Yes, we call it the "wide approach to defense." It doesn't matter what name you use, whether Comprehensive Defense or Total Defense. It is summed up in our slogan "every bush shoots." This best describes how we see it; everyone has a role. Obviously, we cannot all be part of military actions. Nevertheless,

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everything from food supply to immigration is linked to defense. All the policies we are creating in Estonia must also be integrated into this "wide approach to defense." This is very important.

PRISM: Does Estonia have management structures in place to administer civil-military collaboration?

Pevkur: On the military side most importantly, we have our Chief of Defense (CHOD) who has under his control the division which we just basically established in January this year; that is the war structure. On top of that we have a civil structure; we have a clear understanding of what the rescue board will do, what the police and border guard will do. There is a clear understanding that everything is under civilian control. This is a democratic country and that means civilian control must be a given.

PRISM: Is that civil authority institutionalized in a separate administrative agency? Is it under the authority of the Prime Ministry?

Pevkur: It is under the Prime Ministry but in close cooperation with the Ministry of Defense. As Estonia is so small, we do not need an independent or separate administration for that. According to the Constitution these issues go ultimately to the President. But the execution plans are developed and approved by the government.

PRISM: Why is Ukraine important for the world?

Pevkur: Why is Ukraine important for the world? We understand that Ukraine is not fighting only for itself or for its people or for Estonia or the Baltics. This is a fight for the free and the rules-based world order. I am more than sure that all the world's dictators are looking very closely at what happens to Ukraine. Will they find justification for their own autocratic behavior? Or will they get the message that you cannot go to a democratic country and take away the peoples' freedoms.

PRISM: What are the stakes involved? What would be the consequences of a Russian victory in Ukraine?

Pevkur: The European security architecture is at stake. How the world will take shape in the coming decades, especially here in Europe. Even the United States' role in the world. As I have discussed with senators and congressmen, Ukraine is providing and will provide critical lessons for the China-Taiwan conflict.

PRISM: Do the Estonian people understand and appreciate the ramifications of collective defense within an alliance as opposed to territorial defense? That Estonian soldiers may be called upon to defend allied nations such as Montenegro, or even Turkey?

Pevkur: We believe in NATO. We strongly support the "one for all, all for one" principle. It is the same understanding here as in the United States or Canada or any other member of the Alliance. This is why this Alliance is the free world or the democracy watchdog. This also means that when there is a need to help someone there is a readiness to do that. But on the other hand, we must understand this is why we have collective defense and regional plans within NATO. First and foremost, Estonia is in the region of the Baltic states and the Baltic Sea. When you speak of international missions Estonia is also there; Estonia is assisting in Iraq and in other international missions. Whether bilateral cooperation or NATO- or EU-sponsored, these are the missions we are participating in. But when you speak of total defense first and foremost Estonia's armed forces are preparing to defend Estonia.

PRISM: How does the Russian "special military operation" in Ukraine end?

Pevkur: First let's call it what it is. This is a war, not a special military operation. You can say that the gray thing that catches a mouse is not a cat—but it is a cat. It is the same with the Russia/Ukraine war;

it is a war. Hundreds of thousands have died, many civilians have lost their lives, many have been raped. Many have been deported to Siberia as in the Second World War. So, let's not pretend that this is not a war.

How does it end? Of course, this is the million-dollar question nobody can yet answer at the moment. From our vantage point it ends with a Ukrainian "win" where Ukraine reclaims all its territories including Crimea. We just do not know how much time this will take.

PRISM: What more can NATO do to support Ukraine?

Pevkur: At the moment NATO support for Ukraine is managed through the Ramstein format which has 52 member countries including all NATO countries. This U.S.-led forum is where we coordinate all help for Ukraine. We have already trained and equipped nine brigades; we will continue to do that because the war will not be over in a few months. Estonia's contribution for military aid to Ukraine is only .1 percent of the total but constitutes 1 percent of our national GDP. This shows how big Estonia's assistance to Ukraine has been. This is exactly what we all must do. We all must help Ukraine more. There are new proposals on the table which have not been approved yet, such as the provision of Western fighter jets. From the United States definitely ATCAMS. There are many specific assets we can send to Ukraine, but we still must train the Ukrainian army to give them the possibility to win this war, because without Allied help it will be very difficult for them to prevail.

PRISM: Do you think that weapons, training, and intelligence by themselves will be sufficient for Ukrainians alone to drive Russian forces back to the pre-2014 borders?

Pevkur: Ukraine is a big country. Their will to fight is the highest in the world. They are ready to protect their country. They have never asked for people.

They have enough people, so our obligation is to provide all the material support they need.

PRISM: Are you concerned that the present level of support could lead to a frozen conflict as in Moldova or the Republic of Georgia where there is a ceasefire, but Russia remains in possession of significant occupied territory?

Pevkur: That is one possible scenario, but I know that Ukrainians will not accept a frozen conflict. The Ukrainian army is ready to fight for as long as it takes to reclaim their territory. They have lost so many friends, family members and relatives, so many who have lost limbs…. They have come too far—they must take back their territory. There is no other way forward for them. A frozen conflict is also something we do not want; this is why we must all support Ukraine.

PRISM: French President Emmanuel Macron recently said that at the coming NATO summit in Vilnius members should lay out a clear roadmap leading to Ukrainian NATO membership. A recent Foreign Affairs article argues in favor of immediate NATO membership for Ukraine. In your opinion should Ukraine become a NATO member now? or in the future? Or never?

Pevkur: Estonia has always taken the position that Ukraine should become a NATO member, it is just a question of timing. Just the day before President Macron's statement I said the same thing on a panel. Earlier I stated that Ukraine needs a clear roadmap from Vilnius to Washington (as the next NATO summit will be in Washington). We cannot keep giving the same message as we gave in Bucharest in 2008. Ukrainians have clearly said that "first we have to win the war." These are the words of President Zelensky. They understand that it is difficult to see Ukraine in NATO while the war is still going on.

PRISM: According to Putin one of the justifications for Russia's war against Ukraine was fear of NATO expansion. If NATO were to expand to include Ukraine would that not be a further provocation, and assure a future war?

Pevkur: NATO is a defense alliance. NATO defends its members and has no intention of attacking Russia. How can this be a justification for a war? I understand Russia's foreign policy of maintaining some kind of buffer zone between Russia and NATO, and that NATO should not expand to Russia's borders. But no country—including Russia—can dictate to any independent country whether it is eligible or has the right to join any alliance of its choosing. This is not for Russia to say. It is up to the country, and up to the 31 countries of the Alliance to determine its membership.

PRISM: If Ukraine does become a member of NATO will this increase the likelihood of future war between NATO and Russia?

Pevkur: Definitely not from our side! I don't see any reason why Russia has to be so hostile. NATO is not interested in attacking Russia; NATO's goal is to protect its members.

PRISM: If the Russia/Ukraine war becomes a long-term war of attrition, whose side is time on?

Pevkur: On nobody's side. There is no point in speculating on who wins or loses more from this long conflict. Nobody wins. Russia will lose economically, internationally; Ukraine definitely will not have stability, prosperity, or options for economic growth. The only solution is for Russia to get out of Ukraine—then we can talk about security guarantees for Ukraine or NATO membership; but first and foremost, Russia must return to its own borders.

PRISM: It has been argued that because Russia remains a nuclear power and because ultimately Russia is not "going away" we will have to live with

Russia, and thus we should find a face-saving off-ramp for Putin. Do you agree?

Pevkur: I agree only that Putin and Russia should leave Ukraine. Why should we think it is acceptable to forcibly go to someone's home and then say "I am not leaving until I can leave in a face-saving way. Don't call the police. Don't ask anything of me— even when I destroy your home. I need to save face." This is not acceptable. The reality is that people must be held accountable for these criminal acts and the war crimes that have been committed.

PRISM: There is an arrest warrant from the International. Criminal Court (ICC): should we pursue vigorously this international criminal action against Putin and his lieutenants?

Pevkur: When Putin goes to any country that is a member of the ICC they must accept the decision of the ICC and bring Putin under ICC jurisdiction. We have all seen the evidence of criminal acts in Ukraine. Estonia has always said that those responsible for this war must be held accountable. But our first priority remains that Russia should withdraw its forces from Ukrainian territory.

PRISM: Some speculate that if Putin were to retreat from all the Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine it would be his end in the Kremlin. What do you think would be the ramifications within Russia of a Russian defeat in Ukraine?

Pevkur: It is up to the Russian people to decide, but as long as Putin remains in power nothing will change in Russia. There might even be a new Putin who is even worse. Of course, we really hope there will be a democracy one day in Russia. But honestly, I do not see that happening in the near future. Russian power has always been like a pyramid, like a mafia organization that starts at the top. In Russia no one wants to hear about corruption—they want to be part of it.

PRISM: According to a recent article "NATO no longer harbors illusions about the nature of Russia." How would you describe the nature of Russia?

Pevkur: Sometimes I have given the example that Russian behavior is like nightclub fighting behavior. If you get into an argument with a Russian at a nightclub and he punches you, you cannot say "Let's talk," because he will just punch you a second and then a third time. The only option is to punch him back, then he will say "Let's talk." This is the mentality of Russian behavior; always show force. The anti-force or reaction is to show a bigger force—a deterrent. And this is exactly what Russia has to know—that NATO has more power.

PRISM: Is Russia a redeemable country? Can you see Russia becoming a responsible stakeholder in a rules-based global order?

