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Controlling the Beast Within

The Key to Success on 21st-Century Battlefields

Major Douglas A. Pryer, U.S. Army

Once an army is involved in war, there is a beast in every fighting man which begins tugging at its chains, and a good officer must learn early on how to keep the beast under control, both in his men and himself.

— General George C. Marshall, Jr.[1]

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ART: The Huns at The Battle of the Chalons, Alphonse De Neuville (1836-1885)

A Revolution in Military Affairs?

"WHAT DO I want you to do!?" the gravel-voiced brigade commander roared. "I want you to kill them!"

It was 14 November 1997, and the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division (the "Iron Brigade") was taking part in an "Advanced Warfighter Experiment" at Fort Hood, Texas.[2] The purpose of the exercise was to validate the Army's "Force XXI" concept. Via computer simulation, the division was testing the effectiveness of the latest digital communications gear, reconnaissance aircraft, and combat systems against a Soviet-modeled armored force.

Blips on the brigade command post's giant flat-screen monitor had just indicated that the massive units of the enemy (the evil "Krasnovians") were on the move. The Krasnovian 2nd Army Group was attacking the division. Within the brigade's sector, the brigade S2 had rightly predicted that the first echelon of the enemy's attack would include two motorized rifle divisions of the enemy's 1st Combined Arms Army. If the brigade survived to see it, an enemy tank division would follow.

On this, the last day of the exercise, the Iron Brigade's bald, physically fit, and imposing commander was putting on a show. If "Old Blood and Guts" himself, General George S. Patton, had been there, he would have been impressed.

As the commander barked orders, staff officers leapt into action, directing Army Apache helicopters and Air Force air-to-ground fighter jets toward preplanned engagement areas. These deep attacks heavily attritted the enemy's first echelon forces. Undeterred, enemy forces kept advancing into friendly artillery range, where unmanned aerial vehicles spotted them, enabling the brigade's artillery battalion to pound their formations with rolling barrages of shells. This finally proved too much for the enemy's forward divisions, which ground to a halt and assumed a hasty defense.

The battle was not over, though. The enemy's still-intact 24th Tank Division passed through the enemy's first echelon divisions and pressed home the attack. Now it was the "close fight," belonging more to the staffs of subordinate battalions than to the brigade staff. The brigade staff could do little more than track the battle and await the outcome. They did not have long to wait. In a few short hours, this enemy tank division was so battered that it, too, "went to ground," unable to sustain further offensive operations.

The brigade's staff officers were jubilant, smiling and slapping each other on the backs. True, a few friendly companies had been overrun and annihilated. But, these officers believed, they had still proven a point. Due to a situational awareness unmatched by any army unit in the annals of history, none of their casualties had been due to fratricide. What is more, thanks to the superior standoff range of their brigade's combat and reconnaissance systems, they had defeated an attacking force whose superior combat power would have achieved certain victory over any other U.S. brigade.

During this exercise, many of these staff officers had heard the term, "Revolution in Military Affairs." They believed they were at the vanguard of such a revolution. Warfare, they thought, had changed forever. The day when the U.S. Army could easily defeat any enemy who dared oppose it would soon be at hand.

Of course, this was pure fantasy.

Enter: Reality

Six years later, on 3 January 2004, a platoon of the same brigade stopped two locals at a checkpoint in Samarra, Iraq, around 2300 hours, which was curfew time.[3] At the checkpoint, the soldiers of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, thoroughly searched the vehicle.[4] Satisfied that the men inside, Marwan and Zaydoon Fadhil, were not insurgents, the soldiers told the two cousins that they could leave.[5]

First Lieutenant Jack Saville, their platoon leader, sat in a nearby Bradley Fighting Vehicle.[6] As the two cousins pulled away, he issued an order via the radio for his platoon to stop the truck again.[7] Intent on teaching the curfew violators a lesson, Saville directed his soldiers to go with him to a bridge that ran atop the Tharthar Dam and to throw the two cousins in the Tigris River.[8] He did not intend to hurt them, he later testified, but to frighten them.[9]

