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## From the Editors

**F**air Winds and Following Seas. The editors of /luce.nt/ are honored to bring you the Spring 2015 issue of the Naval War College's student run journal. We are also saddened to let you know this issue will likely be the last. As such, we thought it would be great to look back on the short history of the journal.

The /luce.nt/ published its first issue with a volunteer student staff of five students under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Donna Connolly, the NWC Writing Center Director, in the fall of 2010. The students' enthusiasm and thirst to become better writers led Dr. C (as she is warmly called) to develop the curriculum for an elective that allows students to hone their writing and sharpen their critical thinking skills, and publish a student run journal. The journal grew from three issues a year to four in 2012 when the /luce.nt/ began publishing a special issue that featured NWC essay award winners. The NWC journal also served as a model for the Army War College in establishing its version of a student run journal. However, the /luce.nt/ holds the distinction of being the plankholder for student run journals in the world of PME. It is with great sadness that we bid Fair Winds and Following Seas, but we do so with one of our finest issues. As editors of a student run journal, we are proud that we can provide our readers with a broad range of material.

In this issue, we share United States Marine Corps Reserves Lieutenant Colonel William Barnes' NWC award winning essay on protecting the United States' critical infrastructure from a potential cyber attack.

Lieutenant Colonel Aaron Reisinger, an engineer in the United States Army, provides a thought provoking piece on the potential water security has on enhancing global stability. Despite how one feels about global warming, this piece is certain to make you think.

As the United States continues its Rebalance to Asia, we are extremely proud to publish United States Navy Commander and /luce.nt/ editor Gregory Milicic's essay on America's strategy in dealing with potential Chinese currency manipulation.

United States Navy Lieutenant Commander Matthew Noland, in his essay, posits that helping Somalia establish a capable coast guard will help provide regional security and serve U.S. interests.

Colonel Douglas LeVien, United States Army, surmises in his paper that today's leaders could use a healthy dose of George C. Marshall. "Speaking truth to power" was a hallmark of General Marshall's and one that is needed today.

Two of our essays are op-eds. First, Lieutenant Commander Jack Curtis, United States Navy, provides an op-ed on military discounts and the subculture of the military members who have grown to expect them and what this does to the civilian-military relationship. His op-ed is followed by United

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*Cover photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jason Daniel Johnston courtesy of the U.S. Navy  
Back photo courtesy of pixabay.com*



States Marine Corps Major Francisco Zavala who makes a case for a counter-insurgency strategy in the Baltic States.

Lastly, /luce.nt/ editor and Air Force Major Dustin Hart, shares with us an emotional narrative on the power laughter has when dealing with a potential deadly disease.

We hope you enjoy this edition of /luce.nt/ as much as we do. Please feel free to share your comments via e-mail or through the /luce.nt/ Facebook page.

Fair winds and Following seas, From the Editors



Photo by Senior Airman Matthew Lancaster courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

# Protecting the Nation's Critical Infrastructure from Cyber Attack

Lieutenant Colonel William A. Barnes  
United States Marine Corps Reserve

## Introduction

Imagine living in a world without cyberspace, unable to access email, cell phones, or social media. It is difficult to comprehend how much of our lives depend on information technology. The dependence goes well beyond our personal interactions with the plethora of emerging Internet-enabled gadgets and services. Cyberspace supports every

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aspect of our lives from energy to public transportation to healthcare. These essential services, along with others such as financial, water, and communications, collectively represent our critical infrastructure, as listed in Table 1. Recognizing the country’s increasing reliance on technology and growing security threats in cyberspace, President George W. Bush issued “The National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace” in 2003. This strategy committed to defending the nation’s critical infrastructure in order to protect the people, economy, and security of the United States.<sup>1</sup> Further, it highlighted the importance of a public-private partnership, describing this cooperative approach as the cornerstone for success.<sup>2</sup> Demonstrating an enduring commitment to this priority, President Barack Obama described cybersecurity among the country’s most serious economic and security challenges, acknowledged the inadequacy of current defenses, and pledged to build upon efforts initiated by the prior administration.<sup>3</sup>

President Bush identified the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as the federal center of excellence for cybersecurity.<sup>4</sup> President Obama further defined their responsibilities related to critical infrastructure security and resilience to include providing strategic guidance, promoting a national unity of effort, and coordinating the overall federal response.<sup>5</sup> These efforts established a cyberspace security response system, promoted awareness and training programs, and created forums for public-private information sharing. Unfortunately, progress to date does not adequately mitigate, deter, or prevent the most sophisticated cyber threats.<sup>6</sup> Since the nation’s critical infrastructure remains susceptible to cyber attack, the U.S. Government must do more to accelerate the remediation of cyber vulnerabilities.

**Table 1: Designated Critical Infrastructure Sectors<sup>7</sup>**

<b>Chemical</b>	<b>Commercial Facilities</b>	<b>Communications</b>	<b>Critical Manufacturing</b>
<b>Dams</b>	<b>Defense Industrial Base</b>	<b>Emergency Services</b>	<b>Energy</b>
<b>Financial Services</b>	<b>Food and Agriculture</b>	<b>Government Facilities</b>	<b>Healthcare and Public Health</b>
<b>Information Technology</b>	<b>Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste</b>	<b>Transportation Systems</b>	<b>Water and Wastewater Systems</b>

**Background**

Why is it so difficult to secure cyberspace? The answer is due in large part to the rate of technology development and associated complexity. The information revolution is actually an evolutionary process, where secure technologies eventually replace the insecure. Unfortunately, developing safe technologies is far from a trivial process. Gone are the days of simpler electronics such as the transistor radio where it was possible to conduct failure tests of every component to ensure proper function. Today’s technology vendors consider security during product design and provide upgrades upon detecting vulnerabilities. The continued introduction of new technologies complicates the process by creating additional vulnerabilities and exposing those that did not previously exist. This trend of risk exposure continues to increase at an exponential rate.<sup>8</sup>

This increasing risk exposure encourages organizations intending harm. Our growing dependence on technology provides potential adversaries an opportunity to achieve increasing levels of disruption within our society. Within critical infrastructure, the potential is high enough to attract professional organizations representing nation states, criminal organizations, and extremist groups. Collectively, these actors develop highly sophisticated cyber exploits capable of circumventing current

defensive and detection capabilities. Gone are the days of the amateur “hacker” depicted in the movie *War Games*. Today’s hackers are professionals with the backing of significant financial resources.<sup>9</sup>

In an effort to improve our response to emerging cyber vulnerabilities and exploitation, cybersecurity efforts prioritize public-private information sharing.<sup>10</sup> The premise is based on collective defense, where participants share new cyber threat information and implement appropriate prevention and detection measures. This information exchange provides technology vendors product feedback to prioritize future development efforts. In concept, this approach is both essential and reasonable. Unfortunately, various factors limit the effectiveness of these forums. The flow of information is predominately one-way, with the government providing the vast majority of contributions.<sup>11</sup>

### **Risk Exposure**

In pursuit of increased performance and efficiency, organizations rely on emerging information technology capabilities and become more vulnerable to cyber exploitation. The level of vulnerability, or risk exposure, relates to the quantity of technology used. As a result of accelerating technology proliferation, risk increases at an exponential rate. As such, it is impossible to expect that testing alone can identify all potential vulnerabilities.

Unable to effectively anticipate vulnerabilities, the cybersecurity community accepts an enduring maintenance responsibility. Terms such as patch, signature, and firmware describe configuration changes that update technology products to the latest supported versions. For products such as a web browser, updates are relatively infrequent. For anti-virus software, updates occur more regularly, perhaps weekly or even daily. In some cases, technology exists to automate the upgrade process. In other cases, upgrades require significant manual intervention. Recognizing that unpatched systems are vulnerable to cyber threats, support teams attempt to complete upgrades as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, due to the vast number of upgrades released and the associated deployment complexity, many systems run without necessary upgrades for extended periods of time.<sup>12</sup> Within critical infrastructure, systems often run continuously in support of mission essential services. Under these circumstances, the only option is to defer the upgrade until a future scheduled maintenance period. Aside from long-term technology advancements that automate upgrade deployment and eliminate service outages, improvement in this area requires careful planning.

In addition to unpatched systems, significant risk exists within legacy technologies that persist well beyond their supported product life. We frequently upgrade smartphones with newer models, enjoying the benefits of faster performance, new features, and possibly improved security. Within critical infrastructure, some technologies operate for a decade or more, well beyond their supported product life. When a vendor terminates product support, commonly referred to as “end of life,” it ceases developing patches to address new security vulnerabilities. This situation places those supporting such technologies in a difficult situation, as limited defensive options exist to address future vulnerabilities. This issue received considerable attention when Microsoft terminated support for the Windows XP operating system on April 8, 2014. Anticipating significant impact throughout the critical infrastructure environment, the ICS-CERT issued a notification in May 2012 reminding the entire community of the deadline to complete necessary upgrades. In this message, ICS-CERT acknowledged industrial control vendors and integrators resistance to supporting new operating systems because of compatibility concerns.<sup>13</sup> As a result, in many cases upgrade options did not exist. Organizations had to choose between replacing current technology with a new product and operating at risk.

Within our society, various mechanisms exist to address situations of abandonment. In the case of an abandoned child, protective services organizations intervene. In the case of an abandoned home, a local government takes possession or a mortgage company conducts foreclosure. No such parallel exists in cyberspace. Technology vendors can terminate support of any product at a time of their choosing, leaving a community of existing users in a difficult situation. While companies have every right to decide how to support their products, consumers of these products deserve protection from the consequences of abandoned products.<sup>14</sup> This is an area where the U.S. Government must take action to provide technology consumers an option to defend themselves.

### **Threat Sophistication**

Beyond the struggles of deploying necessary security updates to critical infrastructure, we must recognize the growing exposure associated with the proliferation of new automation capabilities. As with our personal lives, digitally connected in ways considered impossible just a few years ago, critical infrastructure becomes more integrated with emerging automation. Driven by the benefits of performance, efficiency, and cost, this integration also creates an increasingly valuable target for those attempting to disrupt the society, economy, and security of the United States. To seize upon this opportunity, foreign governments, extremist groups, and criminal organizations dedicate tremendous resources to develop sophisticated cyber weapons that exploit unknown vulnerabilities.

Upon disclosure of a weakness, the cybersecurity community can develop a defensive capability. Until then, those with knowledge of the vulnerability possess supreme power, able to develop exploits and conduct attacks without concern of detection. The cyber equivalent of invisibility, the term “zero-day” describes vulnerabilities unknown to the public.<sup>15</sup> In the past, governments maintained a zero-day monopoly.<sup>16</sup> The situation today is much different.

In 2005, as the Department of Defense expanded efforts related to cyber warfare, many companies emerged offering offensive cyber capabilities.<sup>17</sup> Beyond traditional defense contractors such as Northrup Grumman, Raytheon, and General Dynamics, many specialized companies emerged offering unique cyber weapons, including some designed specifically for critical infrastructure.<sup>18</sup> Participants in this new and lucrative market include Vupen (Montpellier, France); Netragard (Acton, MA); Exodus Intelligence (Austin, TX); Endgame (Virginia); and ReVuln (Malta).<sup>19</sup> Not surprisingly, these vendors do not disclose the identity of their clients but acknowledge that some of the largest customers are government agencies.<sup>20</sup> Internationally, the largest investors include Israel, Britain, Russia, India and Brazil. Additionally, North Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and many Middle Eastern intelligence services purchase information related to computer vulnerabilities.<sup>21</sup>

The creation of the cyber vulnerability industry institutionalized the amateur hacker. With more easily identified vulnerabilities resolved by a maturing industry, only the most gifted amateurs exhibit the skills necessary to detect new security flaws. Lacking the financial means to perform adequate testing to prevent detection, they depend upon support from the larger profession.<sup>22</sup> The current CryptoLocker virus illustrates the increasing level of sophistication. When CryptoLocker infects a computer, the virus encrypts all of the data, denying the user access to files and data. CryptoLocker allows the user to remove the encryption if they pay a fee through an untraceable electronic method. Having experienced the cyber equivalent of a perfect crime, the police department in Swansea, Massachusetts, recently paid a \$750 ransom to restore important computer files.<sup>23</sup>

Currently, many zero-day vendors can supply more than one hundred exploits per year at an approximate cost of \$40,000 to \$160,000 each.<sup>24</sup> Vupen claims they do not sell to any country subject to

embargo or trade restriction by the European Union, United States, or United Nation. Vupen customers pay a \$100,000 subscription fee in order to view the catalogue of available exploits, which they must purchase separately.<sup>25</sup> Providing services strictly to U.S. customers, Netragard's exploit acquisition program doubled in the last three years, with rates for security flaws ranging between \$35,000 and \$160,000.<sup>26</sup> A former director of the National Security Agency (NSA) supports the start-up Endgame, which sells vulnerability information primarily to the U.S. Government.<sup>27</sup> Revuln specializes in critical infrastructure targeting industrial control systems.<sup>28</sup>

iDefense created the Vulnerability Contributor Program (VCP) in 2002. Three years later Tipping Point launched the Zero Day Initiative (ZDI).<sup>29</sup> The purpose of both programs is to purchase vulnerability information before public disclosure, permitting vendors an opportunity to resolve the problem.<sup>30</sup> With the intent of improving the safety of cyberspace, both programs established ethical standards. Unable to resell vulnerabilities to the highest bidder, these programs cannot pay contributors a prevailing market rate.<sup>31</sup> As a result, it seems likely that vulnerabilities reported through these purchase programs represent just the tip of the iceberg. Even so, their results demonstrate the magnitude of the problem. As of September 2013, VCP and ZDI collectively have purchased 2,393 vulnerabilities since their inception.<sup>32</sup> The average duration from vulnerability purchase to public disclosure is 133 days for VCP and 174 days for ZDI.<sup>33</sup> A 2012 study by Symantec Research Labs found that zero-day exploits exist for an average of 312 days and as long as thirty months before public disclosure.<sup>34</sup> This study also found that after public disclosure the volume of related attacks increased by up to five orders of magnitude.<sup>35</sup> Vulnerability periods ranging between 113 days and thirty months provide a lot of time for those seeking to take advantage of the situation. Vendors with the most vulnerabilities identified through the VCP and ZDI programs include Microsoft, Apple, HP, Adobe, and Oracle.<sup>36</sup> These vendors' products include the operating systems, databases, office automation software, and management utilities that run on nearly every computer and a large percentage of industrial control systems.

To address the issue of zero-day vulnerabilities, some vendors established "bug bounty programs" to purchase information prior to public disclosure or sale on the black market.<sup>37</sup> Over a three year period, Google paid \$580,000 for 501 vulnerabilities in the Chrome web browser.<sup>38</sup> During the same time, Mozilla paid \$570,000 for 190 vulnerabilities in its competing web browser, Firefox.<sup>39</sup> Facebook paid approximately \$1,000,000 since creating its program in 2011.<sup>40</sup> In June 2013, Microsoft, after years of resisting such an approach, established a formal program, paying approximately \$100,000 to date.<sup>41</sup> The recent growth of these programs suggests the approach represents the best option for quickly and discretely addressing vulnerabilities.

### Information Sharing

Recognizing the significance of growing risk exposure and increasingly sophisticated attacks, the earliest efforts to secure cyberspace stressed the importance of developing a public-private partnership. President Bush stated that in order to build a more secure future in cyberspace, public and private organizations must act together.<sup>42</sup> The importance of developing robust information sharing capabilities endures as a fundamental priority for President Obama's administration.<sup>43,44</sup> This commitment led to the creation of numerous information sharing forums, including the Information Sharing and Analysis Centers (ISACs), the U.S. Computer Emergency Response Team (US-CERT), and the National Cybersecurity and Communication Integration Center (NCCIC).<sup>45</sup> Fifteen ISACs currently exist, representing the various critical infrastructure sectors. They include financial services (FS-ISAC), national health (NH-ISAC), and water (WaterISAC).<sup>46</sup> In addition to these information sharing forums, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) established InfraGard, which brings together representatives from business, academia, state and local law enforcement agencies, and other interested parties to prevent

hostile acts against the United States.<sup>47</sup> In recent years, additional non-profit entities emerged, such as the Advanced Cyber Security Center (ACSC), which promotes cybersecurity research and development, education, and thought leadership throughout New England.<sup>48</sup> Those seeking to engage in dialogue related to cybersecurity have many options.