Pevkur: The answer lies in history. Have we seen a democratic Russia? Yeltsin tried to push Russia in this direction, but then he was moved aside by Putin.

PRISM: Is it feasible for NATO countries to de-couple from Russia economically, as we were de-coupled during the Cold War?

Pevkur: Of course it is possible. I do not believe any discussion in that matter when somebody says we cannot decouple from Russia. As close as Russia is in our economy, they were only the 8th or 9th largest trade partner even before the war—they were never one of the top three. Russia must understand that they need the West far more than the West needs Russia. Economically Europe and the world can easily survive without Russia.

PRISM: Is Sweden's membership of NATO important?

Pevkur: Of course, especially for our region. Finland is already in, and we were expecting they would join together. This would bring to our region a lot more security. With their membership NATO would then have a NATO lake in the Baltic Sea region. We would have two very strong armies joining NATO.

PRISM: What does a NATO lake mean?

Pevkur: It means that we would have total control in the region with respect to the A2AD model, with respect to cooperation—not only civil but all the necessary military cooperation. Sweden's NATO membership will give us the opportunity to share more data and information with each other, so obviously this is very important. But first and foremost, we must control the Baltic Sea.

PRISM: What if Hungary and Turkey continue to block Sweden's membership?

Pevkur: For Hungary and Turkey it is vital that NATO as an alliance is stronger. And as Finland and Sweden will make NATO stronger it is to the advantage of both.

PRISM: What can NATO do to make deterrence more effective?

Pevkur: The answer is quite simple. We need to have and to show our enemy that we have superior power. And this brings the enemy to the position that they will not even think of attacking the Alliance. When you talk about the Alliance, NATO has greater air power, greater naval power, and when you take all the land components of all the Allies NATO has greater land power.

PRISM: Should NATO be more pro-active?

Pevkur: We are doing that. As we discussed during the Spring Storm exercise here in Estonia, we had 14,000 Estonian soldiers along with over 3,000 allied soldiers. At this very moment we are participating in a major naval exercise in the Baltic Sea with 30 naval ships including from UK, the United States, Sweden, Belgium, and others.

PRISM: do you think Russia's implied nuclear threats are credible?

Pevkur: There is no advantage to using nuclear weapons. The only thing those can do is to kill thousands of people, but the international impact would be huge. Not only among the Western powers, but politically the cost would be too high. Moscow knows what the costs would be.

PRISM: Do you think that the current structure of the Russian Federation can endure indefinitely?

Pevkur: The current structure of the Russian Federation is not very sustainable. If they want to continue as the Russia we have known since 1991 they will have to make very big changes. Russia is also afraid of China; there are many cities in eastern Russia where the population is largely Chinese. The threat for Russia is that they are losing by fact many parts of Russia to China. There are many different nations within Russia; the question is whether these nations are ready to act as independent countries? This will be a challenge. Some parts of Russia are rich in resources, but in other parts there is not much to build a sustainable country. Why should we listen to Putin when he talks about old Russia. It is vice versa; old Russia started from Ukraine. It is a question of how far back we should go in history. Shall we go back to the Ottoman Empire? How much Russia did we see then? You do not get to pick your favorite historical moment to start from. We have to choose today. This is why Estonia supports Ukraine; we believe they deserve to be a peaceful and prosperous country.

Interview with the Honorable Ināra Mūrniece

Minister of Defence of Latvia

PRISM: What are the most important outcomes from the recent NATO summit in Vilnius?

Mūrniece: As the Minister of Defense of Latvia, I am very happy with the outcomes regarding trans-Atlantic defense and deterrence on the eastern flank of NATO. We are also very happy with defense planning for the Baltic states, scaling up the Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) battle group to brigade level, thus fulfilling the commitments made at the 2022 NATO summit in Madrid. The endorsement of the rotational model of air defense which will be incrementally implemented for the Baltic countries situated on the eastern flank of NATO means more security and deterrence against Russia. Lessons learned from Ukraine show very clearly the necessity for air defense and how crucial it is to safeguarding our communities, our critical infrastructure, and most importantly human lives in our part of the world. We are also very pleased with the defense investment pledge. Latvia has committed to reaching 3 percent of GDP for defense by 2027, but with new defense capability projects and new procurements we will likely reach 3 percent next year. This shows how quickly we are developing our national armed forces. It is also great news that Finland has joined and very soon Sweden will join NATO—a decision I applaud as crucial for the security of the Baltic sea region and for the whole NATO alliance.

There was of course also a focus on Ukraine, with heads of state and government committing to further step up political and practical support. It is important that leaders decided to establish a NATO-Ukraine Council, in the inaugural meeting at which I was honored to participate and at which Ukrainian President Vlodomir Zelensky was present. This was one of the significant outcomes of the Vilnius Summit in addition to a comprehensive assistance package for Ukraine. Latvia has already contributed 2 million euros to this assistance package and has decided to provide 6 million euros over the next 3 years.

Additionally, for the first time in NATO history there are concrete, complicated, and grounded defense plans for the eastern flank of NATO. This is important for us because we are situated in quite a vulnerable territory. These defense plans show a completely revised NATO military thinking that is now committed to defending all NATO territory from the very first centimeters and the very first seconds of a potential conflict. This is a significant change for the NATO mind-set and incorporates new military thinking. From the

Interviewed by Michael Miklaucic, July 17, 2023

beginning of the year Latvia has been working on a new Military Defense Concept, which will be sent to our Parliament this autumn and reflects this new military thinking.

We need a more robust military presence on the eastern flank of NATO; in Madrid NATO leaders agreed to scale up the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence battle groups to combat-capable brigades. This endeavor is going very well with Canada—our framework nation. We have signed a concrete and precise roadmap of how we will scale up our battle group to a combat-capable brigade. A day before the Vilnius summit, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Canadian Minister of Defense Ms. Anita Anand, visited the Adazi military base. Canada will send fifteen Leopard 2 tanks to Latvia and they plan to double the number of troops in Latvia by 2026. We must do a lot to ensure the best host nation support for our Allies.

PRISM: Why is Ukraine—nearly a thousand miles from Latvia—so important to Latvia?

Mūrniece: Partly because of our history. Latvia was occupied for more than 50 years and Soviet troops occupied Latvia with incredible brutality. We have had our own Bucha. We know what Ukrainians are going through today and we have a lot of empathy for Ukrainians. In addition, we have a common border with Russia—an aggressor country—and Belarus. We would like to have good neighbors and partners, but must adapt to the situation as it is, with the help of NATO.

It is clear to us that Russia poses a great danger to the civilized world by undermining the rules-based world order. The war crimes committed by Russians in Ukraine threaten sovereigntyof neighboring countries. For this and many other reasons it is clear to us that Ukraine must win this war with Russia, and that Russia must suffer strategic defeat. Without those two conditions there will be no long-lasting peace in our part of the world.

PRISM: When would it be best for Ukraine to become a member of NATO?

Mūrniece: It is clear that Latvia will support Ukraine until victory and after; our commitment in this regard is ironclad. NATO leaders decided that there is no need currently for a Membership Action Plan for Ukraine. This is a wise and timely decision because Ukraine already complies with NATO standards. The Latvian military trains Ukrainian soldiers; our commitment was to train 2,000 Ukrainian soldiers this year, but it is clear that we will train over 3,000—a comparatively big number. Ukrainians already comply with inter-operability criteria. Ukraine's accession to NATO will be a decision of all NATO countries but Latvia together with our Baltic neighbors and Poland will support Ukraine's accession to NATO as soon as it is possible: better sooner than later.

PRISM: What are the main pillars of Latvia's national security strategy? Sweden has "Total Defense" and Finland has "Comprehensive Defense:" what is Latvia's strategic paradigm?

Mūrniece: I mentioned the new Latvian Defense Concept and the new military thinking to defend our territory from the very first moment of potential conflict and the very first centimeters of our border. In addition we are developing Latvia's Comprehensive Defence System which is very similar to the Total Defense concept, meaning that all of society, hand-in-hand, together with state institutions, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals—all are responsible for Latvia's defense. Everyone should know their place and their role; what to do in the first moments of crisis, how to help their communities, and how to ensure the military is successful at the front lines. We have learned a lot from Ukraine and shaped our state defense concept with lessons learned in Ukraine. It is clear that the military can be successful only when civil society supports it.

PRISM: How is Latvia's private sector and civil society integrated into the national defense effort?

Mūrniece: We have organized a lot of training for the public sector as well as for our partners from local government to NGO's. And we are continuing our work on that. All the elements of the nation are integrated in national defense through exercises, workshops, providing information, etc.; we are working hard on this.

PRISM: Is this the responsibility of the Ministry of Defense or is there a specialized agency in command?

Mūrniece: It is partially the Ministry of Defense which does its fair share. We consult with local government and state institutions about what to do in potential crisis situations. But the Ministry of Interior is responsible for civic defense. Therefore the job is divided by the Ministries of Defense and Interior hand-in-hand.

PRISM: How does Latvia collaborate with its Baltic neighbors and what are the challenges?