What exactly happened when the two Iraqis were thrown in the river was never proven in military court. Marwan would allege to investigators that he had heard soldiers laughing as he fought unsuccessfully to save his 19-year-old cousin from drowning in the strong current.[10] Other family members would also allege that Zaydoon had died, claiming that his dead body was fished out 13 days later from a canal below the dam.[11] However, the soldiers who were there would tell a different story, swearing that— through night-vision goggles— they had seen both Iraqis clamber onto shore safely.[12] Battalion leaders also testified that informants had told them that Zaydoon was still alive.[13] His death, these leaders believed, had been feigned by insurgents in an effort to smear coalition forces.[14]

Whether Zaydoon died or not, Saville exhibited extremely poor judgment. As mere curfew violators, the two Iraqi cousins were unquestionably entitled to Geneva protections.[15] What is more, Saville recklessly put himself and his men at risk of negligent homicide charges. If Zaydoon did not drown, he certainly could have drowned, considering how fast and deep the current sometimes runs at the dam.[16] Surely, detaining these first-time offenders overnight would have been enough to teach them the importance of keeping curfew.

What is also clear is that the ethical judgment of these soldiers' battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Sassaman, was just as skewed. When informed of a pending 3rd Brigade investigation into the incident, Sassaman directed a cover-up, telling his subordinates to inform the investigator of everything "except the water."[17] Sassaman's

decision to lie, and to direct his soldiers to lie, was a stunningly poor choice for any U.S. officer to make. The fact that Sassaman was also a graduate of West Point, an institution with few rivals among commissioning sources for its emphasis on officer integrity, makes it an even more surprising choice. "A cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do," the honor code at West Point famously proclaims.

The incident gained international notoriety.[18] Under media scrutiny, an unflattering picture emerged of the battalion's tactics. Journalists reported that the unit had stormed homes, kicked-in doors, humiliated male occupants by manhandling them in front of their family, conducted brutal interrogations at the point of capture, indiscriminately detained large groups of male Iraqis, fired excessive counter-battery barrages, and withheld medical treatment from injured insurgents.[19]

This ugly image may have been to some extent exaggerated. Even so, it suggests that the problem of heavy-handed, counterproductive tactics and poor ethical decision making may have run deep in this unit. Thanks to this underlying problem, even if the death of Zaydoon were feigned, the resulting scandal undermined coalition credibility to a degree that must have exceeded any Samarra insurgent's wildest dreams.

Ultimately, the Iron Brigade learned in Iraq that the achievement of enduring success had little to do with expensive information technology, even less to do with knowing the exact locations of friendly units, and nothing at all to do with the capability to detect large tank formations from the other side of the planet. Instead, to achieve lasting success, it would need to rethink its organization and tactics.

Even more importantly, the Iron Brigade would need to rethink how much emphasis it placed on right conduct.

Ethics and the Information Age

The Iron Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division has hardly been alone in its struggle to adapt to warfare in the 21st century. The story of this brigade has been very much the story of our Army. Donald Rumsfeld once famously quipped, "You go to war with the Army you have . . . not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time."[20] Rumsfeld would have been more intellectually honest if he had instead opined that, when choosing a war, you do not always get the war you thought you had chosen or wished to have.

DOD, Jim Garamone

Air Force GEN Richard B. Myers (center) listens to a briefing from Army COL Frederick Rudesheim (right) and Army LTC Nate Sassaman at the headquarters of the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry in Balad, Iraq, 2004. Behind Myers is 4th Infantry Division commander MG Ray Odierno.

We certainly did not get the wars we expected in Iraq and Afghanistan. In retrospect, what is perhaps most surprising about what Clausewitz would have called the "nature" of each of these wars is that we were caught so off-guard by them. If we had read the tea leaves properly, we would have seen that the Vietnam War rather than the Gulf War would be the real harbinger of things to come.