Although sufficient quantity exists, the quality of information sharing falls well below the intended goal. Information exchanged with DHS and other government agencies frequently is outdated or too generic in nature for use by participating members. In other cases, information shared by DHS is over-classified, preventing disclosure to the private sector. Efforts to place members of the information technology ISAC (IT-ISAC) on the floor of the NCCIC failed due to various legal issues.<sup>49</sup> Despite these challenges, private industry continues to seek government assistance upon detecting a compromise. For example, more than 40 percent of those supporting SCADA systems acknowledge reporting issues to an appropriate government agency.<sup>50</sup> While this represents an essential step in the right direction, changes are necessary to eliminate remaining barriers to information sharing.

In an effort to address information sharing challenges, specifically security classification, DHS established the Enhanced Cybersecurity Services (ECS). The purpose of ECS is to expand the number of companies that receive classified information related to real or potential threats.<sup>51</sup> This program emerged following a successful pilot known as the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) Pilot, which enabled classified information sharing with several internet service providers.<sup>52</sup> Although more than fifty companies initially expressed interest in ECS, not one joined the program.<sup>53</sup> The cost associated with building a classified network and legal issues rank among the most significant roadblocks impacting enrollment.<sup>54</sup> DHS notes much better progress with unclassified programs, although the sharing of information is predominately one-way, initiated by the government.<sup>55</sup>

Despite presidential recognition that the future of cybersecurity depends upon public-private information sharing, many bureaucratic challenges remain that impede progress. Organizations resist sharing threat information in order to protect their reputation. Unless convinced that disclosures are anonymous, this hesitation will continue. Consider public health, where the issue of privacy is paramount. That is until a patient seeks medical attention for rare and dangerous illnesses. In such cases, reporting is mandatory, and public safety supersedes patient privacy.<sup>56</sup> Cybersecurity needs a similar process to report the most dangerous threats. Seeking to promote continued information sharing, the United States must realize that continuing disclosures by Edward Snowden cast doubt in the minds of Americans regarding the government's true intention regarding cybersecurity. Similar to recently announced changes to National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance policies, establishing a panel of advocates on information sharing challenges could solve many of the security classification concerns and related bureaucratic obstacles.<sup>57</sup> The solution to the security of our critical infrastructure is collective defense. We must improve our ability to tap into the experience and knowledge of all interested parties.

## Conclusion

Our society and economy rely on the nation's critical infrastructure. Recognizing the importance of these essential services and the growing threat of cyber attack, two presidential administrations prioritized efforts to secure cyberspace. The resulting government led initiatives captured the attention of industry, media, and the world. Despite recognition and significant effort, cybersecurity remains an elusive goal. The primary reasons for the lack of progress related to critical infrastructure are the growing risk associated with the proliferation of automation technologies, increasingly sophisticated cyber threats, and an inability to establish effective public-private information sharing.

On a daily basis, the media reminds the world of the clear and present dangers of cybersecurity. Stuxnet and CryptoLocker demonstrate that determined organizations, whether a state or criminal organization, can harness vulnerabilities within cyberspace to their advantage. The battle between exploiting and mitigating vulnerabilities in cyberspace created the cyber equivalent of an arms race. Despite continued risks, a more secure cyberspace is possible. Cyberspace is the creation of mankind, and we possess the ability to create a more secure future by harnessing the lessons from past oversight and omission. An evolutionary process, this will take vigilance, time, and continual assessment.

### **Recommendations**

While a more secure cyberspace will emerge through an evolutionary process, with immediate action the U.S. Government can influence the rate of change. By executing the recommendations described below, the nation can simultaneously address the increasing risk exposure, growing threat sophistication, and impediments to information sharing.

### ***Risk Exposure***

The U.S. Government must act to reduce the impact of vendors abandoning product support. Specifically, the Department of Commerce must require vendors who terminate support for an information technology product to share the source code with DHS. Additionally, DHS must securely store the source code and grant access to authorized representatives of the user community, thereby providing an opportunity to resolve or mitigate future security vulnerabilities.

### ***Threat Sophistication***

The U.S. Government must provide financial incentives to promote programs that accelerate the identification and remediation of zero-day vulnerabilities. Specifically, DHS and DOD must jointly define the highest priority risks and provide funding to establish a government sponsored vulnerability purchase program. Additionally, DHS must develop mechanisms to encourage vendors to respond to disclosed vulnerabilities in a timely manner. One option involves creating a cybersecurity scorecard for information technology vendors. Vendors with fewer vulnerabilities and a more rapid response would receive higher ratings. Those responsible for purchasing information technology solutions within critical infrastructure industries could use these ratings to avoid less secure products.

### ***Information Sharing***

The U.S. Government must review current security classification standards related to cybersecurity and prioritize disclosure to those who can mitigate issues and those vulnerable to exploitation. Specifically, DHS must develop updated classification guidelines to maximize the ability to share information within the critical infrastructure community. DHS must also engage the DOD to ensure the consistent application of revised classification guidelines. Additionally, DHS must establish mandatory cybersecurity reporting guidelines. To ensure maximum compliance, the process must permit anonymous reporting. Finally, DHS must provide timely updates to the critical infrastructure community regarding reported incidents along with detection and response recommendations.

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# Enhancing Global Stability through Fresh Water Security

Lieutenant Colonel Aaron W. Reisinger  
United States Army

**O**n October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel described climate change as a “threat multiplier” that had the potential to exacerbate many current challenges.<sup>1</sup> His comments followed on the heels of the Pentagon’s release of the 2014 Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap that classifies climate change as a national security threat. The report highlights that climate change may limit access to food, water, energy, and healthcare which could undermine both fragile and stable governments.<sup>2</sup> On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, the Director of National Intelligence released an intelligence community assessment called *Global Water Security*. The report describes how water specifically will be a threat multiplier that increases the risk of instability, state failure, and

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regional tensions.<sup>3</sup> Because of this risk, the United States must lead the international community to increase water security and minimize the threat of water-triggered conflict.

A recent example of extreme drought explains how water can increase tensions and instability throughout the world. In 2010, a once in a hundred years drought in the wheat growing region of China forced that nation to import large quantities of wheat. The demand pressure caused a doubling of the grain price in an already stressed world market. Nearly 5000 miles west of China sits the biggest wheat importer in the world, Egypt, where households spend nearly 35 % of their income on food. The price spike significantly impacted Egypt's food supply between late 2010 and early 2011 which closely coincided with that country's January 2011 revolution. In fact, some experts have concluded that skyrocketing wheat prices, a ripple effect of the Chinese drought, acted as a "stressor that contributed to previously quiescent people becoming violent" and overthrowing the Mubarak regime.<sup>4</sup>

Under the cover of Egypt's internal turmoil, Ethiopia initiated the construction of a dam on the Blue Nile River in April 2011. This dam has the potential to control 80% of the Nile River flow on which Egypt's agricultural livelihood is dependent. Previously, in 1980, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made it clear that his country would use force if Ethiopia were to take any action to block the flow of the Nile.<sup>5</sup> In 2013, then Egyptian President Morsi did the same, threatening Ethiopia with war if it continued construction of the dam.<sup>6</sup> Egypt's new regime recently accepted that the construction had become a "fait accompli" and that its strategic focus had to shift to safeguarding mutual interests.<sup>7</sup>

That same 2010 drought in China also energized its domestic dam building projects on major rivers originating in the Tibetan plateau glaciers and snowpack that flow through most South and Southeastern Asian countries.<sup>8</sup> Like Egypt, these downstream countries are concerned about upstream dam projects since they depend on the river's flow for their fresh water supply and ecological system. Since 1997, China has refused to sign the United Nations water sharing convention or consult its downstream neighbors on its dam projects.<sup>9</sup> Chinese attitudes on the matter mirror the primacy position taken by former Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demiral, who responded to Syrian and Iraqi anxiety over Tigris and Euphrates river flow with a blunt declaration: "This is a matter of sovereignty. Water resources are Turkey's and oil theirs. They cannot lay claim to what's ours. These cross-border rivers are ours to the very point they cross the border."<sup>10</sup>

In other words, a single devastating drought in China contributed to a revolution in the Middle East, remade the geopolitical balance along the Nile River, and exacerbated tensions throughout South and Southeastern Asia. Although history offers few examples that so clearly link a correlation between freshwater scarcity and war as this one, evidence suggests there will be more clashes between water haves and have-nots in the future. Additionally, the probability of 100-year shocks to the system is increasing due to climate change. A large group of retired senior officers from the Department of Defense believe that climate change will be more than a threat multiplier, that "the impacts will serve as *catalysts* for instability and conflict."<sup>11</sup> Freshwater might already serve as that catalyst in dangerous regions of the world.

### Strategic Background

Freshwater comprises about 3% of the earth's total water. Of that amount, about three-quarters is trapped in ice with the rest mostly comprised of freshwater lakes and underground aquifers. A much smaller portion of this water is in rivers, wetlands, and the atmosphere. There are 263 international river basins that generate 60% of the earth's freshwater flow. This irrigated territory is within 145 countries covering half of the earth's land mass and home to 40% of the world's population.<sup>12</sup>

Agriculture consumes about 70 % of the world's freshwater while industry and households account for 20 and 10 %, respectively.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the great river basins have origins in mountain glaciers or snowpack. About half of the world's population lives in watersheds that originate in glaciers and snow.<sup>14</sup> These natural water towers collect precipitation during the winter and release it during the spring and summer when it is most needed for agriculture, hydroelectric, ecological, and recreational demands.<sup>15</sup> There is agreement that "the greatest threat to the world's water comes from the mountains and their disappearing glaciers."<sup>16</sup> Estimates show that a 2.0°C (CK) increase in global temperatures may cause most of the mountain glaciers to disappear.<sup>17</sup> This natural system has regulated a vast amount of the world's water effectively for much of history. If it disappears, many regions may experience volatile water events like significant flooding, as well as extreme water scarcity.<sup>18</sup>

Population growth, global warming, and extreme weather patterns are increasingly challenging the balance of these natural systems. Intelligence assessments forecast that population and wealth growth will result in demands for 35% more food, 40% more freshwater, and 50% more energy by 2030.<sup>19</sup> These projections highlight the increasing stressors on the water-food-energy nexus, where water is a common denominator providing irrigation for crops and power for turbines.<sup>20</sup> To produce the food necessary for this population growth requires high yield crops that use extensive water. For example, it takes 110 gallons of water to grow a pound of wheat and 100 gallons for a pound of potatoes. It takes about 4000 gallons of water to create a 1/3 pound hamburger. One thousand gallons of water are required to produce one gallon of fresh milk.<sup>21</sup> The amount of food grown today is twice as big as a generation ago but the quantity of water needed to do it is three times as large.<sup>22</sup>

Increased demand for water corresponds to a rise in global temperatures. Both the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) assess that 2014 was the warmest year on record and project that the trend will continue.<sup>23</sup> NASA reports that with the exception of 1998, 10 of the warmest years on the 134-year record occurred after 2000 with a 1.4° F increase in global temperatures over the past 100 years.<sup>24</sup> Government projections are that temperatures will rise another 2° to 11.5° F over the next century.<sup>25</sup> Higher global temperatures will increase the volume of water vapor and create more volatile and intense climate events. Dry areas will be dryer while wet areas will get wetter. Glaciers and snowpack will disappear while drought frequency will rise significantly.<sup>26</sup> The increased probabilities of extreme weather events are similar to adding an ace to a deck of cards for every degree of temperature increase. The chances of getting aces high full house (extreme droughts) become more frequent as you add aces.<sup>27</sup>

### Strategic Challenge

China controls Tibet and what is known as the world's third pole, so named because it contains the biggest ice fields outside of the Arctic and Antarctic.<sup>28</sup> This area is the source of the earth's largest river systems and provides life for nearly half the world's population—about 1.3 billion people stretching from Pakistan to Vietnam.<sup>29</sup> Chinese actions in Tibet, then, come as no surprise as they mitigate and adapt to this changing environment. The construction of hundreds of dams and reservoirs effectively create strategic water reserves that partially mitigate the loss of natural glaciers and snowpack. The ability to moderate the flow of the rivers protects against destructive flooding. Diverting water to agricultural regions mitigates the impact of drought and helps to feed a growing population. Cheap hydroelectric power reduces Chinese dependence on oil from the volatile Middle East being transported through sea-lanes dominated by the United States. China's regional leverage over its neighbors will increase significantly if it controls the water supply.

China is not the only state with significant leverage. India controls Pakistan's "jugular vein," the Indus River, and its headwaters in Kashmir. Some in Pakistan have threatened India with nuclear war if it does anything to impede the flow of Pakistan's only significant source of fresh-water.<sup>30</sup> The border tensions in Kashmir are in no small way a function of water security. Likewise, in northern Africa, Ethiopia now has significant leverage over Egypt and Sudan as it gains operational control over the headwaters of the Blue Nile. Turkey is dominant as it controls the climate change threatened headwaters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers that supply both Syria and Iraq.<sup>31</sup>

The same forces were at play in the region nearly 50 years ago, during the Six-Day War of 1967. At the conclusion of that conflict, Israel had seized the Golan Heights from Syria. One of the prime strategic advantages of occupying the Heights is that it offers Israel control over the waters of the Jordan River and Lake Tiberias (Sea of Galilee). These are important sources of water for not only Israel, but for Jordan, and to a lesser degree, the Palestinian territories in the West Bank. When writing about the Six-Day War in his memoirs, former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said that the matter of Arab water diversion that contributed to the war was a "stark issue of life and death."<sup>32</sup> Even on a smaller scale, water insecurity can play a key role in inflaming conflicts. Last summer, the radical group ISIS seized control of the Mosul Dam in northern Iraq. The capture offered ISIS the chance to wield water as a literal weapon.<sup>33</sup>

States also exert strategic control through the virtual trade of water. The water involved in the production of agriculture and manufacturing goods is called "virtual water." When a country exports water-intensive products, they are exporting water in virtual form. The United States is the largest net exporter of virtual water, exporting approximately one third of its extracted water. Academic studies estimate that global virtual water trade is the equivalent of twenty Nile Rivers per year.<sup>34</sup> Water rich states that maintain a sustainable, freshwater supply will increase their relative power over water poor states and those water rich states that do not enhance their efficiencies. With greater water control, nations such as China, Ethiopia, Turkey, Israel and even America can exploit their ability to grow the world's food in an increasingly constrained agricultural environment.

History indicates that these water disparity challenges are more likely to lead to cooperation than conflict.<sup>35</sup> For example, the United States has maintained friendly relations with both Mexico and Canada on the Rio Grande and Columbia rivers. Of the 507 international disputes over water that have occurred in the last 50 years, only 37 have contributed to violence.<sup>36</sup> But, a Columbia University study examined two hundred conflicts from 1950 to 2004 and found that climate swings doubled the risk of conflict.<sup>37</sup> The 2012 Intelligence Assessment on Global Water Security argues that many of our partners will experience water problems that may lead to state failure and regional tensions.<sup>38</sup> Water may become a weapon of coercion against countries that depend on an external source of water for food, energy, and sanitary health. Governments that are unable to manage or respond to shortages in any of these areas are more at risk for destabilization.<sup>39</sup>

### **Strategic Opportunity**

This challenge is an opportunity for the United States to strengthen and empower international systems, prevent regional power imbalances, and increase American relative power. A government wide conference on water security in 2013 called for a broad based response to "elevate water security into the three dimensions of U.S. foreign policy: development, diplomacy and defense."<sup>40</sup> The findings from the Intelligence Community Assessment concurred; the world will look to the United States to lead water management improvement and that doing so will enhance American influence and relative

power.<sup>41</sup> And there are a few concrete steps the U.S. can take in the short term to demonstrate this leadership.

First, the United States should negotiate, ratify, and support the United Nation's 1997 Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses. The U.S. can show leadership by having the political will to ratify and support a common set of enforceable rules and then employ our diplomatic power to negotiate and support global norms for water management. There is a universal consensus among experts that water agreements need solidification, enforcement, and resolution mechanisms clarified.<sup>42</sup> The convention codifies fundamental principles of international watercourse law developed by the International Law Commission from 1970 to 1994.