Mūrniece: At the ministerial level, our cooperation is very collegial. We meet often; not only at NATO and EU ministerials, but we also organize additional meetings among the three Baltic ministers of defense. Our cooperation is very close with multiple cooperation projects between the armed forces of the three Baltic nations. For instance, together with Estonia we are jointly procuring a medium-range air defence system—the IRIS-T system—which will further secure the skies above Latvia and Estonia. With this system in place, we will build our own "LIVONIAN SHIELD." Another example of our close cooperation is the air-policing mission. In 2024, during the renovation of Ämari Air Base in Estonia, NATO air-policing fighter jets and the whole support staff provided by Germany will be stationed in Lielvārde Air Base. We have signed a declaration on closer cooperation in regard to the

NATO Air Defence Rotational Model. More and more our cooperation is ongoing and practical. There is great value in cooperation between the three Baltic nations, and our cooperation is very practical. Regarding Enhanced Forward Presence we have three framework nations in the Baltic states. In our case we have Canada as our framework nation, while Estonia has the United Kingdom, and Lithuania has Germany. We have meetings of the three Baltic states and three framework nations plus NATO military commanders. So, it is not just cooperation between the Baltic states; it is more regional and much broader.

PRISM: Has Latvia reinstated compulsory conscription.

Mūrniece: I have been in favor of conscription for many years, therefore I am very happy that under our political leadership it has become possible to re-introduce conscription in Latvia. The first call is voluntary and new conscripts started their service on the 1st of July this year. Conscription will become compulsory starting in 2024. It is a tough reform because it does not only involve the military but civil society as well. Initially there was some reluctance among Latvian civil society because compulsory conscription was associated with Soviet times and the Soviet occupation system which was harmful and quite ugly. But our neighbors Lithuania and Estonia took their decisions on compulsory conscription years ago, and it was Latvia that was lagging behind. When I became a minister, together with my team, we decided to draft a more focused and concrete law on conscription. It took two months to draft and send a new law to Parliament and for Parliament to adopt it in the last reading. When Latvia decides to do something we can do it very quickly!

The main aim of conscription is to strengthen our reserve capability, including reservists as well as equipment and weapons in storage. Thus, if we need to call on our reservists, each will have his or

her own uniform, equipment, and weapon. The second aim is to increase the number of troops in our armed forces. We see a reluctance around the world to join armed services voluntarily, therefore we have established the system of conscription to enlarge our armed forces.

PRISM: What is the biggest military threat to Latvia?

Mūrniece: It is was stated in the NATO Madrid summit communique very clearly—it is Russia and to a lesser extent Belarus.

PRISM: Can Latvia defend its borders from invasion long enough for NATO reinforcements to arrive?

Mūrniece: I would put it differently. There are 11 nations in our Enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup in Latvia. We have U.S. troops in Latvia as well. This means not only Latvia but at least 12 nations together will defend our country—will defend NATO territory in case of potential military conflict.

PRISM: Can you describe further the Baltic states agreement on air defense?

Mūrniece: I mentioned the NATO Air Defence Rotational Model of joint air defense that was approved by NATO at the Vilnius summit. In addition the three Baltic states signed the declaration of cooperation in promoting availability of the Baltic states airspace for NATO air activities. This means even closer cooperation on organizing more NATO training as well as on deploying additional air defense to eastern flank of NATO. Therefore the skies above Latvia and above the Baltic states will become safer. However, how this model will be implemented is up to SACEUR and NATO military planners.

PRISM: Please describe the Russian "gray zone" aggressions that Latvia suffers from?

Mūrniece: I wouldn't say that Latvia suffers—we do everything we can to counter all threats from Russia. We do not suffer, we are vigilant and calm. We do everything to counter these gray zone measures. Yes, there is Russian sabre-rattling regarding nuclear weapons that is quite provocative. We must explain the situation to our society and have faith in our countermeasures. There has been an increased number of cyber attacks, continued propaganda, and disinformation campaigns. Russia and Belarus have found new and "innovative ways" to threaten Latvia with hybrid attacks, for example, by manipulating the flow illegal migrants.

PRISM: Does Russia try to influence the 25 percent of the Latvian population that is ethnically Russian or Russian-speaking?

Mūrniece: We must be very careful distinguishing between Russian and Latvian speakers. I was taught Russian in school and can still read, write, and speak Russian; does that make me a Russian speaker? It is neither ethnic nor language lines that divide our society; it is something very different. Political indoctrination is what actually divides our society. There is a portion of our population that is pro-Kremlin; and another, much larger part, which is in favor of democratic values, of Latvia as a NATO and EU member, and all the values of the democratic world. Some within the population are vulnerable to Russia's or Putin's propaganda, while the rest of the population is doing everything to safeguard our democracy. But it is neither ethnicity nor language which divides us. It is something coming from the past; during the Soviet occupation times there were Russification campaigns. We can compare it to the weaponization of migration as it was forced migration from Russia and other Soviet regions to the Baltic states. This was done to make us more compliant with the Soviet system. The Russian and other Soviet peoples that Moscow sent lost their own ethnical roots. The notion of a

Soviet people was people without ethnicity. Yes, we have seen some attempts to influence the situation in this regard. But the Baltic people were always resistant during the Soviet occupation period; resistant to Russian propaganda, resistant to the KGB, resistant to the Communist Party's attempts to rule our society. This resistance came from our sense of national pride, including our language and our culture, which safeguarded us from all Soviet attempts to destroy our nation.

PRISM: What specific measures has Latvia taken to counter Russian efforts to drive a wedge between the pro-Kremlin and pro-western populations?

Mūrniece: We have done a lot, including special programs of media literacy through our schools, other parts of society, and non-governmental organizations. Media literacy is one answer to Russian propaganda. Another is media regulation in compliance with EU regulations. Our media regulation body has placed a complete prohibition on direct Russian propaganda, as well as fact-checking all Russian media, providing explanations and statements indicating if any information is false.

PRISM: How can Russia be deterred from engaging in gray zone activity, such as propaganda, the weaponization of migration, economic warfare, etc?

Mūrniece: We cannot prevent it; it is very clear Russia will continue doing it. But we must be ready to explain the situation to our population. We must also continue to prohibit direct Russian propaganda in Latvia. We cannot stop those autocratic activities until Russia is strategically defeated in the war against Ukraine. We hope that as the International Criminal Court begins proceedings on war crimes committed by Russia in this very brutal and terrible war, it might be possible to change the attitudes of Russian society and in Russia itself.

PRISM: Can the Suwalki Gap be a strategic asset as opposed to a vulnerability? Can we exploit the Suwalki Gap to isolate Kaliningrad and put pressure on Moscow that way?

Mūrniece: The accession of Finland and soon Sweden will be critical. Suwalki will always be a vulnerability of NATO and of the Baltic region. But with the accession of Finland and Sweden our region becomes much stronger, and we can organize direct supply chains throughout the Baltic Sea. In the land domain we must remain highly vigilant.

PRISM: Is there a way to take the initiative by taking advantage of Russia's vulnerabilities, such as the geographical vulnerability of Kaliningrad?

Mūrniece: I am not ready to speak specifically about operations involving Kaliningrad. Our answer today to Russia's aggression is that we are strengthening our defense with 3 percent of our GDP going to defense next year. Our neighbor Poland is strengthening its defense with really impressive new capabilities and procurements. We are envious as they are procuring tanks, ammunition, vehicles, and weapons with their defense percentage of GDP that reaches 5 percent. This is the responsibility of all the NATO allies.

PRISM: Is Russia's nuclear sabre-rattling credible? Should we take their implicit threats of nuclear retaliation seriously and be deterred?

Mūrniece: Russia's behavior and nuclear rhetoric is provocative; they use it to compensate for Russia's weakness in conventional military capabilities. The Ukrainians have a good understanding of Russian thinking and good information, and they doubt that Putin will press the nuclear button.

PRISM: is the movement of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus concerning to Latvia?

Mūrniece: There is no clear information regarding the deployment of nuclear weapons to Belarus. Belarusian President Lukashenko has been very

explicit about receiving nuclear weapons from Russia, but there is no convincing confirmation yet that he has received them. There is no obvious reason for Putin to send nuclear weapons to Belarus because the difference between the distance from Belarus to Latvia, or any point in NATO, and the distance from Russia to those points is negligible. There is no military logic for the decision.

PRISM: What future does Russia have with Europe?

Mūrniece: It is up to Russia. There is one scenario in which Russia moves its troops from Ukraine back to Russia, but I doubt this is credible. In another scenario Russia continues its attack but suffers a strategic defeat. That would be followed by prosecution for war crimes by the International Criminal Court, the rebulding of Ukraine, and hopefully a change in the mentality and political thinking of the Russian population. This will not be possible without the foundation of the International Criminal Court prosecutions. Ultimately, it is up to Russian society and Russian leaders which scenario they will choose.

Interview with the Honorable Arvydas Anušauskas

Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania

PRISM: Sweden is reviving its Total Defense concept and Finland has Comprehensive Defense. What are the fundamental elements of Lithuania's national strategy?

Anušauskas: Lithuania's defense policy is based on three pillars. These are the strengthening of the armed forces, a resilient society, and reliance on collective defense. In order to achieve these three, we are increasing our spending on defense. During the last nine years we have increased our spending on defense six times, which now amounts to 2.5 percent of Lithuania's GDP. Much of that funding goes to modernizing our armed forces; for this purpose, we now allocate 30 percent of our total spending. The second pillar of our national security is societal resilience. For this purpose, we have adopted a civil resilience strategy. To put it briefly the purpose of the strategy is to ensure that citizens are able to operate in times of crisis. When it comes to collective defense, our key interest is enhanced forward defenses and combat credible deterrence. We are really interested in having sufficient NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and also U.S. forces deployed in the region as well as pre-positioning of equipment and air and missile defense. And the regional plans that connect all these in-place forces, reinforcements, command and control elements, capabilities, and enablers across the regions.

PRISM: What are the challenges to interoperability within the Baltic states themselves?