Today, conventional wisdom has it that in Vietnam our Army never lost a battle, but our country still lost the war. Since battalions and companies did lose engagements in that war, this maxim is an exaggeration.[21] Yet, it is not a great exaggeration. What is more, it comes very close to describing our often-perilous situation in our most recent military conflicts.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, even more so than in Vietnam, force of arms has not defeated the U.S. Army. Often, territory has been ceded, and yes, a few platoon-level skirmishes have been lost. There have also been some close calls in company-level engagements. Nonetheless, neither Iraqi insurgents nor the Taliban have had the option of holding any ground that our Army has chosen to seriously contest. Our overwhelming advantage in combat power has hardly mattered, though. We have still managed to suffer such grievous defeats in these two countries that, as in Vietnam, we have nearly "lost the war"—and still might.

Thanks to the personal computer, Internet, satellite phones, digital cameras, and a host of other high-speed communications devices, a watching world can learn of the misconduct of American soldiers far more quickly, completely, and luridly than it has in the past. Reports of this misconduct inspire enemy fighters, serve as recruitment boons for our enemies, turn local populations against us, degrade support for our foreign conflicts at home, and undermine the relationship between our nation and its allies.

Particularly painful episodes earn so much adverse publicity that they receive the notoriety formerly reserved for the great defeats of major historical campaigns. Instead of setbacks at Kasserine Pass or the Hurtgen Forest, though, the public talks today of place names such as Gitmo, Abu Ghraib, Bagram, Samarra, Mahmudiyah, or Kunduz.[22]

These defeats did not come at the hands of our enemies. Sadly, we inflicted these defeats upon ourselves, through unethical actions. Thus, for the remainder of this essay, I will not look outside our Army to the battlegrounds of Afghanistan or Iraq to understand what we need to do to achieve battlefield success. Instead, I will look within our own ranks, to where the far more dangerous enemy hides. Achieving this inner victory should not be hard if we truly make the effort. After all, at our best, we have been an Army rooted in ethical principles.

Who We Are, at Our Best

The moral defeats we have suffered thus far in the War on Terrorism are painfully ironic, considering our Army's proud history.

No army has ever posed a greater existential threat than that posed by the powerful British Army at our fledgling nation's birth. Nonetheless, during the Revolutionary War, leaders of the Continental Army and Congress were determined not only to win the war, but to do so in a way that was consistent with their moral principles and core belief in human rights.[23] General George Washington set conditions in this regard through personal example and military orders. In one written order, for example, Washington directed that 211 British captives be treated "with humanity" and be given "no reason to Complain of our Copying the brutal example of the British army in their Treatment of our unfortunate brethren."[24] Consequently, the Continental Army

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George Washington and other officers of the Continental Army arriving in New York amid a jubilant crowd, 25 November 1783. The Continental Army had not only won the war, they had proven it could be won in a manner commensurate with Enlightenment ideals of liberty and human rights.

practiced an uncommon humanity for the times. During the more than two centuries that have passed since its birth, our Army has conducted most of its campaigns within this tradition of humanity.

However, our Army also contains a less dominant ethical tradition. Within this other tradition, the imagined greater good outweighs the rights of the individual. In particular, this perspective argues that the ends justify the means when these ends are to achieve victory or to save American lives. Often (but not always), racism has had something do with our adopting this perspective. Contrast, for example, the Continental Army's restraint when fighting the British Army with the Continental Army's treatment of the Iroquois Indian tribe. Or, witness our sometimes savage treatment of Filipinos during the Philippine-American War, of Japanese during World War II, and of southeast Asians during the Vietnam War.

One remarkable Army directive not only captured both of these traditions, but it also reflected their relative order of precedence.