Despite broad support for the convention in 1997, few significant riparian states have ratified this convention that sets forth international rules governing the use, management, protection, and conflict resolution standards for freshwater river basins.<sup>43</sup> Of 193 member states, only 35 have ratified the convention. In a positive step, the thirty-fifth ratification by Vietnam in 2014 brought the 1997 Convention in force in that same year. Ratification within the United States will prove difficult given legal requirements that require a two-thirds majority of the Senate. That should not deter, however, our efforts to build support for the convention over the long term. The United States is in a relatively healthy partnership with our northern and southern neighbors over water management and we will gain international leverage with a ratified convention.

The U.N. water convention's most contentious issue is the "relationship between the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization and the obligation against causing significant harm to lower riparian states."<sup>44</sup> The principle of equitable and reasonable use is favored by most upper riparian states and the doctrine of no significant harm that is preferred by most lower riparian states. The no harm rule is subjugated to the equitable use rule and this causes significant concern to down-river states. Differing perspectives on these rules contribute to limited ratification. In most cases, the upper and lower riparian states have not ratified the convention because each views the other as getting an upper hand. China, as an upper riparian state, for example, believes certain rules violate their sovereignty. Pakistan, a lower riparian state, does not think the convention contains sufficient safeguards against abuse of water management by upper riparian states.<sup>45</sup>

Further, the United States can encourage the opening of global markets to efficiently balance agricultural production which accounts for a large portion of freshwater consumption. Open markets encourage the efficient production of agriculture in the regions where inputs such as water are least expensive. Global stability and trust are essential to sustaining this open market where one state may sacrifice monopolized production of a critical staple. The United States will have to remain decisively engaged globally to sustain this environment. Continuing to assure global security and press for free trade agreements facilitates increased water efficiencies. The economic effort to open markets and exploit efficiencies is an indirect but essential element to better managing the world's water supply

Free trade agreements that include agricultural elements are contentious and difficult to achieve based on highly emotional special interests. Protection of domestic agriculture production is an important interest for all countries. However, the eventual ratification of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) will enhance opportunities to more efficiently manage water resource requirements. They also present opportunities to expand domestic production given the relative strength of our water resources. A report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that the "United States will supply about 33% of the expansion in intraregional

agricultural exports.”<sup>46</sup> These agreements provide direct economic and global water resource benefits to the United States.

With or without global rules and open markets, the United States can provide governance, financial, and technical support to high-risk states vital to American interests. USAID released its 5-year Water Development strategy in 2013. It laid out a water-focused plan to improve global health and food security by building local capacity, strengthening partnerships, leveraging new technologies, and supporting innovative financing.<sup>47</sup> The strategic objectives are essential but limited in both scope and duration. The U.S. Corps of Engineers, the Agriculture Department, and the Department of Defense can take a broader role in building resilience to water shocks in critical states. Tangible areas might include supporting irrigation efficiencies, construction of desalination plants, providing hydrographic technical support, and construction of essential water storage infrastructure.

James Ligh of the U.S. Corp of Engineers in the Pacific Ocean Division who has worked extensively on the Mekong River challenges explains that most high risk Pacific states require extensive management training. Many of their systems are antiquated and based on debunked Soviet styles. Focusing soft support on management skills, inter-governmental and inter-national cooperation, ethical governance, decision-making processes, contract management, and technical skills are long term efforts that build water resiliency. Building infrastructure, he says, is often just throwing money at the problem and ineffective in the long-term. Their efforts in the Pacific are synchronized closely with Pacific Ocean Command and U.S. Army Pacific Theater shaping operations. They also work closely with the Department of State to gain synergies between diplomatic and soft military engagements.<sup>48</sup> Expanding these whole of government and relatively inexpensive efforts to regions beyond the Mekong and South Pacific are effective methods of applying American soft power.

While building foreign capacity, the United States must invest heavily in domestic water infrastructure to maintain water primacy. The United States is a net exporter of virtual water in the form of agricultural products due in part to extensive waterway management and irrigation infrastructure. But, the United States Corps of Engineers (USACE), which provides much of the nation’s water resource management, has seen a steady reduction in the civil works budget since 1980 and it has been clear that this is unsustainable.<sup>49</sup> Steve Stockton, USACE Director of Civil Works, explains that our infrastructure is deteriorating and underperforming. We are under-investing and we lag behind other developed nation’s infrastructure investments. He states that we risk “U.S. economic prosperity, quality of life and environmental health.”<sup>50</sup>

The total forward investment required is enormous according to the U.S. Corps of Engineers. In current dollars the United States was investing \$70 per American in 1936 and \$56 per American in 1966 on U.S. water resource infrastructure. By 2010, that figured had dropped to \$18 per American based on that year’s census. Much of the infrastructure constructed in 1936 and 1966 remains in service and has either met, passed or is nearing its effective service life. To sustain the capital stock value of our water infrastructure will require \$7 billion annually additional capital investment through 2045. These investment challenges create what the Corps of Engineers calls a “Perfect Storm” where the nexus of food, water, energy, transportation, environment, and other interests all create a demand on a resource that is not funded in a sustainable manner.<sup>51</sup> These issues show that water is a source of American power though often only in the shadows vis-à-vis other natural sources of power. Our ability to sustain this advantage in the long term is vital to our national interests and sustaining relative global power.

Water security appears to be a narrative that Americans will rally behind. Recently, California easily passed a \$7.12 billion water bond to fund statewide water supply infrastructure projects. This bill

reflects the forward investment the country requires to sustain a water advantage and ensure no degradation of national power. In a global security survey conducted in 2012, international access to clean water was listed just behind terrorism as most concerning to Americas.<sup>52</sup> This past December the President signed the Water for the World Act, a bipartisan piece of legislation that calls for the creation of a Global Water Coordinator in USAID and a Special Advisor for Water Resources to coordinate water objectives. The law directs the Secretary of State to develop a Global Water Resources Strategy relating to U.S. foreign policy.<sup>53</sup> This law reinforces the Department of State's establishment of the U.S. Water Partnership in 2012 that helps "mobilize U.S. expertise, resources and ingenuity to address global water challenges."<sup>54</sup> These nascent efforts are a solid foundation if supported with appropriate funding, focus, and priorities.

### Strategic Counter-arguments

Despite the evidence of domestic and political support for strategic planning around water security, some would argue that it does not make sense to invest against the assumed impact of future climate change during periods of fiscal belt-tightening. Despite these doubts, all the recent evidence suggests that water insecurity could pose a major threat to global security and, thus, our nation's stability and prosperity. Retired General Gordon Sullivan said of climate change probabilities, "If you wait until you have 100 % certainty, something bad is going to happen."<sup>55</sup> At that point, states are more likely to respond to water suffocation based on fear rather than reason, lashing out either internally or externally. The United States can both pre-empt and alleviate those future fears through leadership today.

Still, if the United States leads, many water-powerful states will not follow. They will not agree to global standards that impose extra-national control over what they see as wholly sovereign resources. For this reason, the United States must ensure its own primacy and enhance balance or deterrence regionally. Building a state's resilience to the coercive use of water is critical to maintaining regional stability. A comprehensive approach must either mitigate a state's relative water disadvantages or increase other comparative advantages. For example, a high-risk, water poor state could be made more water independent through USAID investment in desalination infrastructure. Or, the U.S. could facilitate other leverage that keeps the water flowing, like a bilateral agreement between neighboring states that codifies the reciprocal flow of water with another resource like oil or natural gas.

These transactional approaches are a natural first step to achieving water parity. But in the long term, it is more important to frame water rights as a human rights issue. In the future, states that deny legitimate water rights to downriver riparian states could be charged with violating human rights and subject to sanction in international criminal court. If water security does eventually achieve this status there may even come a time when the legitimate use of international force is required to protect the water rights of a particular population.

### Conclusions

The purpose, of course, is to prevent water challenges from triggering military intervention. Developing a well-defined protocol now is the best approach toward constructing a resilient global agreement and heading off future water-triggered geopolitical shocks. Water insecurity is likely an unfamiliar phenomenon for an American to understand given our water abundance. However, a villager in the desert of Iraq who struggles daily to provide water for his or her family, crops, and animals grasps this problem much more clearly. A fisherman who depends on Mekong River floods to force the Tonle

Sap River in Cambodia to reverse flow and activate a magical ecological system knows this risk. A Palestinian who survives on one-seventh of the water available to an Israeli knows this challenge.

These people would agree that water is not only a threat multiplier, it's also a catalyst for conflict. Humans can survive about three days without water, but they can turn violent far before that point to ensure their survival. States that feel threatened will likewise respond in the same manner. Significant water concerns already exist in tense regions such as South and Southeast Asia, Northern Africa, and the Middle East. The United States must employ a whole of government approach to minimize the probability of water insecurity triggering war in these regions. Leading the international community, building resilience in high-risk states, and maintaining our own primacy is critical to achieving these objectives. This approach supports both state and human survival and is in keeping with the goals of American strategy.

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Image by Richard I Houghton

## Chinese Currency Manipulation: U.S. Inaction Speaks Louder than Words

Commander Gregory Milicic  
United States Navy

China clearly manipulates its currency. Sounds sinister, doesn't it? While sovereign nations have the right to manage their currencies under international law, China's membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) requires China to avoid manipulating exchange rates.<sup>1</sup> For years, China has bought U.S. dollars (USD) and U.S. government debt, flooding the market with Chinese yuan to keep its value down relative to the USD preventing the exchange rate from reaching its natural equilibrium. More sinister, in the prevailing American view, pegging the value of the yuan to the USD, or at least maintaining its value within a narrow range rather than freely floating the value of the currency to market exchange rates, keeps Chinese exports less expensive for Americans to buy while making American exports more expensive for the Chinese import market. This sustains a trade imbalance that heavily favors China (\$342B in 2014) due in part to this currency intervention by China's State Council.<sup>2</sup> One U.S. think tank recently reported that the United States, at no cost to the government, could create up to 5.8M jobs and reduce the overall U.S. trade deficits by up to \$500B in just three years simply by addressing the world's currency manipulators.<sup>3</sup>

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Despite consistent rhetoric over the years on the presidential campaign trail that China plays unfairly in the international economic arena, the United States persists in its refusal to take assertive actions against China for its continuing interventionist currency policy. The U.S. Treasury Department continues to refuse to name China a “currency manipulator.”<sup>4</sup> That declaration would provide the first step towards more aggressive U.S. actions to level the playing field.

Populist rhetoric campaigning for more aggressive measures may provide a boost at the domestic political polls but have not been followed up in practice. This failure, however, does not demonstrate lack of U.S. resolve, but rather an enlightened and pragmatic policy that maintains U.S. economic strength seemingly through inaction. An overtly confrontational and protectionist U.S. response to China’s currency manipulation to undervalue the yuan would be myopic and run counter to both the United States’ short-term economic and long-term strategic interests. Continued inaction, a counterintuitive proposition, remains the United States’ best policy option.

### **Background**

Accusing rival incumbents of mishandling China with weak foreign policy has provided American presidential election campaigns with a string of sound bites since the Dwight Eisenhower campaign. In 1992, when Ross Perot charged President George H. W. Bush with shipping jobs to China, these accusations began focusing on America’s failure to check China’s economic rise. Candidate George W. Bush vowed to treat China as an economic competitor. Four years later, John Kerry maligned President Bush as “asleep at the wheel” for failing to address China’s currency manipulation. During a 2008 Democratic Party primary debate, Senator Barack Obama vowed to “take (China) to the mat on (currency manipulation)” while Senators Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton agreed.<sup>5</sup> Despite the tough talk from the current President, Vice President, and the two most recent Secretaries of State, Obama’s Treasury Secretary has not taken steps to address China’s currency manipulation either. Perhaps this led Candidate Mitt Romney to make the boldest campaign promise on the issue during a 2012 presidential debate, vowing to label China a currency manipulator on “day one” in office.<sup>6</sup>

Why has this consistent bipartisan tough talk failed to translate into action on China? There are four reasons the United States exercises restraint in dealing with China’s currency manipulation: lack of effective measures, the relative unimportance of currency exchange rates in a globalized economy, the benefits to the United States of an undervalued yuan, and the strategic disadvantages that a weak yuan presents to China.

### **The United States Lacks Effective Measures to Deal with Currency Manipulators**

The 1988 Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act requires the Treasury Department to report annually on exchange rate policies of countries with trade surpluses with the United States. This report determines whether predatory currency manipulation has put the United States at a competitive disadvantage. If the U.S. Treasury Department declares a country a “currency manipulator,” the law mandates opening economic negotiations with the violator. Failure of these negotiations would pave the way for follow-on protectionist measures such as trade sanctions or the imposition of tariffs on imports from the currency manipulator. The efficacy of these mandated negotiations are doubtful; the ensuing sanctions and tariffs could potentially raise the price of raw materials and consumer goods with no locally produced alternatives and prove to be more damaging to both the U.S. economy and global economic stability than the currency manipulation itself. For these reasons, the U.S. Treasury Department has never labeled China a currency manipulator nor triggered the lengthy and potentially self-destructive ensuing results.<sup>7,8</sup>

Not only are the economic returns on such an action dubious, but the potential exists to elicit unfavorable international criticism. First, China does not stand alone as a currency manipulator. Other currency manipulators include significant U.S. trade partners and allies: Denmark, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, and Japan.<sup>9</sup> Continuing to ignore these currency manipulators, which include three of the United States' top ten trade partners, while aggressively confronting China would dilute the U.S. case against China. The United States even enjoys a trade surplus with some of the manipulators (Hong Kong and Singapore) which raises doubt regarding the true impact of currency manipulation.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, any unilateral U.S. condemnation of China for artificially devaluing the yuan to create an unfair subsidy on Chinese exports will likely be met with scorn. The international community easily could characterize U.S. condemnation of China as hypocritical given the recent subsidies the United States provided its own automotive, insurance, and financial sectors through the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) and Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (i.e. the "too-big-to-fail" bailouts).<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately the IMF and World Trade Organization (WTO) lack effective mechanisms to address currency manipulators multilaterally. China agreed to avoid manipulating exchange rates, limiting its internationally recognized sovereign rights to manage its currency, in order to gain membership into the IMF. Yet the IMF realistically can do very little to enforce this agreement and curb China's interventionist currency policy. In fact, no country has ever been designated a currency manipulator by the IMF. Designation as a currency manipulator requires a majority vote which China easily could use its influence to block. Even if such a vote passed, the IMF lacks the authority to impose any economic sanctions. The strongest action the IMF could take—expulsion—requires an improbable 85 percent majority vote.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, the WTO can impose trade sanctions but not without its own limitations. First, the WTO requires a determination from the IMF that an offender manipulates its currency. Thus, the WTO relies on the same political process that prevented the IMF from ever designating a currency manipulator in the first place. Second, the WTO does not have provisions explicitly covering currency manipulation. A case against China would rely on an untested strategy that argues China illegally subsidizes its exports vis-à-vis currency manipulation rather than a case against currency manipulation per se.<sup>13</sup> Like the IMF, the WTO has never pursued such action against a currency manipulator, and it is doubtful such a complaint could successfully be used to authorize sanctions leaving the United States without effective unilateral or multilateral options for challenging China.

### **Globalization Diminishes the Significance of Exchange Rates and Deficits**

When American political candidates, business leaders, or pundits condemn China for currency manipulation, the narrative remains simple and straightforward: China cheats at international trade. China buys U.S. dollars and debt to strengthen the dollar against the yuan. This makes Chinese products cheaper than their American competitors and conversely makes American goods more expensive in the Chinese market. This currency intervention effectively advantages Chinese exports, ultimately resulting in both the loss of U.S. jobs to Chinese labor and a persistent U.S. trade deficit with China. This narrative, however, ignores the realities of globalization, attributing too much blame for job loss and the trade imbalance to an unfavorable exchange rate and characterizing China purely as an economic competitor rather than an interdependent collaborator.