Anušauskas: The ministers of defense of all three Baltic states have a chance to meet within our own forum at least several times per year. At these meetings we discuss the development of our joint capabilities and our joint projects. From these discussions came the acquisition of the HIMARS systems, maritime situational awareness, capabilities development, and we are always looking at joint ways of working together in the future. Just now we are looking at opportunities to acquire radars, sea mines, different types of ammunition. We have a plan for this year across all three Baltic states to use our training grounds for different levels of troop preparation. One breakthrough from the last year is the Baltic states area model to which we try to attract our allies' air defense capabilities and ensure proper conditions for large-scale air defense exercises in our region.

Interviewed by Michael Miklaucic, June 19, 2023

This is a huge step forward to help us implement our air defense model, which I think will be approved during the Vilnius summit.

PRISM: What measures has Lithuania taken to contribute to NATO collective defense?

Anušauskas: Let me put it this way: decisions on collective defense are made by the Alliance as a whole and we must always find consensus. Lithuania is among those countries that has always tried to convince the Alliance about the Russian threat. All our efforts as well as investments in our military and capabilities contribute to strengthening collective defense as a whole. So far Lithuania is the only country in the region that is building new training grounds to welcome our Allies, is investing heavily in infrastructure, and is also building several boot camps for Allied forces. These are important steps forward. I already mentioned our air defense model, which with NATO's support will strengthen our air defense capabilities. During the summit will be the first time in the history of Lithuania that we will have so much different air defense capability which will be mutually integrated in a single system.

PRISM: Are there special administrative structures in place for total defense? Who takes the lead on total defense in Lithuania?

Anušauskas: The primary responsibility for total defense is with the Ministry of Defense. But our state authority structure and experience show that whenever a crisis happens all the state institutions must be involved in the response.

The government is responsible for the coordination of the civilian elements of total defense. Earlier I mentioned the civil resistance readiness strategy, which reflects this interoperability among different institutions. The aim of the strategy is to define a role for society with the civil dimension as an indivisible element of the total defense.

Government, together with other institutions and NGOs (non-governmental organization), is in charge of the implementation of this strategy. We also have the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union, which is a voluntary paramilitary organization, and we have significantly increased its funding recently. This Union also contributes to the preparation of citizens for common defense.

To prepare for total defense at the institutional level, we have the mobilization process, which is also a governmental responsibility. We have identified vital state functions, such as continuity of government, functioning of economy and infrastructure, ensuring basic services for society, etc. Various ministries, governmental institutions, municipalities as well as social and economic partners are responsible for the implementation according to their areas of responsibility. The private sector is included in total defense primarily through the mobilization and planning process. A very significant role is played by the municipalities to inventory the resources of the private sector according to requirements and to constantly update information.

During wartime the Lithuanian Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defense, naturally, have primary responsibility for coordination of all defense-related actions. Martial law foresees that to ensure interaction between the armed forces and municipal institutions, bodies, and institutions subordinate to them, the commander of the Lithuanian armed forces appoints and dismisses military commandants and determines the municipality where a specific military commandant will work. They are the key to ensuring that military requirements of civil support will be known and fulfilled in times of war.

PRISM: What makes Ukraine important to Lithuania?

Anušauskas: First of all, Ukraine is important because it is a democratic country which became a target of Russian aggression, which is a way of

testing whether democracies will defend themselves. This is important to Lithuania because a Ukrainian victory in this war is another victory against the Russian/Soviet mode of behavior in international relations. We remember well the days of the occupation and forced influence on Lithuania—even today we are still called "former Soviet republics" even though we were independent states that were occupied by the Soviets. If Ukraine achieves victory this means we have fewer gray zones, and the fewer gray zones we have in which a Kremlin regime can apply hybrid warfare measures and aggression, the fewer gray zones we have the better for Lithuanian and European security.

PRISM: What would be the consequences of a Russian victory in Ukraine?

Anušauskas: I can tell you that in the context of the current war Russia cannot achieve any sort of victory. For this aggression Russia has done everything it could to push Ukraine toward the West. In this case this the war solves the dilemma whether democracies can stand up to totalitarian or even regimes with so called controlled "democracies." Even though I am saying that Russia cannot achieve victory Russia can claim that it is victorious at any time, even now, which it is constantly doing, despite all the losses it incurs. Now we are talking about the new Ukrainian counter-offensive, but this is actually Ukraine 's fourth counter-offensive, and the three previous counter-offensives were successful. They were never treated this way—Russia would say this is a sign of good will or they were making some changes in terms of a troop redeployment around the frontlines, but they would never admit a loss.

PRISM: What is the future of Russia if Russian forces are forced to retreat to pre-2014 lines; meaning if Russia must give up Crimea and the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Anušauskas: In this case Russia might face some regime changes, but perhaps not the drastic kind some might wish. We would have to consider the possibility that Russia would become even more radicalized. As a historian I see similarities between today's Russia and Nazi Germany of 1938-1939. At that time expanding step by step aggression tested the resilience of democratic Western states.

PRISM: Is one possible outcome that the Russian Federation itself might break up?

Anušauskas: There may be such scenarios but let us wait and see what the future brings. Even though there are such scenarios, I personally do not see this as reflecting reality. I do not like to contemplate possible scenarios—any might happen. Everyone should be interested primarily in a Ukrainian victory rather than in Putin's political survival.

PRISM: What more can NATO do to support Ukraine?

Anušauskas: First, we should talk about material support. Ninety percent of NATO member states are providing military and other kinds of support to Ukraine. During the Vilnius summit the NATO-Ukraine Council will gather for the first time. As a practical action NATO could gradually begin integrating Ukraine into NATO structures and offer a clear answer regarding a pathway to future membership.

PRISM: Should Ukraine be invited to join NATO immediately—at the Vilnius summit—or should a formal invitation wait?

Anušauskas: A formal invitation may be offered later, but at least at the summit a clear pathway must be granted now, in Vilnius.

PRISM: Are you concerned that the present level of support could lead to a frozen conflict as in Moldova or the Republic of Georgia, where there

is a ceasefire, but Russia remains in possession of significant occupied territory?

Anušauskas: Such scenarios are always possible, but nobody wants such a scenario. I think we should do even more than we are doing right now. No state wants or is ready for prolonged war, which is why we should continue to increase and enhance military support sufficiently for Ukraine to prevail.

PRISM: Are Russia's implied threats to use nuclear weapons credible?

Anušauskas: Of course, we take Russian capabilities and Russia's official announcements seriously. However, we are also able to verify their official narrative aligns with reality. Let me put it this way, public statements cannot be left without our response. We already have tactical nuclear weapons deployed 100 kilometers west of the Lithuanian border in Kaliningrad. If Russia redeploys tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus they will be 500 kilometers closer to the Lithuanian and NATO border than before. Knowing what Russia is doing in Belarus—namely, the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons—we must show some kind of response. But it shouldn't stop us from supporting Ukraine.

PRISM: Should that support extend to supporting Ukrainian counterattacks on Russian territory?

Anušauskas: What is already happening within Russia's territory is a consequence of the current war, a war that Russia itself started. It proves Russia's weaknesses.

PRISM: What is the future of Belarus?

Anušauskas: In our view Belarus is already integrated into Russia in military terms. Unfortunately, Belarusian society is held hostage by their own dictator. When we along with our neighboring countries are forced to prevent Belarusian regime hybrid attacks—for example, the influx of illegal

immigration through our borders—we understand these actions are not carried out by Belarusian society—that the society is not responsible. So, we still have this exception that we let people in if they leave Belarus for political reasons.

PRISM: During the Cold War there was great concern about Soviet tanks swarming through the Fulda Gap. Today we hear about the Suwalki Gap. Can you describe the strategic significance of the Suwalki Gap?

Anušauskas: The Suwalki Corridor is the only land pathway from the Baltic countries to our NATO allies. Accordingly, the Suwalki is of strategic significance and NATO as an alliance has plans to defend it. But Sweden's accession to NATO will bring changes to the Baltic Sea region security.

PRISM: Is Sweden's membership in NATO still a high priority now that Finland has already become a NATO member?

Anušauskas: Yes, Swedish membership is of crucial importance. Along with Finland's membership they bring very strong military capabilities to the region that changes the security situation significantly.

PRISM: What can we do if Turkey or Hungary continue to obstruct Sweden's membership?

Anušauskas: I personally believe that all the obstacles to Sweden's NATO membership will be removed by the time of the Vilnius summit. A few days ago, I met with the Turkish Minister of Defense, and though he did not commit to any details, from what I heard I remain optimistic.

PRISM: How can NATO turn Kaliningrad into a strategic benefit? Is Kaliningrad a Russian vulnerability?

Anušauskas: Kaliningrad is a significant factor. This area is highly militarized. Russia is doing its utmost to ensure self-sufficiency or survival of

Kaliningrad since it is isolated from the mainland of Russia. Lithuania is not doing anything so that Russia may say that we are isolating the Kaliningrad Oblast. The only thing we are doing is to enforce NATO sanctions against Russia including Kaliningrad. From a military perspective, persistent NATO and U.S. bilateral presence on land, in the air, and on the Baltic Sea; the enhancement of defensive capabilities in the Baltic region vis-a-vi anti-access/area denial (A2AD) in Kaliningrad; Allied combined, joint exercises, based on realistic scenarios—all are visible demonstrations that Kaliningrad shouldn't be regarded as a strategic advantage by Russia.