In July 1862, General Henry Halleck was appointed commanding general of Union forces. During that first hot, terrible summer of the Civil War, Halleck felt increasingly frustrated by insurgents. A lawyer by background, he sought clarity as to how the Army should deal with Confederate irregulars. In a letter to a scholar, he vented, "The rebel authorities claim the right to send men, in the garb of peaceful citizens, to waylay and attack our troops, to burn bridges and houses and to destroy property and persons within our lines."[25]

The scholar to whom he wrote was Dr. Francis Lieber, a Prussia-born veteran of Waterloo and professor of political science at Columbia College.[26] Lieber accepted Halleck's challenge to produce a code regulating the Union Army's conduct of the war. In April 1863, after it had been reviewed by a panel of generals, President Abraham Lincoln approved the "Lieber Code." It was finally published as "General Order 100" in May 1863.

Above all else, Lieber hoped his code would guide the Union Army to exercise wise, compassionate restraint on the battlefield.[27] Consequently, the Lieber Code contained a long list of rules meant to ensure that Union troops humanely treated both noncombatants and prisoners of war. The Lieber Code forbade certain battlefield tactics outright, such as torture, the use of poisons, and refusing quarter or merciful treatment to surrendering soldiers.[28]

Decades after the war, this code would become the primary source document for the drafters of the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907.[29] Thus today, American soldiers can rightly and proudly assert that their great Army was not only the first Army to codify the Law of War, but also their Army helped shape the final form that this law took via the international treaty.

Yet, beneath the Lieber Code's obvious current of humane principles, there was also a strong ends-justify-the-means undertow. In a number of places, the Lieber Code gave commanders the option of violating a rule in the case of "military necessity." Unarmed citizens, for example, were "to be spared in person, property, and honor," but only inasmuch as the "exigencies of war will admit."[30]

This tension between our dominant and subordinate ethical traditions has never been fully resolved. In early 2002, for example, President George W. Bush and Donald Rumsfeld enabled harsh interrogation techniques by signing policies, which said that, in cases of "military necessity," Taliban and Al-Qaeda operatives did not have to be treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.[31]

Thanks to subsequent torture scandals and other frightful stories of hyper-kinetic U.S. forces, it is no wonder that some outside observers believe that our Army has grown immoral. Such outsiders are wrong. Anyone who has ever deployed downrange with the U.S. Army realizes that the vast majority of soldiers conduct themselves honorably on today's battlegrounds. Still, it is frightening to think how close such observers came to being right.

A Professional Ethic in Peril

With hindsight, it seems blindingly obvious that our Army's professional ethic was in trouble as we entered the 21st century. Owing in part to our success

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Tens of thousands attended an Iraq War protest on 27 January 2007 in Washington, DC. The protest's organizers, United for Peace and Justice, intended to galvanize a newly elected Democratic congress into ending the war. Favorable political conditions in Iraq (most critically "the Sunni Awakening"), supported by a troop surge and more effective counterinsurgent tactics, would prevent a precipitous withdrawal.

in the Gulf War, we thought we could ignore the human and moral dimension of war, relying instead on high-tech weapons and intelligence systems.[32] Our experiences in Lebanon, Mogadishu, and the Balkans encouraged a "force protection at any cost" mind-set in some leaders, who later advocated "taking the gloves off" in interrogations to save the lives of American troops.[33] Also, effects-based operational planning got us into the habit of evaluating proposed actions on the basis of predicted effects alone, instead of immediately rejecting some actions on principle.[34]

The damage to our Army's professional ethic runs deep. Officers and soldiers still argue about whether torture is right in some circumstances, and the misdeeds of former Army leaders like Lieutenant Colonel Sassaman, Lieutenant Colonel Allen West, and Chief Warrant Officer Lewis Welshofer have many apologists.[35]

Indicative of the depth of the problem, a Department of Defense mental health survey of soldiers and Marines in Iraq in the fall of 2006 released the following findings:

> Only 47 percent of soldiers and 38 percent of Marines agreed that noncombatants should be treated with dignity and respect. More than one-third of all soldiers and Marines reported that torture should be allowed to save the life of a fellow soldier or Marine, and less than half of the soldiers or Marines said they would report a team member for unethical behavior. Also, 10 percent of the soldiers and Marines reported mistreating noncombatants or damaging property when it was not necessary.[36]