Chinese and U.S. manufacturers do not produce the same things. Chinese exporters do not compete with U.S. firms for American market share: they compete with other developing economies. Likewise, U.S. firms do not compete with Chinese firms for a share of the Chinese market but with firms from developed countries in Europe and Japan. A stronger yuan, even an overvalued yuan, therefore cannot significantly close the U.S. trade deficit. A correction of the exchange rate indeed would increase the cost of Chinese goods to the U.S. consumer, but there would not be any American-made substitutes readily available to replace the higher priced Chinese consumer goods. Americans simply will pay more for these Chinese imports or look to other developing economies for cheaper substitutes, potentially increasing the trade imbalance with China.<sup>14</sup>

Correcting the currency exchange rate would also lead to U.S. manufacturers losing their market share in China to European and Japanese firms. The increased cost of Chinese components and raw materials imported by U.S. manufacturers would drive up the price of U.S. manufactured goods versus the global competition. The increased cost of the imported components and raw materials would also inflate the trade deficit in China's favor as the United States pays more for these Chinese imports.<sup>15</sup> As an illustration, the yuan appreciated by 21 percent against the U.S. dollar between 2005-2008; during that same period, the U.S. trade deficit with China increased by almost one third.<sup>16</sup>

Clearly exchange rates affect but do not alone determine the trade deficit. Measuring the trade imbalance became more difficult with globalization. Historically relied upon econometrics exaggerate the imbalance. For instance, research indicates less than one half of the value of Chinese exports to the United States is actually added in China. The rest (materials, labor, overhead) of the value added comes from other countries, the United States included. For example, iPhones are assembled in China, where laborers add \$6.50 to the total \$178.96 wholesale value. The hardware and software are designed in the United States, and U.S. firms, in addition to Apple, add value through marketing, logistics, etc. Yet the trade statistics are tabulated in a manner that credits China with exporting the full value of the iPhone.<sup>17</sup>

Politicians continue to mistake currency exchange rates as a barometer for trade deficits and U.S. employment; globalization challenges the underlying assumptions in the relationships. Exchange rates factor less in determining the trade imbalance than the ability one country has to provide goods its trade partner cannot produce for itself. Correcting the exchange rate could potentially increase the trade deficit as both imported intermediate components for domestic manufacturers and goods without locally manufactured substitutes become more expensive. Current economic statistics fail to account for collaborative ventures between U.S. and Chinese firms, thus exaggerating the value of Chinese exports and therefore the trade deficit.

Finally, consider that the United States and China do not trade in a vacuum. The interconnected network of globalized economies ensure that any depreciation of the U.S. dollar in an attempt to improve the bilateral trade imbalance with China would have unintended consequences for the global economy. An improved USD/yuan exchange rate more likely would result in increased U.S. trade deficits with other developing nations than in a decreased trade deficit with China or increased U.S. exports or employment.<sup>18</sup>

### **A Weak Yuan Benefits the United States**

A weak yuan relative to the U.S. dollar benefits not only the American consumer but also benefits U.S. firms, their employees, and the U.S. government. Starting with the American consumer, the benefits are rather straightforward. By keeping the yuan undervalued, China artificially keeps the cost, particularly the cost of labor, of Chinese exports to the United States low. This allows American

consumers access to cheap Chinese goods. Revaluation of the yuan would be tantamount to a tax on the American consumer, decreasing the consumer's purchasing power and thus standard of living.<sup>19</sup> The availability of cheap consumer goods ameliorates decades of flat real wage growth in the United States as wages have failed to keep pace with increases in productivity.<sup>20</sup>

Despite cries that China's policies unfairly disadvantage U.S. industry and the U.S. worker, the reality proves more complex. Many U.S. firms and multinational corporations that have outsourced production to China benefit from the low cost of Chinese labor where the weak yuan improves the profitability and competitiveness of these firms. This same phenomenon indeed displaced hundreds of thousands of low-skill, low-wage jobs to China at the immediate expense of the U.S. worker. However, these jobs cannot be recaptured by strengthening the yuan relative to the dollar. The trade imbalance does not determine overall levels of U.S. employment but rather in what sectors Americans find employment. If Chinese labor costs increased because of a strong yuan, the Chinese will lose those same low-skill, low-wage jobs to workers in other developing economies. The availability of low-cost Chinese labor instead created hundreds of thousands of U.S. jobs in engineering, design, finance, logistics, retailing, and marketing. As firms in the United States adopt international supply chains, they create a collaborative vice competitive effort between themselves and Chinese factories.<sup>21</sup> Allowing the Chinese to devalue the yuan may in the long run stimulate a more resilient U.S. economy and labor market that capitalizes on innovation and high-skill jobs.

Just as a weak yuan provides the U.S. consumer with access to cheap consumer goods, it also benefits the U.S. government by providing access to cheap credit. In order to keep the yuan undervalued, the Chinese must buy USD and U.S. government debt. China does so at terms favorable to the United States since the exchange rate is not determined strictly by market forces but rather by the Chinese flooding the market with yuan to buy foreign reserves. The Chinese do not have limited alternatives with either European or Japanese government bonds that are as attractive as U.S. treasury securities. In turn, this allows the United States to continue to cheaply run budget deficits. While the prospect of China holding significant amounts of U.S. debt may be unsettling, China has become inextricably interested in the continued strength of the U.S. economy in order to maintain the value of its investments.<sup>22</sup>

### **A Weak Yuan Fetters China's Rise**

Finally, the artificially weak yuan prevents China from assuming worldwide economic leadership, inflates the price it pays for commodities, and forces China to devote resources to its internal security. The United States enjoys benefits as the supplier of the world's reserve currency. Not only can the United States raise capital more cheaply than other nations, but it also enjoys the clout of world economic leadership in multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, IMF, and WTO. China desires the status the United States enjoys because of the dollar's reserve currency status.<sup>23</sup> Despite being projected to displace the United States as the world's largest economy—at least in nominal terms—in the near future, the yuan will not displace the dollar as the world's reserve currency. The policies used to devalue the yuan do so in part by preventing it from being fully convertible, or exchanged without restrictions, on the open market. Even with reforms to Chinese policy, the yuan will not be able to replace the dollar for at least several decades.<sup>24</sup> Chinese currency intervention has delayed and may deny the changing of the guard as the United States will maintain economic hegemony for many years to come.

The artificially weak yuan makes dollar-denominated commodities, most significantly oil, more expensive for the Chinese. As the Chinese intervene in currency exchange rates to fuel economic

growth, the resources required for that growth are more expensive. This tempers Chinese demand for resources, preventing China from driving up the price of resources, keeping oil available relatively cheaply for the U.S. market.<sup>25</sup>

In the long run, an artificially undervalued yuan cannot be sustained; a stronger yuan would fuel China's rise. A stronger yuan would allow China to shift from an export based economy to a consumption based economy.<sup>26</sup> The implications are significant. A stronger yuan would lead to increased Chinese wages, increased purchasing power, and improved standards of living. Current economic growth does not enhance the welfare of the Chinese population as the U.S. dollars that flood into the Chinese economy are returned to the United States in the form of foreign reserve and securities purchases. At some point, the Chinese population will demand reforms and increased living standards on par with those enjoyed by the populations of developed economies. As long as the yuan remains artificially weak, the potential for social instability and threat of challenges to the one-party system will force China to focus security resources inward while the United States rebalances to the Pacific in an effort to maintain its edge.

### **Does U.S Inaction Speak Louder than Words?**

China's currency manipulation may be necessary to support its short-term economic prospects but cannot be sustained in the long run. Those that would scapegoat China for the loss of low-skill, low-wage U.S. jobs exaggerate the exchange rate's impact on the U.S. trade deficit with China. They also ignore the realities of U.S. relations with China; China is as much an economic collaborator as competitor. They also gloss over the potentially devastating effects of engaging in an economic tit-for-tat with China—a policy shift that would invite retributions and potential escalation into a trade war.

A confrontational approach does not provide the answer. Indeed, absent an overt U.S. response, the Chinese will continue to gradually revalue the yuan in their own self-interest and at their own pace. In fact, a milder approach that included closed-door negotiations and avoided public condemnation saw the Chinese real exchange rate with the United States, which provides a better measure than the nominal exchange rate as it compares the cost of equivalent goods and services between the countries, rise by nearly 50 percent between 2005-2010.<sup>27</sup> In other words, the Chinese revalued their currency in the absence of an adversarial approach. This allowed the United States to focus on developing, in the words of the 2010 National Security Strategy, “a pragmatic and effective relationship between the United States and China” rather than antagonizing China for a questionable economic gain.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the campaign rhetoric, the failure of both Democratic and Republican administrations to take a stronger stance on China's monetary policy neither reflects a decline in U.S. economic influence nor a lack of U.S. resolve. Rather, the U.S. response has strengthened its long-term economic security while recognizing mutual economic interests with a trade partner it has grown inextricably interdependent upon.

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Photo courtesy of Maritime Security Review

## Somalia: Looking to History and Geography for a Solution

Lieutenant Commander Matthew Noland  
United States Navy

**P**iracy off the Horn of Africa brought Somalia into the collective conscience of western observers, offering a glimpse into the chronic instability and corruption that reigned there for decades. The piracy generally has been suppressed, and Somalia has established an internationally recognized federal government for the first time in nearly twenty years. Suppressing piracy and establishing a legitimate government are important steps towards stabilization, but Somalia cannot solve its problems without international

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support. Beset with issues of corruption, clan-based rivalry, and near total economic collapse, the path to sustainable stability for Somalia is fraught with difficulties of prioritization. Unless the international community can help, Somalia is likely to slide back into chaos. There are many ways the United States, and particularly United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), might engage the problem. Tailoring American engagement to Somalia's maritime character and geo-strategic position offers a logical starting point with short-term and long-term potential. Somalia is a maritime nation. Establishing a capable coast guard is a logical step towards general stability for Somalia and serves American regional security interests as well. AFRICOM should commit to the establishment and growth of a credible indigenous coastal patrol and interdiction capability as its first priority in Somalia.

In the last twenty years, Somalia has become "the infamous poster child of state failure; the world's collapsed state *par excellence*,"<sup>1</sup> and "the most failed state on the planet."<sup>2</sup> After having maintained a modicum of control over Somalia's clan-based society for 22 years, the despotic government of Major General Muhammad Siad Barre collapsed in 1991. Since then, Somalia has undergone an uninterrupted downward spiral, ravaged by civil war, corruption, and famine. The resultant instability facilitated the most infamous episode of maritime piracy in modern times as Somali pirates threatened global commerce and prompted the deployment of warships from around the globe to combat it.

In September of 2012, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud became the first president of the newly constituted Federal Government Somalia (SFG). Greeted with optimism both internally and abroad, this milestone marked the end of Somalia's absence in the international system and was an important step towards reconciling the general chaos that reigned. President Mohamud was elected in a transparent process and conscientiously selected technocrats and professionals as his cabinet members rather than clan leaders and discredited former politicians.<sup>3</sup> The SFG is surrounded by a domestic and international "feel good factor" that lent it, at least initially, an immediate credibility.<sup>4</sup> For the first time in decades, Somalia has been recognized by the United Nations and the United States of America.

Many factors contributing to instability in Somalia are common to other fragile states. Somalia is plagued by poverty and lack of economic opportunity. Corrupt elites are coupled with a general lack of public services and a weak internal security apparatus. The legitimacy of the government is questioned by many factions inside Somalia, and external intervention by foreign militaries remains well above average, even for the most beleaguered states in the index.<sup>5</sup> Add to this laundry list the episodic civil war and famine over the last twenty years. Clearly, Somalia is one of the weakest and least stable countries in the world and needs help from the international community in a myriad of arenas in order to make progress towards stability.

Besides the general security issues posed by a weak Somalia, one need only look at the piracy that blossomed into a full scale crisis to see how Somalia's instability affected the rest of the world. Long part of a trade route of critical value to European commerce and access to the Orient, the importance of the sea lane through the Gulf of Aden has grown exponentially since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.<sup>6</sup> Today, over 20,000 ships pass through it each year, transporting in excess of 12 percent of the world's daily oil supply.<sup>7</sup> While the United States may not rely on this oil directly, many trading partners do. As Royal Canadian Navy Admiral Robert Davidson writes,

Shipping represents an area of economic vulnerability. . . The operations area of CTF 150 comprises a region through which roughly two thirds of the world's oil moves. Although we may not rely on this source for Canadian oil, it is critical to our trading partners. Safe and unhindered

navigation through this region's waters is critical to the economies of the west, including Canada, and thus our contribution to this international coalition force is not simply about altruism, or doing the right thing. Given our economic reliance on trade, worldwide maritime security is also about self-interest.<sup>8</sup>

Given the circumstances outlined above, it is not surprising that General Rodriguez has made security in Somalia a specific priority for AFRICOM.<sup>9</sup> With such an array of problems, prioritization might seem overwhelming. The history (recent and ancient) and culture of Somalia provide clear guidance. Somalia is a maritime state possessing strategic maritime geography and boasts the longest coastline on the continent at nearly 2000 miles.<sup>10</sup>

Piracy reinforces Somalia's connection to the sea. When the going got rough, thousands of Somali mariners traded in their fishing gear for "pirate paraphernalia," and in the words of the seminal American naval strategist, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Somali's followed the sea, as they have done for centuries.<sup>11</sup> As Somalia is a maritime state, it follows that a maritime security capacity for Somalia would pay economic dividends far beyond the suppression of piracy. A Somali coast guard is a perfect vehicle for maritime security.

Prior to the collapse of the state, Somalia's fishing industry was small but thriving and showed enormous potential for growth.<sup>12</sup> Somali fishermen are outdone by foreign trawlers and have seen piracy as a lucrative alternative. Every fish caught illegally by foreign trawlers is revenue lost to a fragile Somali economy. A coastguard would help Somalia's economy by forcing foreign trawlers out of the EEZ and putting a Somali fishing industry back on its feet.

Besides fisheries, Somalia possesses undeveloped but potentially valuable port infrastructure and a great potential for offshore energy exploitation, neither of which help grow the Somali economy until Somalia can resolve its maritime security issues. The development of major ports and an offshore energy industry are both stated Somali maritime goals, but neither is attainable without a coast guard.<sup>13</sup>

Weak and failed states are bad for international security. This line of reasoning is articulated throughout foreign policy literature including the American National Security Strategy of 2002, which states, "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones."<sup>14</sup> Ungoverned spaces allow illegal trade and activity to flourish and have provided a base of operation for violent terrorist networks like Al Qaeda. Weak states often cannot provide for their own security and thus allow themselves to be preyed upon by other powers, potentially destabilizing entire regions. Finally, in an increasingly connected global economy, an interruption in trade that might have affected a limited number of players in centuries past, now has the potential to affect the entire world. Dr. Derek Reveron articulates this point of view in his book, *Exporting Security*,<sup>15</sup> and it is a central theme in Martin Murphy's book, *Small Boats, Weak States, Dirty Money*.<sup>16</sup>

With its own coast guard, Somalia could take advantage of the lull in piracy and support nascent fishing, energy, and shipping industries. In addition to bringing in revenue to the Somali economy, these industries would provide job opportunities to Somalia's mariners, who have shown what they will do when opportunities for employment are scarce. Economic prosperity and rising employment rates would account for a distinct security dividend for Somalia, relying on maritime security but separate from it. A Somali coast guard would essentially pay double for Somalia. It would provide maritime security, which Somalia sorely needs, and would also allow offshore industry the chance to flourish. Not

only would a coast guard contribute to Somali internal security and regional stability, benefitting everyone, but it would inhibit those looking to capitalize on instability.

Somalia needs its own coast guard, and AFRICOM should find a way to assist in its development. In the short term, an indigenous maritime security capability would let Somalia take charge of its own maritime law enforcement. A capable coast guard would allow Somalia to prevent a recrudescence of piracy and illegal exploitation of fisheries by other national fishing fleets. Somalia should not have to rely on naval coalitions for law enforcement. Operation Atalanta, the European anti-piracy coalition, will stand down in 2016, and CTF-151 ships are needed elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> The benefits of a capable Somali coast guard to American security are plain. If Somalia could police her own waters then the United States and allies would not have to.

Recognizing the need, several donor nations have attempted to establish Somali maritime security forces by hiring private contractors for training over the last several years. These efforts have generally failed for two reasons. First, a top-down approach has bred resentment from semi-autonomous regions that see a centrally controlled coast guard as a threat to their own self-rule. Secondly, they have failed because of perceived corruption, as in the case of the Puntland region, where the president appointed his own son as the force commander.<sup>18</sup> If AFRICOM can lend the credibility of a Combatant Command behind the effort to build a coast guard for Somalia, then there may be some chance for success. In addition to providing maritime security for the region, a coast guard is an important step towards building Somalia into a more stable government. If AFRICOM factors in Somalia's centuries old aversion to centralized government, and couples capacity building efforts with ministerial level mentoring, a capable coast guard in Somalia could be a win for the Horn of Africa region and for international security. AFRICOM should continue its counter-terrorism mission conducted against Al-Shabaab in support of the SFG. That mission is important. However, if the goal is a stable Somalia, coercive power must be paired with the application of American soft-power.<sup>19</sup> Given undeniable factors of history and geography, building a Somali coast guard makes sense and also nests perfectly under the AFRICOM tenant of capacity building.