PRISM: Is gray zone conflict—sometimes referred to as hybrid warfare—a significant threat in Lithuania?

Anušauskas: We call these measures tools of hybrid warfare. Russia used to apply, is applying, and in the future will apply such measures. If we talk about neutralization or elimination of hybrid warfare, we have been getting ready for these scenarios for at least 10 years—for example making sure Russia cannot impose energy blackmail against us. This applies to both the electricity market and the supply of natural gas. The elimination of dependencies measures that we adopted a while ago helped us in the difficult conditions when the war started and some of the Western European countries had a tough time to reorient themselves to abandon Russian oil and gas. We were ready for this. When it comes to information warfare, we take these things very seriously.

PRISM: Does Russia attempt to exploit the Russian speakers in Lithuania?

Anušauskas: Thirty-three years ago Lithuania was still occupied by the Soviet Union, and I would be lying if I were to say that there are no consequences of the former Russian occupation and influences at all. Russia's influence campaigns are intense, and tools are trying to target both Lithuanian and Russian parts of civil society, both citizens of Lithuania.

PRISM: When Lithuania approved the opening of a Taiwan Representative Office, China was very angry and took certain measures against Lithuania. Do you view China as a security threat?

Anušauskas: China's military stance and rhetoric has not changed. This was recently proven by China's Minister of Defense who at the recent Shangri-La Dialog Conference said there is a need to renew the international security architecture. Lithuania was among the first countries in the region to include China in the national security threats assessment. China is following our response as well as Russia's vulnerabilities and also learning lessons from their mistakes, however still choosing to oppose Western democracies.

PRISM: Is the Chinese security model a threat to democracies?

Anušauskas: Yes, China supports other values than those embraced by the democratic countries. In the past Lithuania tried to make a dialog with China, but after opening the Taiwan Representative Office in Lithuania we felt the harsh measures taken by China against us. We had to appeal against these measures and looked for support among our allies and in international organizations such as the World Trade Organization.

PRISM: Is the world entering a second Cold War?

Anušauskas: I think that war in Ukraine and China's behavior vis-a-vis Taiwan demonstrate that for Russia and China Cold War never ended as much as we wanted to believe.

The Fifth Act: America's End in Afghanistan

By Elliot Ackerman
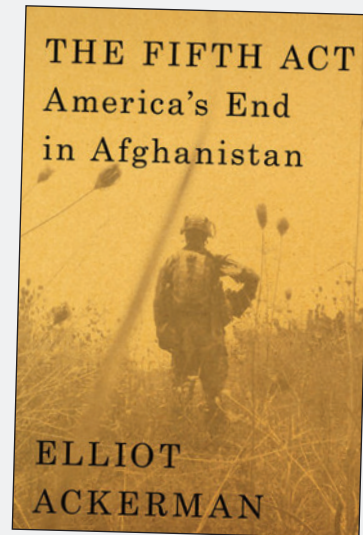Penguin, 2022
276 pp., $27.00
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Reviewed by Dov S. Zakheim

Elliot Ackerman's *The Fifth Act: America's End in Afghanistan* reads like one of his award-winning novels. It is fast-paced and thrilling. It also is full of flashbacks, similar to movies and extended television murder mysteries. But this latest Ackerman volume is not a novel. It is the very real story of how the author, together with many others, worked to rescue as many Afghans as they could during the chaotic days of Kabul's downfall to the Taliban. And it contrasts not only the fate of these people with the author's current peaceful life but with the anguish that characterized his own service in Afghanistan both as a Marine and as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer a decade into what became America's endless war.

Ackerman's book is not merely one man's account of his efforts to save as many Afghans as he could, and doing so by working together with a host of partners, some of whom he never actually met. It also is a bitter reflection on the policies that led to America's humiliation two decades after what appeared to have been a lightning victory over the Taliban.

Early in the volume, having provided a brief *mise en scene* of the state of play in the immediate aftermath of Kabul's fall, Ackerman offers the first of many reflections on what went wrong in Afghanistan. He does so in the context of his own look backward to his days of training at the Marines' Amphibious Reconnaissance School in 2002, just after what appeared to be America's quick victory over the Taliban. He notes that his first deployment was not to Afghanistan but to Iraq, "leading a platoon in Fallujah," and points out that while Afghanistan was the older war, for him, as for others, "Iraq was our first war." He deployed there "first because Bush had made Afghanistan a second-tier priority." He observes that "of the many fatal mistakes made in our Afghan tragedy, the Bush administration would soon make the first: it would begin the war in Iraq…. As the Iraq War raged, the lack of US focus in Afghanistan set conditions for the Taliban to reconstitute in neighboring Pakiistan. President Bush's fixation on Iraq allowed this."

While it is arguable that it was less Bush's "fixation" than those of Vice President Dick Cheney and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz in particular, Ackerman is on the mark regarding the priority assigned to the two wars. I vividly recall having to fund the positioning of forces in anticipation of an attack on Iraq even as we were in the midst of our initial Afghan operations. Moreover, it

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was because Iraq was uppermost in the minds of the Pentagon leadership that I was asked to coordinate our non-military activities in Afghanistan, a task that surely should have been in Under Secretary for Policy Doug Feith's writ rather than mine as Comptroller. But Feith, like his superiors in both the Pentagon and the White House, was totally consumed by Iraq.

Ackerman goes on to point out three elements that characterized the Afghan war—and for that matter the war in Iraq as well—and rendered them both unprecedented: "Never before had America engaged in a protracted conflict with an all-volunteer military that was funded through deficit spending." Previous wars had involved two of the three elements that he outlines. America had employed deficit spending to fight the protracted war in Vietnam. Draftees, not volunteers, constituted the vast majority of America's forces in that war. The United States did employ a volunteer force that it funded by means of deficit spending; but the war in which they fought, the 1991 Gulf War, was not protracted.

Nevertheless, as American troops mobilized in the Gulf in late 1990 and early 1991, there was no way of knowing that Saddam's forces, on paper the fourth largest military in the world, would collapse as quickly as they did and inflict an amazingly small number of casualties on the American-led coalition. On the other hand, as Vladimir Putin will certainly attest after his invasion of Ukraine, wars are not short just because those who launch them think they will be. Ackerman's observation about the Afghan War is simply a reflection of the resentment that he continues to harbor.

Having digressed to opine on the origin and nature of the war, Ackerman turns to his initial induction into the Marines, and the flowering of a friendship with Jack, who sponsored him throughout his service with the Corps and then the CIA and who later figured in his efforts to save Afghans. Ackerman then jumps ahead in time as he offers his readers another flashback, to his decision to leave the CIA and thereby disappoint Jack, who had anticipated

that they would work together in Afghanistan, this time for the Agency. Ackerman had had enough of the Afghan War, though cutting his ties with the Agency, and his friend, was not without pain. As he writes: "I felt sick. Try as I might to rationalize it away, leaving the war meant betraying my best friend…. Every person who has fought in these wars and left them has had to declare the war over for themselves…. There has been no single peace; rather, there have been tens of thousands of separate peace deals that each of us who walked away from the war had to negotiate with our own conscience."

It is only after these flashbacks that Ackerman turns to the heart of his tale: the contrast between his current lifestyle as a family man and successful author and the misery of those whom he and his fellows attempt to save. He begins his account as his family is about to depart for a vacation in Italy. He receives many phone calls asking him whether he knows how to raise funds to enable Afghans to leave their country and then whether he can actually help them leave. These calls come from people he knows, from people who know people that he knows, and from people with whom he has no prior connection either direct or indirect. Most of the callers are veterans of the Afghan War, as he is. They feel an obligation to their Afghan translators, guides, and fellow soldiers to a far greater degree than does the Biden Administration, which has trouble organizing a coherent rescue operation.

As his family arrives in Rome, Ackerman learns that "the issue now isn't flights but access to the airport itself. No one can get inside." He now is being asked to help in three different ways: to find money, to help get people to the airport, and to help them get out of the country. It is a series of tasks that ultimately consumes him throughout what is meant to be a vacation.

Ackerman's flashbacks pepper his description of his efforts, together with those of so many others, to rescue as many Afghans as he possibly could. He veers between giving his readers an update as to the

state of play on the ground in Afghanistan, the interconnecting networks that strove to save whomever they could, updates on his family vacation, flashbacks to his service both as a Marine and then as a CIA operations officer. If all this seems complicated, that is because it actually was.

I can personally attest to at least some of the challenges that Ackerman so lucidly describes. I played a minor role in the effort by the senior management and trustees of the American University of Iraq in Sulimaniyeh to rescue a small number of students from the American University of Afghanistan. Like Ackerman and those he worked with both inside and outside Afghanistan, my colleagues and I also had to identify and win the commitment of financial sponsors; to give—and receive—updates from both senior contacts and desk officers in the Pentagon and from the military on the ground; to keep Congressional members and staff informed and to seek whatever assistance they could provide. Then there were the matters of getting the students to Kabul's Karzai International Airport; of finding aircraft to receive them once they got past the Marine wire; of determining the route that would get them from Kabul to Sulimaniyeh. And, like Ackerman, because of the time zone differences, several of my heroic colleagues devoted their efforts through the wee hours of many mornings.