General David Petraeus, the commander of our armed forces in Iraq at the time, was rightly alarmed by this survey's results. In response,

he wrote an open letter to the members of his command. U.S. forces, Petraeus wrote in this letter, would fail in their mission if they could not show Iraqis that they, rather than their enemies, occupied "the moral high ground."[37]

While we have recently taken steps as an Army to heal our professional ethic, this healing process has been a painfully slow one. One step has been to substantially revise our doctrine, which today is far more robust, consistent, and unambiguous with regard to battlefield conduct than it was just five years ago.

Another important step has been to improve ethics instruction at basic training: all trainees now carry a card called "Soldier Rules" (an abridged version of the Law of War), and each trainee receives 35 to 45 hours of values-based training.[38] Also, promisingly, in May 2008 the Army established the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic for the purpose of studying, defining, and promulgating our professional ethic.[39] Just as promisingly, our Army is calling 2011, "The Year of the Profession of Arms" (with a clear mandate to develop the professional ethic), a strong indicator that Army leadership intends for us to do better in this area.

And we need to do better. One area in which we need to do better is officership, as evidenced by events at such places as Gitmo, Abu Ghraib, Bagram, and Samarra.

The still deeper problem, however, lies in subcultures hidden within our operational Army. In *A Tactical Ethic: Moral Conduct in the Insurgent Battlespace*, former Navy SEAL officer Dick Couch presents the compelling argument that new recruits today leave their initial military training with a thorough understanding of U.S. military values, but when they are assigned to operational units, they may enter a small-unit culture that is not what higher commands want this culture to be. A potentially dangerous subculture, Couch argues, is usually due to one or two key influencers (moral insurgents) who convert or gain silent acquiescence from other members of the unit.[40] Since young soldiers want to fit in with their small units, they usually conform.[41]

Couch is correct. Abu Ghraib, the most extreme example of a small unit run by ethical insurgents, is hardly the only example. Indeed, it is no overstatement to say that all of the great moral defeats we have suffered thus far in the War on Terrorism have involved, to varying degrees, harmful subcultures. To avert future defeat, we must first get right conduct right at the small-unit level.

This can only be done at home station.

The Culture Training Needed Most

In recent years, our Army has placed a growing emphasis on the need for deployed soldiers to understand the local culture. All soldiers now deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan receive culture and language orientation courses, usually taught by teams of experts from Fort Huachuca or the Defense Language Institute. Just as importantly, a five-person "human terrain team" consisting of anthropologists and social scientists now supports the commander of each deployed combat brigade. This emphasis is clearly a good thing. After all, it is not rare for soldiers to operate fully in accordance with law and our Army's professional expectations and yet undermine America's popular support abroad via unintentional violations of religious, ethnic, or local customs.

Culture training will remain relevant to our success in the information age, but it should also involve home-station training that builds ethical cultures within operational units, especially within small units. Here are a few proposals:

- Army Values, Law of War, and rules of engagement training need to be *command business*. The impact this training has is of a completely different order of magnitude when a commander or other senior unit operator gives it rather than a lawyer. Lawyers should help develop this training, and they may even deliver a portion of it. However, at the large-unit level, a commander,

"…having a battalion commander talk to every soldier about coming home with their honor intact worked."

executive officer, or operations officer should be required to lead this training. As Major Tony Suzzi, the executive officer for a cavalry squadron in the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, said: "I guess I'm a simple guy, but from my combat experience, having a battalion commander talk to every soldier about coming home with their honor intact worked."[42]