An unstable Somalia poses a regional security risk that cannot be ignored. AFRICOM should continue to address the issue, but the level of instability in Somalia makes finding a starting point difficult. Building an indigenous maritime security capability represents a tailored approach based in historical and geographic reality. A coast guard would pay dividends for Somalia and the region in the near term, with the potential for sustainability in the years to come.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul D. Williams, Somalia in *Responding to Conflict in Africa: The United Nations and Regional Organizations*, ed. Jane Boulden (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 257.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Lennox, "Contemporary Piracy off the Horn of Africa," (Report prepared for the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute, Calgary, December 2008), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Matt Bryden, "Somalia Redux?: Assessing the New Somali Federal Government," (Report prepared for the CSIS Africa Program, Washington, August 2013), 4.

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

<sup>5</sup> Fragile States Index, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/fragile-states-2014>

<sup>6</sup> For an eloquent review of the strategic importance placed on the Red Sea route by Great Britain prior to the opening of the canal see Gerald S. Graham, *The Politics of Naval Supremacy: Studies in British Maritime Ascendance*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), pp. 63 – 95.

<sup>7</sup>, James Kraska and Brian Wilson, "Fighting Pirates: The Pen and the Sword," *World Policy Journal*, (Winter 2008/2009), 41.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Davidson, "Modern Naval Diplomacy, A Practitioner's View," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 11, no. 1 – 2 (Fall/Winter 2008/2009), 12.

<sup>9</sup> General David M. Rodriguez, Commander, United States Africa Command, *Posture Hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee*, U.S. Capitol Building, Washington D.C., March 6, 2014

<sup>10</sup> Timothy Martin, "Maritime Piracy: Out of sight, Out of Mind," *Goorangai: Occasional Papers of the Royal Australian Naval Reserve Professional Studies Program*, vol.2 no.3, (August 2006). Available online at <http://www.navy.gov.au/w/images/GoorangaiVol2Number3.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> "pirate paraphernalia" is the language recently used by Commander US Naval Forces, Central Command, providing justification for boarding and seizure by coalition warships operating against pirates in the subordinate Coalition Task Forces (CTF 150 and CTF-151). It refers to any combination of weapons, conspicuous fuel loads, ladders, grappling hooks etc. that fisherman would have no use for.

<sup>12</sup> "Somalia: Potential Goldmine for Fisheries as Piracy Declines," *Irin Humanitarian News and Analysis*, December 14, 2012, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/97049/somalia-potential-goldmine-for-fishermen-as-piracy-declines>

<sup>13</sup> Federal Government of Somalia, *Somali Maritime Resource and Security Strategy* (Mogadishu: FGS, 2013)

<sup>14</sup> National Security Strategy of the United States, (Washington: The White House, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/index.html>

<sup>15</sup> Derek S. Reveron, *Exporting Security: International Engagement, Security Cooperation and the Changing Face of the U.S. Military*, (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Martin N. Murphy, *Small Boats, Weak States, Dirty Money: Piracy and Maritime Terrorism in the Modern World*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Eric Haun, "NATO Extends Somali Counter-piracy Mission to 2016," *Marine News Magazine*, June 4, 2014, <http://www.marinelink.com/news/counterpiracy-extends370476.aspx>

<sup>18</sup> James Bridger, "Searching for a Somali Coast Guard," *Center for Maritime Security Online*, October 8, 2013, <http://cimsec.org/searching-somali-coastguard/7776>

<sup>19</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, (Cambridge: Perseus Books Group, 2004), 8.

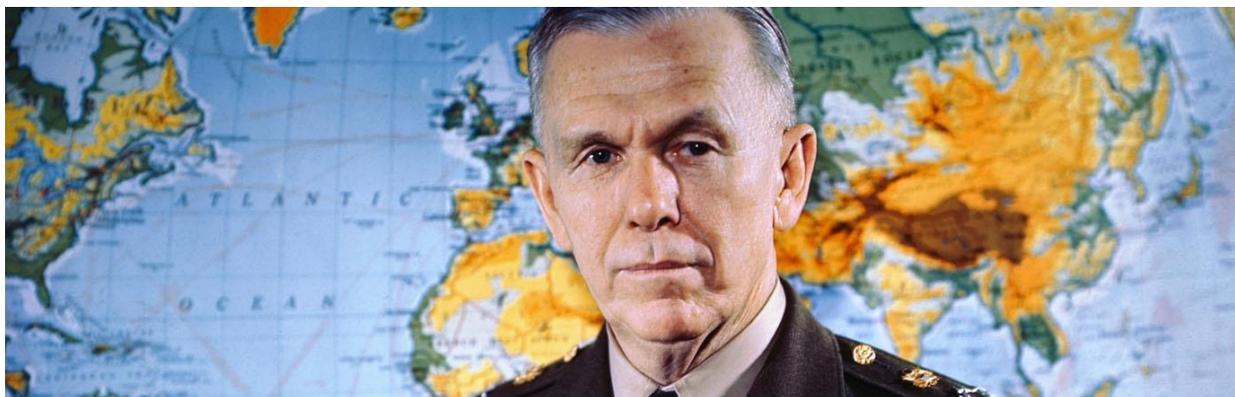


Photo courtesy of the George C. Marshall Foundation

## Where Have You Gone George C. Marshall?

Colonel Douglas A. LeVien  
United States Army

**W**here have you gone George C. Marshall? Dr. Forrest Pogue’s illuminating authorized, four-volume, 1,900 page, biography of George C. Marshall published between 1963 and 1987, is the definitive, indispensable account of the “true organizer of victory” and America’s global role in the post World War II world.<sup>1</sup> Pogue’s masterpiece is an enduring monument to the life of one of America’s greatest soldiers, statesmen, humanitarians, peacemakers, and architects of success. The historian Douglas Freeman once observed that when Marshall’s colleagues asked themselves what were his most noble character virtues, they immediately turned to Thomas Jefferson’s testimonial to George Washington: “His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decisions.”<sup>2</sup>

“Succeeding generations,” Winston Churchill insisted, “must not be allowed to forget his achievements and his example.”<sup>3</sup> Marshall was a leadership genius whose guiding principles are timeless and worthy of emulation. Yet after 14-plus years of endless conflict following the attacks of September 11, 2001, and for considerable spans of the last half-century, the United States has largely ignored his example. In an era when too many of our public and private leaders are more interested in their personal or special interests, and more concerned about prestige than selflessness, it is absolutely necessary to reflect upon how Marshall would have prevented the best military in the world from misguided, endless wars and provided the world’s lone superpower with the strategic vision to navigate in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment.

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The Republic has been blessed that in its bleakest hours it has managed to find a George Washington, an Abraham Lincoln, and more recently Franklin Roosevelt and the cadre of marvelous military officers he assembled, among whom General Marshall was unsurpassed.<sup>4</sup> Those who are troubled about the future of the U.S. military should ponder the stewardship and foresight of General Marshall in periods of storm and tribulation. If we can appraise the value of institutions in part by the leaders whom they have brought to harvest, the U.S. military should be happy to be exalted through Marshall.<sup>5</sup> Marshall was far from being a military conformist. Marshall's independent critical thought, temperament and counsel have been guiding beacons for generations of Americans. "I am a United States Army general," Daniel Bolger begins in *Why We Lost*, "and I lost the Global War on Terrorism."<sup>6</sup> The expostulation is not his alone, but one that demands further examination of how decisions and events could have taken form and how America's leaders proved unequal to the test.

"Speaking truth to power," is the contemporary idiom expressed when articulating one's thoughts. Leaving nothing "between the lines" is expected, but seldom received in the necessary time to alter a course of events. Principled criticism and dissent were hallmarks of outstanding organizations and Marshall believed they needed to be nurtured and encouraged rather than expelled. As an aide to General John J. Pershing for five years, Marshall discovered that Pershing appreciated honest criticism and had the extraordinary ability not to take an affront personally; rather, he used it to strengthen the issue or position at hand. This level of professionalism and two-way dialogue was a lasting trait that Marshall employed throughout the remainder of his service. Marshall gained invaluable experience while preparing Pershing for meetings on Capitol Hill, where a co-equal branch of government holds significant power in raising armies and advising and consenting on foreign affairs. It would teach Marshall not only the political craft of the possible but in the temperance of democracy. Marshall's unwavering refusal to hyperbolize or to resort to pandering made him an indispensable witness before a Congress that was skeptical of the administration. Marshall's respect for Congress in the development of foreign policy stands as a model of what the Constitution calls for with "checks and balances."

Pogue reveals countless enduring principals and strategic advice that largely has been forgotten. Marshall was exposed to both the personalities and intricacies of politics and business, not only in Washington DC, but also in the course of frequent travels through the country. As Chief of Staff of the Army, Marshall would compel his staff to disagree with his decisions. "I am disappointed in all of you." When asked for a reason, he replied. "You haven't disagreed with a single thing I have done all week."<sup>7</sup> He did not select a staff of "yes men" but one that would challenge his assumptions and perspectives. He yearned for a diversity of opinions from a variety of different viewpoints so that he fully understood the complexities and nuances of issues prior to making a decision. Marshall remained "above" politics and accepted the principle of civilian control over the military. Marshall had a unique savvy for informing Presidents flatly where their military or political ideas were misplaced, and yet not be fired.

Contrast Marshall's example of candor in his career with our political and military leaders in 2002 to 2003 and their decision to invade Iraq. The experience and intuition of many senior officials guided their judgment to oppose the use of force, but for political reasons or loyalty they decided to "go along" with the faulty decision. Namely, Secretary of State Colin Powell, who reveres Marshall and was often characterized as the reluctant warrior, decided to make his reservations known to President George W. Bush, but did so in a less than persuasive manner. Additionally, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the principal military advisers to the President, failed to sufficiently challenge the wisdom of invading Iraq and seemed to be detached from the preliminary planning of the invasion. As a result, they made themselves extraneous to the formulation of strategy and became the administrators of an operation they barely constructed. Exacerbating the problem was the destructive, hyper-controlling McNamara-like climate that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld fostered within the Pentagon. When Army Chief

of Staff, General Eric Shinseki testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in 2003, he stated that “something on the order of several hundred thousand” troops would be needed for the invasion and occupation of Iraq. This ran counter to what Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz wanted to hear, but history would judge him to be correct. A conformist, sycophant culture developed where obedience and “careerism” were expected at the expense of candor and respectful dissent. Moreover, a generation of leaders would not only ignore Marshall’s example of moral courage, but also Senator J. William Fulbright’s principled dissent regarding the Vietnam War. Unfortunately, today Professional Military Education schools across all the services assign only nominal readings on Fulbright, Marshall, or anything else on the topic of principled dissent and candor. Unless one learns these historical case studies on their own, senior officers will miss profound lessons and may be condemned to repeat past follies.

Marshall’s curiosity propelled his insights on history, terrain, culture and international relations. Throughout his professional career, he retained his boyhood curiosity and a detective’s itch for inquiry. At every new duty assignment and on travels throughout the globe, he discovered that all too frequently history was employed to present a highly flavored nationalistic point of view. Marshall was a pragmatic military scientist, tinkering with what he had until it worked better, as opposed to an intuitive genius who changed the nature of warfare. As a teacher he sought ways to stimulate the thinking of his students and he provided them with an atmosphere and the conditions in which bold experimentation might flourish. Intellectual curiosity and cultural exploration are characteristics of strategic leaders. This breed of leader often possesses foresight, a trait that should be considered as essential as technical and tactical expertise when selecting officers for promotion and command. A broad liberal arts education is perhaps a stronger foundation for success in today’s environment than the present concentration focused on science and technology. The complexities in the world and the solutions to be discovered are grounded more in art than in science. However, many officer commissioning sources do not yet acknowledge that philosophy.

Marshall’s career was replete with several teaching assignments at military schools where he mastered the instructional material and effectively taught young officers how to be independent thinkers. Lacking the proper grounding in languages, international relations or troop management, an officer of this earlier era had to train himself, and Marshall was no different. Marshall provided his officers the opportunity to disagree at times on questions of military education, regardless of rank, and fostered an attitude of tolerance of ideas that encouraged intelligent counterarguments. He had his own staff of deliberately chosen “Marshall Men” whom he admitted personally, and who had served recently with troops and found themselves sympathetic to his pragmatic approach.

One of the paramount lessons that Pogue delivers is how frequently in the decades since Marshall’s time that American leaders have failed to make a similar effort to explore the possibilities for avoiding confrontation under far less desperate and pressing circumstances than Marshall encountered. Marshall aimed at toning down the growing anti-Soviet hysteria and McCarthyism in the United States immediately following the end of World War II. He remained a voice of moderation and reason, urged a policy of firmness based on strength, but disavowed the ideological anti-Soviet bombast found in political and media pronouncements.<sup>8</sup> Marshall, like George F. Kennan, wanted to avert irreparable schisms through the pending Cold War between the West and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and its satellite nations. Marshall’s “opposition to sending American military forces to intervene in the struggle in China between Chiang and Mao is seen by Pogue as Marshall’s awareness of entanglement from which withdrawal would be difficult.”<sup>9</sup> This caution, Pogue maintains, led Marshall to limit U.S. expansion of the Korean War. Marshall’s refusal to let the United States be sucked into a hopeless civil war in China or to be made subservient to Chiang Kai-shek’s corrupt regime stands as a

model that subsequent administrations should have followed in modeling relations with Third World dictatorships.<sup>10</sup> His military judgment as opposed to spurious geopolitical theories resulted in not spreading American forces too thinly following the tremendous sacrifices of World War II. Marshall demonstrated a profound distaste for anything that resembled militarism and was a proponent of strategic patience.

During the Cold War, the fear and spread of communism formed the overarching ideological rationale for American foreign policy and for the deployment of U.S. military forces and resources. It is likely that Marshall's influence on President Dwight D. Eisenhower impacted the President's decision largely to stay out of Vietnam. However, subscribing to the "falling domino" theory and its potential impact on Southeast Asia, the Johnson Administration committed the United States to an unnecessary, unsuccessful, and tragic war in Vietnam. General (Retired) Matthew Ridgway, another protégé of Marshall's, was highly critical of U.S. foreign policy in Vietnam. During testimony to a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing and in a *Look Magazine* article published in April 1966, he echoed the teachings of Marshall and opined, "The falling-domino theory—if Vietnam falls, then Laos, Thailand and all of south Asia will collapse—is a theory, I have never accepted. Like many other premises upon which people tend to rest their position, it is deserving of more searching analysis than it generally gets."<sup>11</sup> Ridgway reflected upon his vast experience and knowledge of South Korea and South Vietnam to exhibit the dissimilarities. In South Korea the line of battle was determined, the enemy was clearly identifiable and the populace supported the fiercely patriotic civilian leader, tenets that did not exist in Saigon. This was exactly the kind of principled dissent, sound judgment and candor that Marshall championed.

Marshall's experiences during occupation duty in the Philippines in 1902 taught him the complexities of occupying foreign countries as well as the challenges of self-government. As a second lieutenant, he received no formal education or training about administering a large territory and serving as its governor. Marshall was determined to apply his lessons learned from the Philippines to reconstruction following World War II. In 1942, he and members of his staff recognized that officer-administrators would need to be trained for the tasks of military government. A School of Military Government was subsequently established that enabled successful German and Japanese occupations. Not learning from previous case studies, the U.S. approach to building host nation capacity within the Department of Defense has delivered mixed results at best in Iraq and Afghanistan. General Marshall would most likely be very disappointed and dumbfounded with the failure of fusing strategy with military operations on the ground.

Following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, and the commencement of the Global War on Terrorism, Washington D.C. once again espoused an ideology for setting national agendas which included simplistic, flawed analysis. Violent extremist terrorist organizations replaced communism as the dogma that, if ignored, threatened to sweep across the world with grave ramifications for freedom, liberty and economic prosperity. President George W. Bush's dire concerns regarding Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons of mass destruction and channels to al-Qaeda fostered America's invasion of Iraq. Neglecting Iraq's mammoth sectarian, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and strategic complexities, the Bush Administration launched Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Disregarding virtually all the lessons of Pershing, Marshall, Eisenhower, and Ridgway, General Tommy "Shock and Awe" Franks deployed insufficient forces to Iraq and then soon retired from the Army leaving the debacle for others to manage.