Perhaps the toughest challenges that Ackerman faced were getting the refugees through the airport's gate and then onto a waiting aircraft. He relates how he turned to his former Marine and CIA buddy Jack for help in getting the first of several convoys past the airport wire. He tells Jack that he needs the Marines at the one gate that is not closed, the so-called Unknown Gate, to let a few busloads of Afghans into the airport. He is conversing with Jack while speaking from the gift shop of Rome's Colosseum. He tells him he has the financing, and though he does not have the tail number of the aircraft that is meant to evacuate the Afghans, he

expects to get both that and the passenger manifest in time for the Marines to open the gate at 0330 Afghan time; all Jack can offer is: "I'll see what I can do." It is an answer that Ackerman frequently hears from the officials and military on the ground.

Before the reader learns the fate of the Afghans on the buses, Ackerman returns to describe the next stages of his family vacation, as well as his partial reconciliation with Jack, who had taken serious umbrage at Ackerman's decision to retire. He then offers the reader yet another critique of the Biden Administration's Afghan policy. He notes that Biden vigorously disputed any notion that the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan was inevitable. Ackerman quotes Biden asserting that "the Afghan troops have 300,000 well equipped [soldiers]—as well equipped as any army in the world—[with]… an air force against something like 75,000 Taliban." "And yet," observes Ackerman, "these forces were shown to be a plywood army, one with the capability to accomplish the mission, but with foundational problems in recruitment, administration and leadership." In other words, an army doomed to defeat.

Ackerman then rightly criticizes the Biden Administration for its failure to develop a coherent evacuation plan in the period that immediately followed the president's announcement of America's planned withdrawal from Afghanistan on September 11. He notes that several Congressmen, many of them veterans, wrote to Biden asking for an evacuation plan and calling for a massive airlift and temporary housing for the refugees on Guam. He quotes a few of the signatories, including Seth Moulton, a friend from his days as a Marine, who points out that "'the US…has managed such evacuations before." "Yet," he observes, "in the months before Kabul's fall, while there's still an opportunity to significantly expedite the visa process or even begin a wider evacuation, the Biden Administration does neither." And he pointedly adds, "the September 11 deadline has, since its inception, been arbitrary, of arguably of no military

significance, a gimmicky way to add symmetry to an otherwise asymmetrical conflict. As the withdrawal begins, and the situation in Afghanistan deteriorates, the date is moved up, to August 31. If our back is up against a wall, it is a wall that we have built."

Ackerman then returns to relate how from Rome he continues to monitor the situation on the ground in Kabul. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of his network, the non-Afghans accompanying the buses with 109 Afghans, his friend Jack, and the Marines at the gate, all the refugees are able to get into the airport and board the awaiting flight. Their convoy is only the first, however. The work that Ackerman and his contacts have undertaken has only just begun.

Before turning to the fate of a second convoy of Afghans that he worked to assist, Ackerman offers another flashback, this time to an American special forces operation against Taliban fighters in a town in Farah province, located in southwestern Afghanistan near the Iranian border. But Ackerman interrupts this narrative by returning briefly to his tale of helping Afghans escape while he and his family continue their Italian adventure. And then he reverts to the operation in Farah.

He writes about the Farah operation in a town called Shewan because it involved the death of a Marine whose body Ackerman decided his unit should not attempt to recover because it was still under fire. That decision continues to haunt Ackerman, because Marines never leave a comrade behind. Indeed, ultimately, another unit did recover the body. Before the reader learns that this was the outcome of the incident, however, Ackerman has again reverted to the progress of his family vacation, to the latest developments in the effort to rescue Afghans, and to yet another critique of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"If insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome, in Afghanistan the Biden administration has adopted an insane policy, setting itself up for a repeat of Obama's experience in Iraq with what has proven

to be a debacle of a withdrawal." In what almost becomes a rant, he continues in this vein for several more pages before returning not to Shewan, but once again to the situation on the ground in Kabul, and only then turns to relate the the denouement of the episode in the Afghan town.

Ackerman then brings his readers back to the rescue effort. He continues to expand his network in order to help a second convoy enter the airport, this time through its North Gate, which he had previously related was closed. Again, it cannot enter that gate. He reaches out to retired Marine General John Allen, former commander of Central Command, who links him with the Command's headquarters, which could order that a gate be opened for this latest convoy of four buses of Afghan escapees. Allen contacts the CENTCOM Director of Operations, as well as Ackerman's journalist friend Nick, who is organizing the convoy, which then proceeds to the airport's South Gate.

Noting that he has given his wife an update on his latest efforts and developments on the ground, and that she responds that "it's total collapse," enables him once more to interrupt his narrative with yet another biting critique of America's war and its chaotic aftermath:

Collapse is a good word. The past couple of weeks have not only seen a collapse of our country's competence as we've unconditionally lost a twenty-year war, but also a collapse of time, space and hierarchy…. Time has collapsed as those of us who fought in Afghanistan years ago have found ourselves thrown back into that conflict with an intensity as though we'd never left…. Space has collapsed, as those of us coordinating these evacuations are spread across the world…. And hierarchy has collapsed, as from the President on down, we are all subject to the vicissitudes of this catastrophic withdrawal.

When he returns to his account of the second convoy, Ackerman conveys the conversation taking place among the leaders of each bus and those who

are working feverishly to find a way to get into the South Gate. The attempt also fails, and the convoy is forced to return to the Serena hotel from where it began its perilous journey. The failed attempt to enter the South Gate took just over an hour; but the private citizens who organized and directed the effort had barely slept for two days. The military at CENTCOM headquarters and on the ground had tried their best as well. One can understand Ackerman's frustration with the Biden Administration.

Before returning to his efforts to extract Afghans from their war-torn land, Ackerman indulges in several more flashbacks. He relates a 2016 chance encounter in New York's Essex House hotel with a retired Marine helicopter pilot nicknamed "Dutch" whom he has not seen since they were both in Afghanistan five years earlier. Their meeting prompts yet another flashback, this time to Ackerman's days advising a Counter Terrorism Pursuit Team (CTPT) operating in Shkin, a town in the Taliban-infested Paktika province. He is working with those who are carrying out targeted killings, which the Obama Administration increasingly came to rely upon as it drew down American conventional forces. Ackerman notes the "discomfort" of those who planned and carried out the killings, "because it felt like we were doing something, on a large scale, that we'd sworn not to. Most of us felt as though we were violating Executive Order 12333 [which explicitly prohibits assassinations]. Everybody knew what was happening…. [But] in the United States we veiled these assassination programs behind the highest levels of classification. In Afghanistan and Pakistan…these programs were part of daily life…. They were no secret to the residents of these countries, while to us, in our country, these campaigns became a secret we kept from ourselves."

It is not only to indict the targeted assassination program that Ackerman writes of his chance meeting with "Dutch." It is also to demonstrate the fog that engulfed even the most sophisticated assassination attempts. While working together in Shkin,

the military had targeted a Taliban commander named Nazir. The air strike that was meant to kill him killed four Talibs, but it was unclear from the satellite imagery whether Nazir was among them. In fact, he was not. It was only after an Afghan informant of sometimes dubious reliability showed the Americans where the Taliban commander lived that the man met his fate.

Before returning to his main narrative, Ackerman offers another memory, one of his father-in-law, a member of the Greatest Generation who fought in World War Two, which he juxtaposes with a conversation with his friend Congressman Seth Moulton. Moulton had bravely arrived in Kabul to see for himself what was going on, and offered to help any way he could. Ackerman then further couples his recollections of his father-in-law with his conversation with another veteran who also fought in Fallujah, and later in Afghanistan, to opine yet again on the tragedy that was the Afghan War. When his friend remarks, reflecting a view that many hold, that "'Afghanistan was the good war…. No one attacked us from Iraq," Ackerman takes a contrary view. "One could make a credible case that our other war, in Iraq…was the war we didn't lose…particularly as the country has now held four consecutive sets of parliamentary elections without any meaningful violence." Harking back indirectly to his father's vastly different wartime experience, however, he adds: "America's mixed outcome in Iraq paired with our unequivocal loss in Afghanistan feels not only like a national indictment, but also a generational one."

There follow more flashbacks, more reports on the family itinerary, more updates of the situation on the ground. And more opportunities to bemoan the incompetence of the American government. In one notable instance Ackerman turns to the Trump peace deal with the Taliban, which he terms a "betrayal." He correctly observes that the Afghan government was kept out of the negotiations, a "strategy [that] resembled the flawed American negotiations during the

Vietnam War…in which National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger cut out the government of South Vietnam." He goes on to point out that just as South Vietnamese president Nguyen van Thieu was handed a fait accompli, so too was Afghan president Ashraf Ghani. As a result, the deal "fatally delegitimized President Ghani and his central government."

Even more than the Paris Peace Accords to which Ackerman refers, the February 2020 Doha Agreement was reminiscent of the 1938 Munich Agreement, in which Britain and France gave away the Czech Sudetenland to Germany without Czechoslovakia's agreement. In the days immediately following what British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain crowed would bring "peace in our time," the British and French forced Czech President Edward Benes to accept the deal; like Benes, Ghani, had little choice but to cave in to pressure from his more powerful putative allies.

The debate over whether the Paris Peace Accords were the reason South Vietnam fell has raged for decades. But even a cursory review of America's deal with the Taliban is enough to lead one to conclude that it was a complete giveaway. Washington agreed to release five thousand prisoners—without the consent of the Kabul government; the Taliban offered virtually nothing in return. Neither did Hitler in 1938.

Moreover, as Ackerman notes, the American negotiators seemed to have overlooked the inconsistency between the formal American refusal to call the Taliban a government and the demand that it not issue travel documents to those who might threaten the United States. Kissinger won a Nobel Peace Prize for the Paris Accords; none was even contemplated for those whose negotiation at Doha was merely a cover for America's decision to cut and run.