- Our operational Army should place its greatest emphasis on ethics training at the small-unit level. Commanders or other senior combat operators should lead initial ethics discussions, which then set the tone for longer, breakaway discussions within small units. Platoon, squad, or team leaders should lead their small units in these breakaway discussions.
- Large- and small-unit discussions should be scenario-based, with the bulk of time spent in Socratic discussions rather than passively watching PowerPoint slideshows. Furthermore, moral restraint needs to be incorporated in all battle drills, such as tank tables, urban close-quarters combat lanes, and practice interrogations. "Once my interrogators saw with their own eyes the advantages of appreciating the positive aspects of Muslim culture," said Matthew Alexander, the noted author and interrogator who led U.S. forces to Zarqawi, "they converted [from using harsh tactics] quickly."[43]
- Lawyers should be a staff component of, not the staff proponent for, ethics. First, what is technically legal is not necessarily what is right. "Moral decisions are simply too important to be left up to lawyers," the notable historian, Michael Ignatieff, once sagely observed.[44] Most critically, since lawyers are not combat operators, they are not the trainers you want to have oversight of battle drills with weapons and role players. Since chaplains do not even carry weapons, they are an even poorer choice for providing such oversight.
- To ensure that ethical theory and practice is effectively integrated in training, we need an overall staff proponent conversant in both. Why not have ethics master gunners appointed within brigades, groups and battalions to ensure this integration, under the proponency of the operations officer? Additional ethics trainers would also be appointed at the company level. These ethics master gunners and trainers would provide oversight for commanders, to include ensuring that ethical vignettes and decision making are fully integrated into all training events.
- Ethics staff appointments would be filled only by senior unit operators. At the brigade, group, or battalion level, the operations officer, assistant operations officer, or operations sergeant major would be a good choice. At the company level, it should be the executive officer or first sergeant.
- To prepare appointed ethics leaders, they would need to attend a two-to-four-week ethics course, which would need to be developed. This course could be installation-run, or be incorporated into already existing executive officer, operations officer, and first sergeant courses.
- Phase I of this ethics course should be "theory," and lawyers, academics, mental health professionals, chaplains, and former commanders could teach classes. Phase II of the course should be application. The Center for the Army Profession and Ethic has already developed a one-week theoretical course for ethics trainers that could serve as the foundation for Phase I, and for Phase II, the experience of a firm like Close Quarters Defense® (CQD®) could be leveraged to develop the curriculum, build facilities, and "train the trainers."[45]
- Generally, officers receive sufficient ethics training at their commissioning source, whether that source is West Point, a military college, or an ROTC program. However, a newly minted 22-year-old lieutenant may have just as much trouble standing firm in the face of an immoral unit subculture as a 22-year-old recruit, even if this lieutenant is the unit's designated leader.[46] To foster good officership, we must focus more on training for officers to sustain their ethical understanding and commitment after commissioning. Ensuring that senior leaders lead ethics training at home station will help. The reinforcement of our professional military ethic should also be the backbone of any unit's Officer Professional Development Program. Additionally, our service schools need to contribute more in this regard. Out of a year spent at Command and General Staff College, for example, field grade officers receive only four hours of ethics-related instruction. This is woefully inadequate, considering the moral nature of our defeats in recent years.[47]

The Real Revolution

In Iraq and Afghanistan, we have edged painfully close to winning every battle but still "losing the war." Even today, the outcome of these two

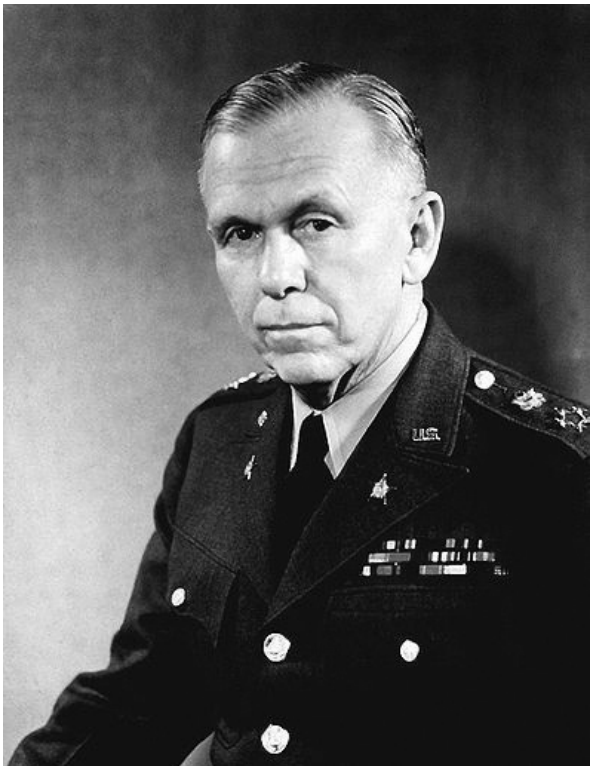
conflicts is very much in doubt. Although Iraq is far more stable than it was two years ago, it might yet unravel into civil war. In Afghanistan, while the hope for an honorable peace has sprung anew with our recent troop surge, that conflict is best described at present as a stalemate.[48]