Rick Atkinson, a Washington Post reporter embedded with the U.S. Army during OIF, wrote that then Major General David Petraeus would often extol those around him by saying, "Tell me how this ends."<sup>12</sup> Ironically, Petraeus, in 1987, wrote his Doctor of Philosophy dissertation on *The American*

*Military and the Lessons of Vietnam: A Study of Military Influence and the Use of Force in the Post-Vietnam Era.*<sup>13</sup> The 328-page dissertation contained the lessons learned on the shortcomings of the nation's leadership in Vietnam and expounded on how to prevent another similar debacle. Petraeus's initial actions, however, did not demonstrate that he had learned the lessons of the Vietnam failures, or that he shared his concerns with his chain of command prior to the initiation of the Iraqi War. In fact, one of his mentors was General Jack Keane, then serving as the Army Vice Chief of Staff, who was in a position to receive constructive principled dissent and articulate those concerns to the National Command Authority. Petraeus certainly did not act in the spirit of constructive principled dissent advocated by General Marshall. Additionally, the Department of Defense's voluminous headquarters staff and bloated bureaucracy handicapped military operations and resulted in discord and dysfunction, compared to the unity of command and synergy that President Franklin Roosevelt had given Marshall to train the force, select its commanders and plan and conduct operations. Not only were America's political and military leaders in Vietnam and Iraq strategically encumbered, but so was the organizational structure, to include the Joint Chiefs of Staff, combatant commanders and the National Security Council.

Marshall understood that when it came to military policy, it was necessary to comply with the spirit and intent expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. One of the nation's utmost trials is harmonizing the demands of defense with the ideals of democracy. Marshall insisted that the citizen-soldier, Pogue reminds us, not the regular professional soldier, should form the bedrock of the U.S. military both in war and peace. He favored the Selective Service System as the fairest and most effective method of raising millions of men quickly for the task of fighting World War II. Marshall accepted slowness in preparation for defense as a part of the American attitude toward war and the prevention of elective, ill-advised conflicts not supported by Congress. Marshall opposed a large standing Army as un-American, and now after 14 plus years of conflict with an all-volunteer force comprised of less than one percent of the population, he again was prescient. Dr. Andrew Bacevich, an authority on civil-military relations, wrote in 2012, "A people untouched by war are far less likely to care about it."<sup>14</sup> Just as the National Security Act of 1947 and the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 addressed the deficiencies at the time of the national security enterprise and mandated defense reform, another similar reform is required to address the concerns that Marshall would have identified today. However, the prospects of challenging the "military-industrial-congressional complex" and its web linking money, the military, industry, Congress and foreign policy, will require a level of moral courage not witnessed since Marshall.

Marshall's strategic prowess and character prevailed over political agendas, cranky allies, service rivalries and totalitarianism. While in retirement, Marshall refused several lucrative offers to write his autobiography. He stated that it would be unethical to sanction a tell-all book in order to profit from his service to the country; nor would it be appropriate to benefit from sacrifices made by the citizen-soldiers. He relented only after President Truman repeatedly urged him to write his memoirs. Marshall agreed in 1956 to write his biography with the proviso that neither he nor his family would receive royalties from the sale of the book. Instead royalties would be used to establish the Marshall Library and Museum at his alma mater, the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), in Lexington, Virginia. This act is another example of General Marshall's selflessness and serves as an admirable example for others to emulate.

Perhaps the most touching incident Forrest Pogue relates about the stature and international reputation of Marshall occurred in 1953. President Eisenhower asked Marshall to head the American delegation to the coronation of Elizabeth II. As he was being escorted to his seat in Westminster Abbey the entire audience reverentially rose to their feet. Perplexed, he gazed around to see who the luminary was. It was General Marshall himself! The United States can only hope that its future brings countless

“architects of victory” with Marshall’s humility, self-effacing personality, unswerving honesty, and dignified simplicity, a model for all in service of the Republic. It has been 56 years since General Marshall’s passing. Many subsequent strategic and military architects have failed at the country’s peril. The country could find a winner now if only it just would follow his example.

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<sup>1</sup> Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Education of a General 1880-1939*, (New York, Viking Penguin, 1963), *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope 1939-1942*, (New York, Viking Penguin, 1966), *George C. Marshall: Organizer of Victory 1943-1945*, (New York, Viking Penguin, 1973) *George C. Marshall Statesman 1945-1959*, (New York, Viking Penguin, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Pogue, *George C. Marshall Statesman 1945-1959*, (New York, Viking Penguin, 1987), p.521.

<sup>3</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Public Papers of the President of the United States: 1960-1961*, p. 691.

<sup>4</sup> Forrest C. Pogue, “George C. Marshall: Statesman 1945-1959,” review by John F. Melby, *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Spring, 1988), pp.135-137.

<sup>5</sup> Forrest C. Pogue, “George C. Marshall: Education of a General, 1880-1939,” review by Russell f. Weigley, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 353, (May, 1964), pp. 195-196.

<sup>6</sup> Daniel P. Bolger, *Why We Lost: A General’s inside account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 2014) p. Xiii.

<sup>7</sup> Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope 1939-1942*, p. ix.

<sup>8</sup> Forrest C. Pogue, “George C. Marshall: Statesman, 1945-1959,” review by William E. Pemberton, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Jun., 1988), pp.313-314.

<sup>9</sup> Forrest C. Pogue, “George C. Marshall: Statesman, 1945-1959,” review by Vincent P. DeSantis, *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (Spring, 1998), pp.320-322.

<sup>10</sup> Ed Cray, “General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman,” review by Daun van Ee, *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (Jan., 1991), pp.123-124.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew B. Ridgway, “Pull-out, All-out, or Stand Fast in Vietnam?” *Look*, April 5, 1966.

<sup>12</sup> Rick Atkinson, *In the Company of Soldiers*, (New York: Henry Holt, 2004), p.6.

<sup>13</sup> David Petraeus, *The American Military and the lessons of Vietnam: A Study of Military Influence and the Use of Force in the Post-Vietnam Era*, (Ann Arbor, MI: U-M-I, 1987) p.i.

<sup>14</sup> James Fallows, “The Tragedy of the American Military,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, January / February 2015, p. 89.



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## American Businesses, Veterans, and Military Discounts

Lieutenant Commander Jack Curtis  
United States Navy

### Introduction

“ I think there is a certain subculture in the military that has grown to expect the perks and admiration and adulation. I think that a lot of folks are starting to feel that way without realizing it. While I certainly think that what the military has done over the past decade is admirable, we don't want to feel entitled to a certain treatment different from other citizens. Ours should be a culture of selfless service and selfless leadership.” Marine Maj. Peter Munson, the author of *“War, Welfare & Democracy: Rethinking America's Quest for the End of History.”*<sup>1</sup>

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Major Munson succinctly describes the underlying premise of this paper; a large portion of uniformed members, veterans, and family members have developed an unhealthy sense of entitlement after nearly twelve years of continuous war. This sense of isolation, and at times, superiority, is “not healthy in an armed force serving a democracy.”<sup>23</sup> To be sure, many of our veterans have made substantial sacrifices, as has been the case throughout American history. As the gap between those who have and have not served in the military continues to widen, actions, well intentioned as they may be, that reinforce this distinction impede the necessary task of reintegrating veterans into society. This paper, part historical case study and part editorial, will look back to WWII, Vietnam, and Desert Storm to examine how our society arrived at a point where every veteran is a *hero*, and how superficial discounts now substitute for genuine shared sacrifice.

## Historical Context

### WW II, National Sacrifice, and a Hero’s Welcome

During World War II, American automobile manufacturers focused much of their production on the war effort. The market for personal automobiles during the war sputtered as gasoline was rationed, rubber was diverted to the front, and a moratorium was placed on the production of new cars. American automakers produced 3 million cars in 1941, with just 139 more made during the rest of the war.<sup>4</sup> By late 1942, General Motors (GM) dedicated 95% of its output to the war effort.<sup>5</sup> Chrysler manufactured aircraft fuselages. Packard assembled Rolls-Royce engines for British aircraft, and the Ford Motor Company turned out a new B-24 bomber every 63 minutes.<sup>6</sup>

Automobile manufacturers were not alone in these herculean war efforts. The Mattatuck Manufacturing Company moved from making upholstery fasteners to producing clips for Springfield rifles. The American Brass Company produced more than two billion pounds of brass materials. The Chase Brass and Copper Company produced more than 50 million cases and mortar shells, over a billion small arms rounds, and eventually made components used by scientists working the Manhattan Project.<sup>7</sup> These contributions are notable but tell only half of the story. The manpower—and perhaps more accurately, womanpower—required to produce this much war material is the other half.

During the pre-war era, women comprised one percent of the U.S. aircraft industry’s workforce. This number spiked to 65% in 1943 while Rosie the Riveter became one of the best recruitment tools in U.S. history.<sup>8</sup> Men, too, contributed greatly to the industrial war effort. Men who were physically disqualified from military service saw it as an obligation to serve in whatever capacity they could. Children also participated in any way they could. So-called “Victory Gardens” were planted at elementary schools to ease the burden of food rationing, and many teenagers lied about their age to gain employment in factories.<sup>9</sup>

World War II saw the mobilization of American industry that combined with unprecedented labor initiatives had the effect of creating a shared burden. The “boys” may have been away fighting on foreign shores, but Rosie and the rest of America were at home doing as much as they could to help ensure victory. Following World War II, service members came home to a population that had sacrificed with them, and while sacrifices on the battlefield are much different than those on the home front, a sense of shared responsibility and accomplishment existed. National pride and shared sacrifice, the defeat of fascism, government backed home loans, and money for education were, in most cases, enough compensation for those who had won a hard fought victory. If *harmony* translates to peaceful agreement, mutual respect, and understanding, then the post-war era represents the zenith of military-civilian harmony.

## Coming Home from Vietnam

“They treated us terrible when we came home.” These are the words of Dan Mahoney during a 2013 interview with the *Troy Record*.<sup>10</sup> Mahoney served with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. He recounted being escorted through a California airport by police in order to keep anti-war protestors at bay.<sup>11</sup> Diane Mazur, in her book *A More Perfect Military*, challenges many of the widely accepted narratives of how veterans were treated during homecomings, including her assertion that no data exists to support the infamous claims of veterans being spit on. Regardless of whether soldiers were spit on, shouted at, refused service, or called names, it is a fact that soldiers returning from Vietnam came home under much different circumstances than those of their fathers following WWII. Anti-war activists mistakenly condemned the soldier along with the policy-maker. As recently as 2012, President Obama poignantly characterized the period as “a national shame, a disgrace that should have never happened. . . . Even though Americans turned their back on you, you never turned your back on America.”<sup>12</sup>

While American industry went all-in with its support of the war effort during the 1940s, times changed considerably by the 1960s, with the military industrial complex that President Eisenhower warned of now in full swing. Ford did not have to shut down its assembly lines to manufacture bombers. The American workforce that blossomed in the years following WWII remained largely unaffected. The feelings of shared sacrifice and national unity of effort were replaced with bitter political distrust and widespread anti-war protests. Contributing to a general ambivalence towards the war (and those who fought it) was the fact that military members made up a much smaller portion of the overall U.S. population than during WWII. From 1941 to 1945, over nine percent of the U.S. population directly participated in the Armed Forces. During the Vietnam War (1962-1973), that number was under two percent.<sup>13</sup> President Obama’s lament describes the nadir of American military-civilian harmony.

If the pendulum of civil-military harmony was lodged on the positive end of the spectrum following WWII, it had swung fully in the opposite direction following Vietnam. Time is said to heal all wounds, and nearly twenty years after the fall of Saigon, the American public had an opportunity to right the wrongs of the past. Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM was a rousing success for the American military. General Schwarzkopf led U.S. and coalition forces to a quick and decisive victory over Saddam Hussein. While the American economy and civilian population were again largely unaffected, the sense of national pride and gratitude expressed to returning veterans was ardent; the pendulum had reversed itself again.

## Longer, Much Longer with Less

Today’s all-volunteer active duty force constitutes less than one percent of the American population.<sup>14</sup> How this number came to be, and the relevance it bears, is open to countless interpretations.<sup>15</sup> The fact remains: a very small fraction of the American population now serves in uniform. Further illustrating the gap between those who have and have not served, a recent Pew Research Poll concluded fewer than 35% of 18-29 year olds have a family member in the military.<sup>16</sup> It is not merely the act of service that sets today’s veterans apart from society: it is also the nature of their service.

In 2010, USA Today reported more than 13,000 troops had served three to four cumulative years in Iraq or Afghanistan.<sup>17</sup> Soldiers returning from World War II, in most cases, did so once. Stephen Maxner, a military historian and director of the Vietnam Center and Archive says the same of Vietnam veterans: “Small numbers of soldiers volunteered for multiple tours in Vietnam, but the vast majority

served single, year-long deployments.”<sup>18</sup> Multiple tours, and at one point “stop-loss” retention measures, meant many soldiers were away from their families more frequently and for longer periods of time than in previous wars. While fewer soldiers were shouldering a larger burden, life at home largely marched on unaffected.

American civilians, with the exception of media reporting and acquaintance, remained insulated from the fighting. The Pew Poll found that 50% of Americans felt the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had little impact on their lives.<sup>19</sup> Today, the shared sense of duty and sacrifice that prevailed during the 1940s is absent. Civilians go about their lives focusing on matters of employment, insurance, financial security, and other domestic issues. Aside from the initial economic shock of the 9/11 attacks, American industry survives mostly unaffected by the wars. The Great Recession that began in 2008 had a much more profound effect on the economy than any direct war related efforts.<sup>20</sup> GM and Ford, as during Vietnam, do not shoulder the burden of building jeeps or aircraft. Apple and Microsoft continued producing iPods and X-Box’s. Flush with a sense of patriotism in the post 9/11 era, the vexing question for corporate and civilian American was, and continues to be, how, and to what extent, should they express their appreciation to this small group of citizens who fought a largely unpopular war? Unfortunately, the answer seems to come in the form of fawning displays of gratitude and unbridled deference that often ignore the challenging task of reintegration.

### **Heroes, Home Depot, and Hubris**

*“We can’t all be heroes; some of us have to stand on the curb and watch as they go by.”*  
*Will Rogers*

The term *hero* evokes an emotional response when used to describe the actions of Medal of Honor Recipients Vice Admiral James Stockdale, Lieutenant Michael Murphy, and Sergeant First Class Leroy Petry. These men, and many like them, “distinguished [themselves] conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of [their] life above and beyond the call of duty.”<sup>21</sup> Few, if any, reasonable people would argue that these men’s actions were not heroic. Admittedly, being awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor should not be viewed as the sole gateway to hero status; however, in the post 9/11 era the word *hero* has been bandied about by an uneasy populace to the point of banality, creating two unintended consequences.

First, the term itself loses gravitas when applied so ubiquitously, and risks debasing the actions of men like Stockdale, Murphy, and Petry. Second, when veterans and their families view themselves as heroes simply because they served, it only widens the unhealthy gap between “us and them.” A civilian society that is as far removed from the realities of war as ours, often knows no better way to express support than to hand out superficial labels, sometimes masking a deeper misunderstanding or distrust.<sup>22</sup> Veterans who routinely receive praise as heroes can begin to see themselves as separate from the society they serve. These newly minted heroes may view themselves as better, braver, more deserving, and worse; forget the binary nature and literal meaning of *citizen-soldier*. In a July 2013 op-ed piece, General Dempsey, the nation’s highest ranking military officer, cautioned, “We need to guard against suggestions that we deserve admiration because we volunteered to serve when others didn’t. We are an all-volunteer force, but we are not all who volunteer.”<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, General Dempsey’s message was not received by all who needed to hear it.

### **What’s in a Discount?**

Absent a requirement to militarize production lines or enact conscription, American industry and society writ large, have graciously sought ways to contribute in meaningful ways to the men and

women who serve in the military. The most common manner of accomplishing this is by offering so-called military discounts. Chevrolet no longer builds amphibious landing craft, but a veteran can get a good deal on a pick-up truck. These discounts, as has been stated, are gracious but can appear duplicitous in nature. Are companies using soldiers and flag waving patriotism to sell beer, airline tickets, and automobiles, or are their motives driven by genuine altruism? The answer to that question opens the door for unnecessary cynicism, but what is undeniable is that military discounts are now so common that they have become expected. The GI Bill, VA Loans, health care, and various other codified benefits are no longer enough for some veterans. Some want, demand even, discounts on lumber and lawn mowers. The expectation of unnecessary and private benefits defies the all-volunteer force's underlying premise of selfless sacrifice.