Some of Ackerman's most powerful writing contrasts his own family vacation and the situation that he is attempting to address in Kabul. For example, as his family is in a taxi to the airport on their way to their next Italian stop, he records the efforts

of his network to support an Afghan couple trying to make its way to Kabul airport. As Ackerman's wife is handing over her passport and checking bags, this couple is making its way through the crowds before Kabul airport's North Gate. And the couple makes it through the gate just after Ackerman's family has arrived at theirs.

This episode, like others in the book, is accompanied by photographs. The photos are meant to highlight his various recollections, as well as the progress of the vacation in Italy. But those that illustrate the conditions surrounding the Afghan couple's escape are especially moving. There are no friendly flight attendants. No signs for priority boarding. No loudspeaker announcements of a gate that is about to close. Instead, the photos are of a handwritten sign to alert the Marines at the gate to the escaping Afghans; of the crowd of desperate Afghans milling in front of the gate; of the barbed wire topping the fence and wall, laced with garbage in between them, that mark off the barriers to entering the airport.

As Ackerman begins to conclude his twofold account of both his efforts to help fleeing Afghans and his experiences over a decade earlier as a CIA officer, he expands the aperture of his critique of the war. After repeating the several parallels between the Vietnam War and America's Afghan misadventure, he argues that there remains a fundamental difference between the two, as illustrated by the reactions to the 1971 publication of the Pentagon Papers and that to the *Washington Post's* Afghanistan papers that appeared two decades later. While the earlier revelations had what Ackerman terms a "galvanizing effect" that reinforced public opposition to the Vietnam conflict, the Afghanistan papers did nothing of the kind, apart from enflaming "certain members of Congress [who] noisily expressed their outrage,"(page 182) which Ackerman sarcastically dismisses. "Such sudden indignation," he remarks cynically. "Do we, the American people, really need an unearthing of thousands of

previously classified documents to tell us that our efforts in Afghanistan have not gone well?"

It is, of course, a rhetorical question. Ackerman faults not only policy makers and the military, but also average Americans who never mobilized to oppose the war and who have ignored its costs, allowing them to be passed on to future generations. He calls it "societal duplicity." And somehow, he then transitions into a discussion of his reaction to the January 6, 2020 insurrection, arguing that "the level of insanity witnessed that day" is comparable to fighting in a war: "anyone who has been to war can tell you that no matter how honorably it is conducted, it is an exercise in collective insanity." That observation may hold more than a grain of truth, but hardly contributes to the progress of his narrative.

Although the Afghanistan papers indict all administrations since 2001, Ackerman appears to have a softer spot for Barack Obama than for his predecessor and his successors. His bias is most marked when in the course of indicting the American public for what he terms its "fatigue," he digresses to Obama's futile threat to Syria's Bashar Assad against crossing a "red line" by employing chemical weapons. Instead, he blames "the international community," the Congress, and indeed "the fatigue of voters." It is as if Obama's hands were tied. They were not. Just as he could order retaliation for attacks on American troops, just as he could order targeted assassinations, so he could have ordered a serious retaliatory strike against the Syrians. That he failed to do so was no one's fault but his own.

Following his seemingly never-ending political commentary, Ackerman inserts another flashback. He is attending the burial of a war buddy at Arlington and he spies Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, watching at a distance. Ackerman goes on to discuss his high regard for Mullen, which the Admiral justly deserves. I offer full disclosure that he is a friend; no matter, few will disagree with me—or with

Ackerman—that Mullen has always been as down-to-earth as he has been thoughtful; that he puts his interlocutors, no matter how junior, at ease; that he is always curious to learn new facts; and, most important, that he always has cared, and still cares—and cares deeply—for the men and women who once served under his command. Equally important, he has long been a firm believer in an apolitical military; at a time when there is a growing debate over the politicization of those in uniform, Ackerman's portrayal of Mullen is especially welcome.

Ackerman's final section, which, like the title of his book, he calls "The Fifth Act," again intersperses his account of Afghans he helped rescue with yet more—and repeated—criticism of the Biden Administration, the Trump Administration, and the American public. There are still families to save, however; still Afghans whose lives are at risk because they worked with Americans and now have been left by Washington to twist in the wind. Ackerman and his network press on, and they do manage to get more Afghans out of the country, though far too many are still left behind.

Ackerman's bitterness comes to the fore most starkly as he brings his volume to a close. He relates the content of a video by a serving Marine lieutenant colonel named Stuart Scheller, who castigates the senior military leadership and quotes Thomas Jefferson's famous (or infamous) remark that "every generation needs a revolution." Ackerman writes that Scheller's video cost him his military career. He notes that "my first instinct is to categorize it as a rant." One might say the same of so much of the content of *The Fifth Act*. Regarding the video, Ackerman observes that "emotions are raw—so a rant…—seems understandable." That may be so, up to a point, but Ackerman has just too many rants of his own, and it ultimately detracts from the raw power of his narrative.

The same might also be said regarding the book's many flashbacks. While they do offer a contrast with

his main theme, and indeed can be enlightening and informative, they also can be overdone, to the point of bewildering the reader. Ackerman's story just has too many wheels within wheels, too many digressions. Some are necessary, others not so much.

Ackerman is both a brilliant novelist and a decorated veteran. His efforts, and those of his many compatriots—from ordinary citizens to the most senior officers in the land—to rescue Afghans for whom America simply had not provided, are nothing short of heroic. And he is certainly entitled to express his revulsion at Washington's ignominious departure from Afghanistan. Yet his bitterness against government and military leaders blinds him not only to the good work of many of those leaders, but also to the fundamental decency and generosity of the American people.

Ackerman published his book before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Most intelligence experts, including those of the United States, expected Ukraine to collapse within days. Instead, due in no small part, not only to the brave Ukrainians, but to the American led coalition that has aided them with arms, materiel, training, and funds that have flooded into the country, the supposedly overmatched Ukrainian military has fought the Russians to a standstill for the better part of a year.

In 2022 the Biden Administration and Congress—two of Ackerman's primary targets—directed almost $50 billion in aid to Ukraine. More will be forthcoming in 2023. Congressional support for aid to Ukraine is overwhelmingly bipartisan, as is that of American public, despite economic hardship and the highest level of inflation in decades. Evidently, "fatigue" has paralyzed neither government nor public support for Ukraine.

It is true that there have been murmurs in both Washington and Western Europe that the Ukrainians should settle their differences with Moscow by making some difficult concessions. Nevertheless, even if the Western Europeans would

prefer to forget the Munich Agreement, the Biden Administration cannot overlook its predecessor's disastrous deal. As long as the heroic Ukrainian president Volodomyr Zelensky refuses to participate in a meaningful negotiation, despite what already may be strong American pressure to do so, there will be no negotiated settlement with Russia. The Doha Agreement, and even more so the chaotic departure from Afghanistan, will continue to haunt the White House just as it haunts Ackerman and those who fought in that decades long debacle.

Things could have been different in Afghanistan. America had good reason to attack the Taliban and al Qaida, which until the Iraq War were both on the run. Millions of exiled Afghans returned home during the early years of the conflict; women were freed from their medieval drudgery; small businesses began to flourish. Even as the war dragged on, there had still been progress: free elections, education for women, tolerance for minorities. These were no small accomplishments, despite widespread corruption and Taliban control of a good part of the countryside.

The Biden team simply could have renounced the Doha agreement on the perfectly justifiable grounds that the Taliban continued to harbor terrorists. It could have retained a small troop presence in the country, as well as Air Force units operating from Bagram air base, which should not have been abandoned as quickly as it was. Had the Biden team—which reversed so many other Trump decisions—reversed Trump's pullout, Afghanistan might not be suffering both socially and economically as is the case today. But Biden did nothing of the sort, and for that reason, even if Ackerman's scathing political observations are far too repetitive, and his flashbacks too frequent, his book is still worth reading. It offers lessons that America should have learned after the fall of Vietnam, but did not. And it is high time that it did.

War Transformed: The Future of 21st Century Great Power Competition and Conflict

By Mick Ryan
Naval Institute Press, 2022
312 pp., $39.95
ISBN: 9781682477410

White Sun War: The Campaign for Taiwan

By Mick Ryan
Casemate, 2023
339 pp., $22.95
ISBN: 9781636242507

Reviewed by John M. Grondelski

Every military strategist is cautioned against the temptation of fighting the last war. This pair of books by retired Australian Major General Mick Ryan makes clear that, whatever criticisms might be addressed against his predictions, he has not succumbed to that temptation. Instead, he has decided to try his hand not just at envisaging the next war but fleshing it out in a novel.

War Transformed is Ryan's vision of what warfare looks like today and might look like tomorrow and how military education and planning might prepare us for it. Among his arguments is the value of incorporating fiction into professional military education. Human beings are storytellers who like a good story, which generally sticks more vividly in memory than a dry lecture. Akin to August Cole's 2015 effort in "ficint" (fiction and intelligence), *White Sun War* is Ryan's effort to incarnate the vision he sketches in *War*

Transformed into a potential great power conflict: a 2028 attempt by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to seize Taiwan.

War Transformed considers changes in modern warfare from four angles: intellectual revolutions, new-era competition, the interplay of institutions and ideas, and the role of people. Ryan argues we are in the midst of a "fourth Industrial Revolution" or, more accurately, an "era of acceleration." The pace of knowledge and change is growing exponentially, threatening to outpace human capacity to assemble, analyze, and act on it. Such change, coupled with the constant advantage of surprise in warfare means technology, including artificial intelligence, will not just be a "tool" in warfighting but, in a very real sense, will become a partner. Other areas where technology is likely to compress the window for decisionmaking are "… robotics, quantum technology, biotechnology, energy weapons, hypersonics, space

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technology, and additive manufacturing …" (p. 42). These are driving intellectual revolutions.