According to its website, Home Depot U.S.A. Inc is the world's largest home improvement retailer with more than 1,500 stores in North America.<sup>24</sup> Home Depot actively recruits and employs thousands of veterans and, unlike many other American companies, contributed millions of dollars-worth of tools and material directly to the war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. For the past several years they have also offered a 10% military discount to veterans and their families. By most accounts, Home Depot is a "military friendly" organization.

William Carney of Pace, Florida feels differently. Carney is a self-identified veteran who routinely shops (or shopped) at his local Home Depot enjoying its military discount. On a recent trip, he purchased \$356 worth of merchandise, showed his military ID, and was surprised to find on his receipt that he had only saved eight dollars with the discount. This represented a savings of two percent instead of the roughly \$35 dollars he expected. When he asked the clerk about the apparent discrepancy, he was informed that Home Depot had changed the policy governing military discounts, and now not all in-stock items were eligible for the discount. Feeling the clerk was mistaken he spoke with a manager who confirmed the new "reduced item" policy. Mr. Carney wrote a letter to his local newspaper titled *Home Depot Dishonors Our Military* (emphasis added).<sup>25</sup> Extensive internet research suggests that not all Home Depots have implemented this change. It remains unclear if the Pace, Florida branch was acting alone in the policy change, or if the national headquarters simply failed to synchronize the change nationwide. In the end, either outcome is irrelevant.

Military discounts are benefits, voluntary benefits, offered to veterans as a symbolic gesture of appreciation. In many cases, the discounts are offered out of sense of obligation so as not to be seen as unpatriotic. Much like the absence of an American flag lapel pin on a politician's coat has been foolishly labeled disrespectful, companies that fail to offer military discounts are often seen as disloyal or unsupportive.<sup>26</sup> In the case of Home Depot, the benefits were offered by a company who also contributes greatly to veteran related projects that arguably do more to say "thank you" than offering a nominal discount on everyday purchases. Home Depot provides materials to build and modify homes for disabled veterans and was recognized by *G.I. Jobs* magazine as a "Top 25 Military-Friendly Employer".<sup>27</sup>

Mr. Carney's grievance, boorish as it may be, is emblematic of a growing problem within corners of the veteran community—one of entitlement and expectancy. A quick search of the internet reveals countless stories of veterans and families waging boycotts against local businesses that stopped offering military discounts. In 2011, Sears teamed with private donors to provide free holiday gift cards to active duty personnel and their families. Unfortunately, a computer glitch limited the registration time to only a few hours. In short order, more than 2,000 people posted comments on the company's Facebook page, many of them negative.<sup>28</sup> It is worth pointing out that Sears did not have to offer this promotion, not in 2011, and not in the three previous years.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the program relied heavily on the generosity of outside donors for financial support. Finally, much like Home Depot, Sears spends

considerable effort recruiting, training, and hiring veterans. The 6,500 veterans that Sears plans to hire in 2014 will benefit much more from a job than from a gift card.<sup>30</sup> Employment and training closely match the nature of the GI Bill and VA Loans: the veteran and society benefit from a shared investment.

Those of us in uniform must recognize that the nation we serve is vastly different from the nation that went to war in decades past and very different from when this war began. The concept of shared sacrifice by those on the home front is nearly non-existent except for those eagerly awaiting emails or phone calls from loved ones in uniform. The industrial base is no longer required to reinvent itself to support war efforts. Instead of building tanks and trucks, companies, either through genuine altruism or shrewd marketing, have found a way to participate. Military discounts and special promotions are how an uneasy private sector says thank you, and are undeniably kind, but there are better ways.

The Veterans Administration reported in 2013 that nearly 50,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans were either homeless or in federal housing programs designed to keep them off the streets.<sup>31</sup> Instead of offering 10% discounts on routine purchases, businesses should direct that money to organizations providing skills training, resume preparation, and job placement. Mr. Carney may be interested to know that several non-profits, with Home Depot backing, have pledged to spend \$80 million building and adapting homes for veterans by 2015.<sup>32</sup> Instead of providing nominal discounts on routine purchases, more companies should follow Home Depot's lead and express their support with lasting, meaningful acts that serve the veteran and his community. There is greater benefit in teaching a man to fish than in simply giving him a fish.

### Conclusion

There should be no doubt that our men and women in uniform have made considerable sacrifices during the last twelve years of war. What veterans must understand, however, is that our nation has grown weary of war. The unflagging displays of patriotism and adulation heaped upon the military following the first Gulf War and particularly after 9/11 are waning. Businesses were shocked into financial uncertainty following the economic downturn of 2008. Profitability is more important than symbolism in free-market economies and the ability to offer sweeping discounts to veterans may prove unsustainable. Further risk comes in the form of legislative cuts to defense spending. A career in the military will not make one a millionaire, but the existing compensation is fair. Compared with many Americans in the private sector, military compensation is arguably more than fair. Veterans risk trading national deference for national contempt if we continue to bang the drum against compensation cuts, while at the same time enjoying private benefits that are unavailable to other citizens who volunteer for service: police, fire fighters, the Peace Corps, educators, and clergy. The fault does not lie in asking for fair compensation or even in resisting cuts; the fault lies in alienating ourselves from the citizens we serve with self-righteous behavior.

This discussion is not an indictment of veterans, their families, or the countless companies across America that graciously offer military discounts. I have benefitted from military discounts, will continue to do so, and do not struggle with feelings of hypocrisy. The reason is simple: as a veteran myself, I am keenly aware of the all-volunteer nature of our military, but as General Dempsey correctly pointed out, "We are not all who volunteer."<sup>33</sup>



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- <sup>1</sup> Munson quoted in Tilghman. July 2013.
  - <sup>2</sup> Henceforth described collectively as *veterans*.
  - <sup>3</sup> Admiral Stanley Arthur, quoted in Ricks. July 1997.
  - <sup>4</sup> WETA, American Lives II Film Project. Public Broadcast System. September 2007.
  - <sup>5</sup> Snyder. October 31, 2011.
  - <sup>6</sup> WETA, American Lives II Film Project. Public Broadcast System. September 2007.
  - <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
  - <sup>8</sup> History.com. A&E Television Network. 2014.
  - <sup>9</sup> National World War II Museum. 2014.
  - <sup>10</sup> Benjamin. March 31, 2013.
  - <sup>11</sup> Benjamin. March 31, 2013.
  - <sup>12</sup> President Obama, quoted in Garcia. March 28, 2014.
  - <sup>13</sup> Segal and Segal. December 2004.
  - <sup>14</sup> Defense Manpower Data Center. March 31, 2014.
  - <sup>15</sup> The percentage of active duty military members has remained below 1% since the end of the draft in 1973.
  - <sup>16</sup> Pew Research Center. October 5, 2011.
  - <sup>17</sup> Zoroya. January 13, 2010.
  - <sup>18</sup> Maxner, quoted in Zoroya. January 13, 2010.
  - <sup>19</sup> Pew Research Center. October 5, 2011.
  - <sup>20</sup> A reasonable argument can be made regarding the effects to the economy from spending nearly \$1 trillion in Iraq and Afghanistan.
  - <sup>21</sup> Text from Medal of Honor citation.
  - <sup>22</sup> Gronke and Feaver.
  - <sup>23</sup> Dempsey. July 3, 2013.
  - <sup>24</sup> <http://www.homedepot.com>
  - <sup>25</sup> Carney. Feb 5, 2014.
  - <sup>26</sup> Wright and Sunlen. October 4, 2007.
  - <sup>27</sup> <http://www.homedepot.com>
  - <sup>28</sup> Andi. December 1, 2011.
  - <sup>29</sup> Anonymous post to spousebuzz.com. September 2, 2011.
  - <sup>30</sup> Sears Holding Press Release. January 22, 2014.
  - <sup>31</sup> Zoroya. January 17, 2014.
  - <sup>32</sup> Foody. March 25, 2014.
  - <sup>33</sup> Dempsey. July 3, 2013.



Photo by D. Myles Cullen courtesy of the U.S. Department of Defense

## **The NATO Wales Summit is Not Enough: A Case for a Pre-Emptive Counter- Insurgency Strategy in the Baltic States**

**Major Francisco X. Zavala  
United States Marine Corps**

**T**he 2014 NATO Wales Summit Declaration attempted to decisively deter Russian aggression and reiterate that hostility against NATO members would not be tolerated.<sup>1</sup> Regrettably, NATO provided solutions to the wrong problem. NATO must rapidly move beyond the Wales Summit Declaration in order to safeguard its members and deter Russia. Economic sanctions and the threat of conventional military power are insufficient to effectively

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safeguard NATO against future Russian hybrid threats.<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Putin could exploit the effectiveness of hybrid warfare, NATO's hesitation to employ conventional forces in conflicts that could escalate toward total war, and the resistance by individual NATO members to endorse the implementation of Article V. The most immediate threat of Russian aggression against NATO is found in the Baltic States. NATO must execute a pre-emptive counter-insurgency strategy in the Baltic States that denies the use of "Maskirovka" by eliminating the isolation of ethnic Russians in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.<sup>3</sup>

### **Understanding the Threat**

The 2014 Ukrainian conflict provides three important lessons. First, the most deadly Russian threat remains a conventional attack against NATO, which could result in uncontrollable escalation toward total war. This most deadly threat remains unlikely given the questionable victory it could produce. The most likely Russian threat is not conventional warfare, but the execution of hybrid warfare as a way to achieve national interests while deliberately violating the sovereignty of another state.<sup>4</sup> Robin Niblett points out "that Russia's strategy in Ukraine presents an entirely new set of challenges, which cannot be deterred or confronted by troops, tanks and aircraft alone."<sup>5</sup>

Second, the moral justification for military action used by Putin must be highlighted. Putin justified Russian intervention in Ukraine as necessary to defend the rights of ethnic Russians who were socially and politically isolated within the Ukraine. John Herbst offers that "Moscow has promoted instability in neighboring countries as a means to exercise influence."<sup>6</sup> Herbst proposes the development of policies that make it clear that future attempts to use this tactic will be ineffective and therefore not worth pursuing, or "otherwise the Kremlin's exploitation of 'ethnic rights' and promotion of social disorder will create problems in countries beyond Ukraine, including among our Baltic allies."<sup>7</sup>

The third lesson is the execution of Russian brinksmanship. Russia's use of peace treaties in the Ukrainian conflict demonstrate Putin's calculated pursuit of objectives in which Russia accepts premeditated risks and skillfully de-escalates the situation before the consequences become unacceptable. This tactic of brinksmanship foreshadows the Russian pursuit of objectives that defy NATO while exploiting NATO's incremental response.

Through brinksmanship, Putin is attempting to manipulate NATO, daring it to reveal its "red lines." The "red lines" would be drawn gradually in response to a series of calculated Russian engagements designed not to achieve decisive effects but to coerce NATO into identifying its threshold. The establishment of NATO's "red lines" is acceptable to Putin because he recognizes that NATO's unwillingness to go to war, along with its reluctance to accept additional security responsibilities, will result in a threshold that is both limited and acceptable in relation to Russia's interests. Ultimately, the establishment of this present day "Iron Curtain" will allow Russia to confidently pursue objectives that fall just short of NATO's "red lines" while accepting the diplomatic and economic consequences.

### **Why the Baltic States Must Be First**

NATO must recognize its vulnerability to Russia's hybrid warfare strategy, the use of the ethnic Russian pretext, and the application of brinksmanship. Within NATO, the Baltic States are the most vulnerable to Russian hybrid threats for several reasons. First, Russia perceives that it is isolated and surrounded by competitors or adversaries.<sup>8</sup> Russia has sought protection by surrounding itself with territorial buffer states.<sup>9</sup> The Ukrainian conflict is a testament of this strategy.<sup>10</sup> The Baltic States are of significant geo-strategic value to Russia due to their potential as buffers.<sup>11</sup> The physical border the Baltic States share with Russia distinguishes them from other NATO members who have greater geographic separation. Russian intervention in the Baltic States should be anticipated because of their geo-strategic

value. Russia will attempt to manipulate each country's government, advance pro-Russian policies, and extend a geographic buffer against NATO.<sup>12</sup> Not only would intervention in the Baltic States advance Russian objectives, but it would also reduce the isolation of Kaliningrad.<sup>13</sup>

Second, Russians can justify the pretext of defending ethnic Russians in the Baltics. Latvia offers a clear model for concern. One third of the population in Latvia consists of ethnic Russians. Those ethnic Russians remain largely isolated from society and are "stuck" as non-citizens, unable to participate in the democratic political process, and are limited in the professional and economic opportunities they can enjoy.<sup>14</sup> The existence of an isolated ethnic Russian population presents an excuse for Russian intervention that is actually intended to pursue diplomatic or economic interests, rather than social interests, as demonstrated by the Ukrainian conflict.<sup>15</sup>

Articulating that an immediate, credible Russian threat exists against a current NATO member is likely to invoke skepticism and organizational resistance. Contrary assessments will be founded on the assumption that Russia would not deliberately challenge the sovereignty of individual NATO members given the collective security assurance provided by Article V and the corresponding unacceptable risk of total war. Nonetheless, there is evidence that Russia is willing to challenge the sovereignty of a NATO member. The 2007 cyber attacks against Estonia offer a warning that Russia is willing to accept calculated risks to pursue limited objectives, gambling that their actions will not trigger an Article V response. During the 2007 cyber attacks, Estonia invoked Article V. NATO did not respond despite Estonia's continued cries for a collective response. Individual NATO states debated the definition of war and whether a cyber attack truly constituted an act of warfare. NATO was unable to agree on the definition of war, and failed to formulate a unified response to this event.<sup>16</sup>

Article V contains a flaw that Russia will methodically exploit. Article V allows for interpretation, internal disagreement, and unwillingness to honor collective security obligations due to conflicting interpretations of what constitutes an armed attack, severity of the threat, and limits for the collective response. As Robin Niblett describes, "The answers to these questions will stand as a test of the alliance's commitment to the collective defense of its members."<sup>17</sup> The proposed threat and pursuit of limited Russian objectives that violate the sovereignty of the Baltic States is therefore neither extreme nor irrational. The threat is rational, calculated, and promising given Russia's anticipation of NATO's disjointed response. Putin will methodically advance Russian interests in defiance of NATO, exploit NATO's sluggish responses, and execute the mentioned Brinkmanship strategy.

### **Pre-Emptive Counter-Insurgency Solutions**

NATO has the opportunity to seize the initiative. It does not have to wait for Russia. NATO must anticipate the Russian threat in the Baltic States by taking pre-emptive action to eliminate the sources of instability that could justify a Russian supported insurgency.<sup>18</sup> This strategy of deterrence through denial must concentrate on changing the isolation of ethnic Russians in Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia by focusing on national reconciliation while emphasizing national over ethnic allegiance. The strategy must be implemented in three steps. First, all reasonable measures to expedite national citizenship must be enacted. Second, steps must be taken to guarantee the ability of ethnic Russians to participate as citizens in the political, democratic process. This is vital since it reduces the justification for violence as a mechanism for political expression. Lastly, the socio-economic opportunities for ethnic Russians must be safeguarded ensuring that opportunities for prosperity exist for all citizens.

NATO should temporarily modify the 2% GDP spending target for each Baltic State. Rather than spending 2% on military capability, the Baltic States should balance their defense contribution between

military capability and pre-emptive counter-insurgency measures. Critics of this proposal might argue this creates a dangerous precedent for a selective system of contribution. However, the reality is the hybrid Russian threat is not proportional across NATO. Eastern members of NATO face a higher threat of Russian aggression. The greatest contribution Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia can make to NATO's collective defense is not the 2% GDP investment in military capability but rather the elimination of conditions that could encourage Russian hybrid warfare and a quandary that forces NATO to pick either all-out war against Russia or accept the collapse of the alliance as a result of individual member states unwillingness to honor Article V obligations.