"New-era competition" will involve features such as the compression of time for decisionmaking, the relevance of electromagnetic signatures, the increased role of algorithms, and changed notions of influence. Today's geopolitical competition, involving peer and near-peer competitors, represents a departure from warfare as Western nations have mostly known it since the fall of communism in the 1980s and 1990s. The role of space, cyber, and information domains will play far more central roles in warfare than in the past, whether by influencing the outcomes of terrestrial-based fighting or directly affecting space assets, bringing the disruptive impact of war to the enemy through cyber compared to raw kinetic action, or exploiting the potential of information and influence operations on adversaries and their will to fight. Nor will today's expansion of conflict in these domains necessarily be limited to states: they afford vast opportunities for non-state actors to exploit these domains for their own agendas.

The interplay of institutions and ideas requires assessment of how the conduct of modern warfare will likely demand thinking outside the box. Most services at least pay lip service to, if not actually implementing, greater degrees of jointness and integration. How much we pay attention to resources is another question. Post-COVID-19, the United States and allies have become more aware of their dependency on competitors (if not enemies)—whether out of scarcity or the consequences of globalization—for supplies vital to warfare, be they rare earth minerals, medicines, or various manufactured goods, and for the supply chains necessary to ensure their sustainable supply. Finally, military forces that presuppose more seamless integration of humans and technology will also require troops with commensurate education to employ them well: Ryan politely does not delve extensively into the challenge posed by declining Western educational standards.

Finally, Ryan is emphatic about the primacy and indispensable role of people. Under this rubric, he focuses on five important areas: cultivating a culture of joint warfare; maintaining the cutting edge of our military leaders; fostering their professional development, especially in a culture of continuous learning; and enhancing appreciation of military ethics as essential to professional military education and leadership.

A formidable array of topics, you might say, but how does it all hold together? Ryan attempts to depict one possible way it could, involving a topic of frequent current concern to U.S. defense planners: Taiwan. *White Sun War,* a novel recounting a 2028 unsuccessful attack by the PRC to seize Taiwan, is Ryan's canvas to sketch that picture.

A new PRC President sees a narrowing window to achieve a *fait accompli* by taking over Taiwan. The United States is internally divided ahead of a presidential election, while Washington must handle two simultaneous extreme climate events: massive hurricane-induced flooding in Florida and uncontrolled wildfires in the Far West. With the United States distracted and the People's Liberation Army heavily invested in technology, the PRC President believes Taiwan can be occupied before Taiwan's allies can react.

The bulk of the book examines possible changes in warfighting from the perspectives of a PRC Marine Colonel (Bo) leading an invasion brigade; a U.S. Army Captain whose cavalry troop provides reconnaissance support to a Marine Colonel commanding new Littoral Regiments; and a Technical Sergeant in the Space Force. Others—a Taiwanese soldier, various U.S. federal bureaucrats, military figures—also play supporting roles in the story.

Ryan envisions an amphibious assault on Taiwan, calculated to rapidly impose an exclusionary zone on the Taiwan Strait and to land forces on the island. Ryan's futuristic vision includes massive PRC use of "beetles" (autonomous devices, both

airborne drones and amphibious devices) programmed to reconnoiter, clear obstacles, and kill. A project developed by Colonel Bo as part of his strategy project at the PRC National Defense University, beetles are designed to be a non-human advance that opens the way for PRC troops. As the initial landing force on the island, beetles would destroy Taiwanese shore barriers and take first crack at island defenders before actual humans stormed the shores. The beetles also serve as PRC advance forces, clearing the way for follow-on by PRC troops. They feature prominently throughout the book, including an airborne version which regularly detects enemy units to swarm, attack, and destroy them.

White Sun's beetles are a fictional embodiment of Ryan's argument in *War Transformed* that autonomous devices will increasingly almost be "partners" to living troops both in paving their advance as well as in protecting them. Because of their independent sensing capabilities, beetles have the potential (like hypersonic missiles) to achieve lethal goals before the adversary is aware of them and/or deploys countermeasures.

But the PRC is not alone in this computer-driven war. U.S. Army Captain Lee spends most of her time in her armored vehicle on screens, detecting and retaliating against targets. Lest anyone imagine that the fight is just soldiers on computers, Ryan emphasizes that this "automation" of warfare is hardly, however, bloodless: soldiers are cooked inside their vehicles after the enemy detects their signatures and assaults them.

The Space Force acquires a relatively important role, reflecting Ryan's belief that space-based assets are intrinsic components of modern terrestrial warfare. Examples of that role include an ability to hijack surveillance satellites for a limited period, feeding false imagery of storm transit roots to deceive the PRC about the first U.S. forces' deployment to Taiwan being seemingly Okinawa-bound. Among the Space Force's more audacious exploits are the clandestine seizure of a PRC satellite to assess its technological capabilities, leaving satellite debris in its place, and the feat that ends the war: feeding faked storm tracking information into global weather satellites about a typhoon. By misleading people that the storm was bearing down on Taiwan's east coast with a path out to sea rather than its west coast (the primary site of PRC occupation) and the Straits, PRC forces were left exposed to extremely violent weather during which the United States and Allies launched a massive, all-out assault across all domains against the enemy. PRC forces, bogged down in the southwest quadrant of Taiwan, facing both growing logistical supply problems and aggressive local insurgency, are decimated, forcing a PRC withdrawal. Although the unlucky PRC President is deposed, the Chinese Communist Party remains in power, Ryan leaving the intimation it may live to fight another day.

Naval activity in *White Sun War* is confined to the Straits. Early in the three-month long war U.S., Japanese, and Australian naval forces—while taking major losses themselves, also inflict significant damage on Chinese cross-Strait vessels, stopping an invasion of Taiwan's north, which sets the stage for PRC strained supply lines during an extended conflict. There is no activity in the South China Sea nor any strikes on the PRC mainland.

Ryan envisions primarily a U.S.-Japanese-Taiwanese alliance, with Australia contributing a much more junior partner role. The only other country that plays a minor but significant role in the scenario is India. Ahead of the conflict-ending literal allied *Sturm und Drang* attack in August that is coordinated with the falsified weather data, India is induced to deploy significant forces along its border with Tibet. They do nothing, but concern about Indian intentions forces PRC leaders to divert forces to their Western Theater, further weakening their forces on Taiwan.

Ryan pulls various technological rabbits out of the hat, e.g., a possible improved American stealth

aircraft that allows for massive, undetected enemy bombing (which occurs just prior to the August ceasefire). Ryan presents the project as an effort to overcome Western conundrums from Cold War days: given the numerical superiority of then-Soviet, now-PRC forces, Western Allies might be forced to resort to tactical nuclear use more quickly than they would like. There is, therefore, a need for a more massive, effect strike capability at extreme points in a conflict short of the nuclear threshold. That is where his secret stealth bomber comes in.

How plausible Ryan's technological rabbits are I leave to those more proficient in cutting edge military technology. In some sense, Ryan asks us to suspend our disbelief and concede a measure of plausibility to these developments. At the current pace of technological advance, can we really exclude at least some of them in five years?

Ryan also assumes that geopolitical competitors employing these new warfighting domains and technologies will also begin to establish redlines that warn adversaries of escalatory intent. In one scene, tension is stoked because a local PRC unit deploys a centrally unauthorized electromagnetic pulse to disrupt enemy technology. The unexpected event triggers a discussion about ascertaining if it was a one-off or the PRC is escalating to use of limited tactical nuclear weapons. Such ambiguity is likely to bedevil Western allies' ability to discern the intent of geopolitical competitors like the PRC in real conflict.

Such is Ryan's Taiwan scenario. I reiterate that Ryan is probably less interested in a detailed battle plan for Taiwan than using a story to illustrate how he sees 21[st]century war changing, particularly in the pairing of people and autonomous weaponry and the information, cyber, and space domains. After reading the book, I will concede something to Ryan's argument about the utility of fiction in professional military education: a good story serves to make more memorable how theoretical arguments (in this case, changes in warfare today) might be instantiated.

Either book can be read independently but combined, Ryan successfully attempts a novel feat to make his vision's points. Together, the books offer policymakers and military leaders considerable fodder to ruminate about conflict in a world where great power conflict is back with a vengeance and how it might play out in an Asian theater of particular American concern.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE!

The Patriot Dinner

Unity for Ukraine: A Gala Dinner Honoring Diplomacy,
Allied Cooperation, and the Defense Industrial Base

Tuesday, December 12, 2023
Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington DC 20004

6:00 p.m. Reception	7:00 p.m. Dinner/Program
Horizon Ballroom	The Rotunda

Honoring:
Volodymyr Zelenskyy
President of Ukraine

Special Remarks:
Her Excellency Oksana Markarova
Ambassador of Ukraine

Please save the date to join leaders in national security and diplomacy, allies, and members of the Ukrainian Defense Contact Group and the newly formed NATO-Ukraine Defense Council. Attendees include senior officials from the National Defense University (NDU), and leaders from the military, State Department, other executive agencies, and executive leaders in the defense industrial base gathering to celebrate the enduring partnership between Ukraine, the United States, and the allied community.

For more information please contact datoc@ndufoundation.org