### Conclusion

NATO has the ability to seize the initiative and to anticipate Putin's strategy that seeks to exploit fissures within NATO to advance Russian objectives. NATO must execute a pre-emptive counter-insurgency strategy in the Baltic States that denies the use of "Maskirovka" by eliminating the isolation of ethnic Russians in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.<sup>19</sup> In doing so, NATO will not only eliminate the root causes of a potential insurgency and the continued application of hybrid warfare but will also deny Russia the moral pretext for intervention and continued execution of their brinkmanship strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Alan Cowell, "NATO Plans More Visible Presence in Eastern Europe," 27 August 2014, <http://nyti.ms/1mRyJsV>

<sup>2</sup> Robin Niblett, "NATO Must Focus On The 'Hybrid Wars' Being Waged On The West", 17 July 2014, Financial Times, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3192c7a0-0cd2-11e4-bf1e-00144feabdc0.html>

<sup>3</sup> "Maskirovka", a Russian term meaning "something masked", refers to Russia's hybrid warfare strategy, which is based on deceiving the enemy about ends, ways, and means; coercing the enemy to respond incorrectly; and exploiting the corresponding gaps that have been created through the strategy. A more detailed description and explanation of this term can be found in: Joergen Oerstroem Moeller, "Maskirovka: Russia's Masterful Use of Deception in Ukraine", 23 April 2014, The Huffington Post, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master\\_b\\_5199545.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master_b_5199545.html)

<sup>4</sup> Robin Niblett, "NATO Must Focus On The 'Hybrid Wars' Being Waged On The West", 17 July 2014, Financial Times, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3192c7a0-0cd2-11e4-bf1e-00144feabdc0.html>

<sup>5</sup> Robin Niblett, "NATO Must Focus On The 'Hybrid Wars' Being Waged On The West", 17 July 2014, Financial Times, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3192c7a0-0cd2-11e4-bf1e-00144feabdc0.html>

<sup>6</sup> John E. Herbst, "US and Allies Should Take Three Steps Now to Prevent Putin's Moves Beyond Ukraine", 2 September 2014, Atlantic Council, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/us-and-allies-must-take-three-steps-to-prevent-putins-moves-beyond-ukraine>

<sup>7</sup> John E. Herbst, "US and Allies Should Take Three Steps Now to Prevent Putin's Moves Beyond Ukraine", 2 September 2014, Atlantic Council, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/us-and-allies-must-take-three-steps-to-prevent-putins-moves-beyond-ukraine>

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Graham, "The Sources of Russia's Insecurity", *Survival*, Vol 52 no. 1, pp. 55-74 The International Institute For Strategic Studies

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Graham, "The Sources of Russia's Insecurity", *Survival*, Vol. 52 no. 1 pp. 55-74 The International Institute For Strategic Studies

<sup>10</sup> Joergen Oerstroem Moeller, "Maskirovka: Russia's Masterful Use of Deception in Ukraine", 23 April 2014, The Huffington Post, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master\\_b\\_5199545.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master_b_5199545.html)

<sup>11</sup> George Friedman, "Ukraine and the Little Cold War", 4 March 2014, SRATFOR Global Intelligence, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/ukraine-and-little-cold-war#axzz3EcdI5ZxN>

<sup>12</sup> The pursuit of political influence and control should be distinguished from a quest for territorial annexation.



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<sup>13</sup> Kaliningrad is a Russian exclave physically separated from Russia. Kaliningrad shares borders with Lithuania to its north and east, Poland to the south, and the Baltic Sea to its northwest. Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus are located between Kaliningrad and the rest of the Russian territory.

<sup>14</sup> Alison Smale, "Latvia's Tensions With Russians at Home Persist in the Shadow of Ukraine Conflict", 23 August 2014, The New York Times, Europe, <http://nyti.ms/1p2nqmW>

<sup>15</sup> Joergen Oerstroem Moeller, "Maskirovka: Russia's Masterful Use of Deception in Ukraine", 23 April 2014, The Huffington Post, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master\\_b\\_5199545.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master_b_5199545.html)

<sup>16</sup> Scheherazade Rehman, "Estonia's Lessons in Cyberwarfare", 14 January 2013, U.S. News & World Report, World Report

<sup>17</sup> Robin Niblett, "NATO Must Focus On The 'Hybrid Wars' Being Waged On The West", 17 July 2014, Financial Times, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3192c7a0-0cd2-11e4-bf1e-00144feabdc0.html>

<sup>18</sup> The application of a pre-emptive counter-insurgency strategy is likely to draw scrutiny from those who believe that NATO should limit itself to purely conventional military solutions. This assumption must be challenged especially since it ignores NATO's hard lessons learned during "Resolute Support". NATO must embrace one of Afghanistan's most valuable lessons in that military problems often have non-military solutions.

<sup>19</sup> Joergen Oerstroem Moeller, "Maskirovka: Russia's Masterful Use of Deception in Ukraine", 23 April 2014, The Huffington Post, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master\\_b\\_5199545.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joergen-oerstroem-moeller/maskirovka-russias-master_b_5199545.html)



Photo courtesy of the author

## The Cancer Conundrum

Major Dustin Hart  
United States Air Force

“Don't give up. Don't ever give up!”

College basketball coach Jim Valvano's inspirational words at the 1993 ESPYS award ceremony gave the captivated crowd a glimpse into his fight against cancer, a battle that would claim his life less than eight weeks later.

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Cancer is a foe that plays no favorites. Young, old; black, white; male, female; cancer simply doesn't care. While cancer isn't the death sentence it used to be (the overall survival rates currently hover around 70%), on average, close to 1,600 people will die every day this year due to the disease. Cancer remains the second leading cause of death in America, accounting for nearly 25% of all annual deaths.<sup>1</sup> In the midst of an illness that can ravage almost every part of the human body, we witness firsthand the very best of the human spirit and strength.

A cancer fight is a 12-round heavyweight bout, but it's not a professional athlete taking the punches. It's Janelle, a 36-year-old wife and mother of two beautiful girls, who is in the midst of the fight for her life.

My wife, Tyleen, received the phone call last January from her older sister Janelle. When you live thousands of miles away from your siblings, phone calls are the lifelines to a normal family relationship. Unfortunately, they also serve as a terrible way to share bad news. The two sisters had talked for several months about how Janelle had not felt quite right. Multiple visits to the doctor had produced little results and initial blood tests had come back clear. On this night, however, the conversation was different and included one of the most devastating phrases in the English language.

"Tyleen, I have cancer."

Having been unable to clearly identify the cause of her discomfort, Janelle's doctors had run a precautionary PET scan. It came back positive, she told my wife, Hodgkin's Lymphoma. I watched as my wife's body slumped, eyes slowly moistening. I can't imagine the feelings of receiving that news personally from a doctor, yet sitting in a room with my wife who had just received this horrible news about one of the people she loves the most, was crushing.

I don't like to cry. Of course, I cried when Old Yeller died, at the end of *Brian's Song*, and sometimes even as a Hallmark movie hits just that right chord. In my opinion crying never seemed to make the situation better. Yet there I sat, dabbing my eyes, trying to clear my head and thinking of comforting words for my wife and her sister. As my head continued to spin, I heard a sound so shocking, I questioned my sanity. I heard laughter. The sweet sound of laughter was coming from my wife, and from what I could tell, the other end of the phone. You see, my wife's family name is Murphy, which means they have their own famous law. My sister-in-law had just joked about yet another instance of "Murphy's Law." I looked again at my wife. Her shoulders were no longer slumped and her head was high. Her eyes now showed determination and her voice was strong. "You're going to kick cancer's ass!" There have been numerous phone calls between the two sisters since that fateful conversation over a year ago, featuring a lot of laughter and very few tears. I have never seen two women be so strong for each other.

Since the doctors believed Janelle's case was fairly textbook, there was a level of confidence that this would be a quick bout. For the first few months of chemotherapy, this seemed to be the case. Despite all the horrors that are associated with intentionally poisoning a body to treat cancer, my sister-in-law truly looked great in every picture we saw. To prepare her girls to the changes in her body that were certain to come, she cut her hair in a short, contemporary style. It looked great and as the weeks passed, the hairdo remained. Instead of her hair it was our concerns that started to fall away as this amazing woman cruised through her chemo treatments.

Different cancers have drastically different symptoms, treatments, and survival rates. While an early diagnosis is obviously helpful in treatment options, it doesn't guarantee success. Hodgkin's survival rates vary from 90% at an early diagnosis to 60% for the more extreme cases.<sup>2</sup>The doctors



assured Janelle that she was in the 90% group. However, less than two months after completing her chemotherapy treatments with a celebration party with her beautiful family, the doctors informed her they were shocked to learn the cancer was already back. Damn cancer! It never plays to script.

The next round of the fight included a two week stay in the hospital to undergo a more intensive chemotherapy and stem cell transplant procedure. From the elation of finishing chemotherapy a few months earlier, she now stared at the reality of an even harsher treatment and time away from her family. She called my wife to share the news. No tears, only a strong faith between sisters and a few more strong words for a strong disease. This time the chemo would take the hair her first treatment spared, but it was unable to poison her spirit and drive.

Our family arrived to visit less than a week after Janelle was discharged from the hospital. My wife was prepared to personally care for the sister she had, to this point, been unable to physically help. Although our family circus of six arrived near midnight, Janelle met us at the door with a smile. For the next week, she was completely “dependent” on my wife: dependent on her to join her on a daylong “Black Friday” shopping spree, where they rode skateboards through Target; dependent on her to taste test the full Thanksgiving meal they cooked together; and dependent on my wife to join her as they chased their children around the playground. We were witnessing a superhero in reality.

The phone rang again a few weeks after our family returned home. Unfortunately, it was more bad news. The cancer with the 90% cure rate had once again defied the odds. The bout’s next round would be radiation treatments. Their conversation had no tears; why start now? It was time for another round and the fighter was ready to come out of her corner once again.

This past summer, 21 years after Valvano inspired the ESPYS crowd, ESPN sports broadcaster Stuart Scott, who was in the last rounds of his own fight with cancer, took to the same stage and gave the world another glance of the strength he and Valvano have shared with the millions who fight the disease every day: “You beat cancer by how you live, why you live, and in the manner in which you live.”

By these words, my sister-in-law has already kicked cancer’s ass.

**Author’s note:** *In April, 15 months after that fateful first call, the phone rang once more at our house and laughter poured out at both ends. The radiation treatments were the punch combination that had finally knocked Janelle’s cancer to the mat. She is now officially cancer-free and continuing her life as a full-time mom, wife, and superhero.*

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<sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society, last modified Jan, 2015,  
<http://www.cancer.org/research/cancerfactsstatistics/cancerfactsfigures2014/index>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



## About the Contributors

**Lieutenant Colonel William Barnes** graduated from the Naval War College in 2014 as a member of the Gravely Naval Warfare Research Group. He currently serves at Marine Forces Cyberspace Command as a cyber planner responsible for the development of a persistent training environment for the Marine Corps' cyber mission force.

**Lieutenant Colonel Aaron Reisinger** is an Army Engineer Officer with 21 years' experience conducting combat and construction engineering in joint and combined environments. He graduated from West Point with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1994. He also holds degrees in Engineering Management from the University of Missouri, Rolla and Public Policy from Georgetown University. Most recently, he commanded the 84th Engineer Battalion at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and graduates from the Naval War College in June 2015.

**Commander Gregory Milicic** is a Surface Warfare Officer and a Stephen B. Luce Scholar at the Naval War College. He earned a B.A. at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a M.S. from the Naval Postgraduate School. His operational duty includes deployments throughout 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Fleets and tours in the Forward Deployed Naval Forces in both Japan and Italy.

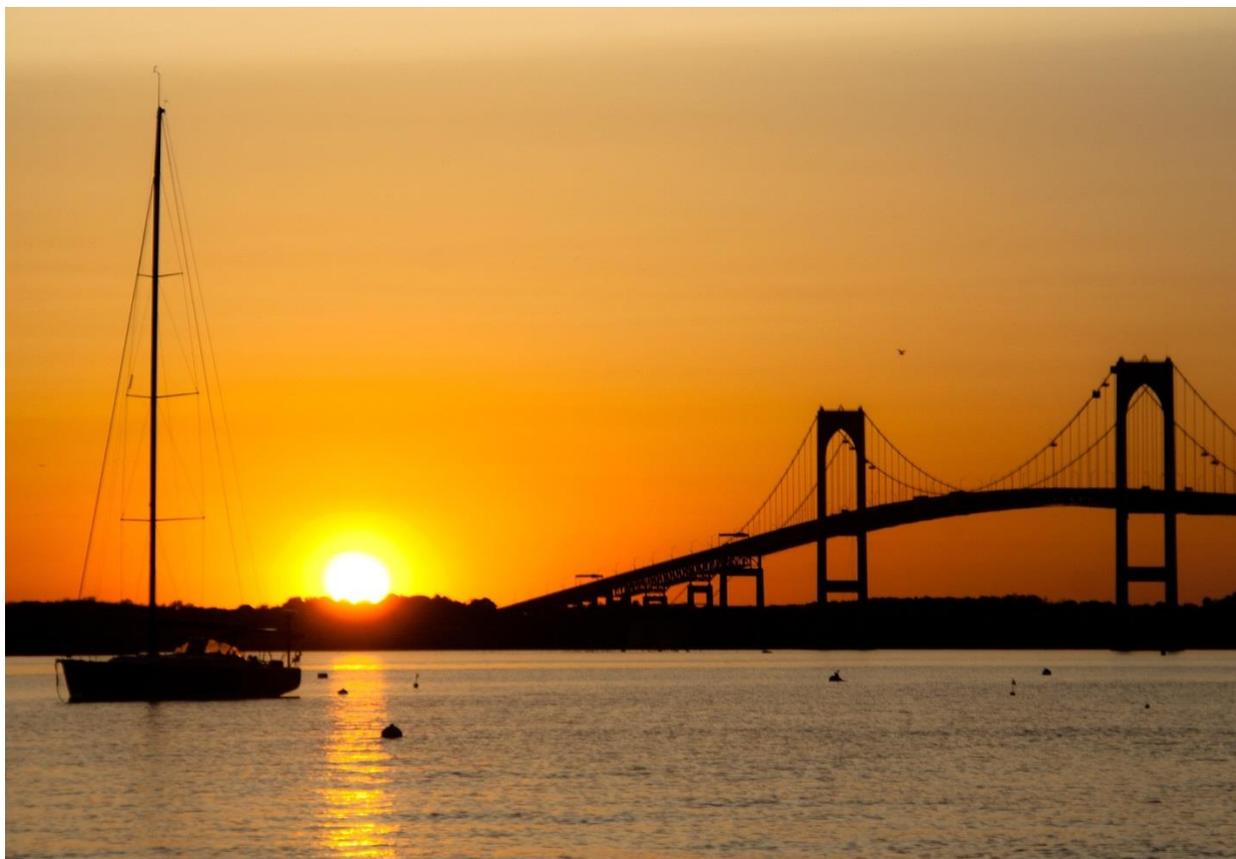
**Lieutenant Commander Matt Noland** is a Surface Warfare Officer with significant experience in Cruisers. He has conducted multiple deployments to the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Fleet areas of responsibility. He has also served in an exchange tour with the Canadian Atlantic Fleet Staff and as Battle Watch Commander for CTF-150 in 2008. He has orders to the 7th Fleet Staff following graduation.

**Colonel Douglas LeVien** earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from La Salle University and a Masters of Arts in International Relations from Webster University. In 2005, he deployed with the 10th Mountain Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and deployed to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan in 2008. From 2012 to 2014, he served in the Joint Chief of Staff's J-5 Strategic Plans and Policy Pakistan/Afghanistan Coordination.

**Lieutenant Commander Jack Curtis** is a naval aviator with experience flying the EA-6B PROWLER and EA-18G GROWLER. He holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Florida and graduated from the Naval War College in March 2015.

**Major Francisco Xavier Zavala** is a U.S. Marine Corps Infantry Officer pursuing a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies degree from the Naval War College. He is a combat veteran of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He will serve as a Planner in the 2d MARDIV G-3 Staff in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, following graduation.

**Major Dustin Hart** is a Stephen B. Luce Scholar in the Naval War College's Naval Command and Staff College. He is a U.S. Air Force Public Affairs Officer with assignments at the wing, major command and combatant command levels. He most recently served as the Chief of Public Affairs Officer Assignments at the Air Force Personnel Center. He also has deployed to Afghanistan as the Information Operations Officer for the Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team from 2008-2009.



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