One crucial reason for our current predicament is the tragic succession of moral defeats we have suffered on these twin battlegrounds. These shameful losses have strengthened the determination of our enemies to achieve victory and undermined the will of the American people at home to achieve the same. Such defeats are especially distressing considering our Army's proud history of sound battlefield conduct.

General George Marshall (a paragon of principled officership, referred to by Winston Churchill as "that noble Roman") spoke of the "beast within" which emerges inside the individual in combat. During World War II, Marshall was more concerned about controlling this beast in order to preserve good order and discipline within the ranks. However, in the information age, when this beast takes control, an insurgent may appear within our ranks who is far more politically dangerous than any insurgent we confront with arms on the battlefield—the moral insurgent.

To defeat this most dangerous insurgent, our Army's operational culture must learn that right conduct on the battlefield now matters more than anything else that we do. Good conduct cannot in itself win the peace, which often depends upon strategic conditions we soldiers do not control. But sound battlefield conduct, when combined with the right objectives and tactics, does marginalize insurgents by depriving them of the popular support that they need to thrive. Thus, as surreal as it sometimes seems to those of us who served in the 1990s, battlefield technology, armored vehicles, gunneries, and weapons ranges contribute less to our mission success today than does the ethical behavior of our troops.

This is not to say that our traditional means of waging war are no longer important. Of course, they are important. Some soldiers still find themselves in situations where, above all else, they are glad that they have good weapons that they know how to use. Sometimes, calculated ferocity is what is required of soldiers. However,



U.S. Army

George C. Marshall, General of the Army, 1942

in the 21st century, battlefield conduct does not just matter sometimes; it always matters, and this importance will only continue to grow as information technology improves. In the future, even conventional wars—at least if these wars are to be sustained by mature democracies like the U.S.—will have to be waged from pure practical necessity in accordance with ethical principles, to include the Law of War.[49] In its ability to impose socially acceptable battlefield conduct upon a democracy's military service members, information technology has become the great leveler of all forms of warfare.

Whether preparing for conventional or unconventional wars, we can no longer permit weapons and combat proficiencies to deafen us to what has become most important and, like the proverbial siren's song, wreck us upon the watching world's jagged rocks. We must make sound battlefield conduct our Army's highest educational and training priority.

On a final note, the concept of a "Revolution in Military Affairs" may be the most over-used term in military writing today. However, since I began

this essay with one misuse of the phrase, it is worth referring to once more. After spending billions of dollars to achieve a massive technological superiority over the armies of other nations, would it not be ironic if we realized that, in the 21st century, the most fundamental component of a revolution in military affairs is our simply remembering that, at our best, we are a principled Army? If this lesson must be the starting point of any meaningful military revolution, it is surely not too late for us to learn it. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Matthew Alexander, "My Written Testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing," *The Huffington Post*, 13 May 2009, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-alexander/my-written-testimony-to-t_b_203269.html> (28 June 2010). When referring to "controlling" the beast within, Marshall was referring to managing rather than eliminating the ferocity of American soldiers. This, too, is my meaning in this essay: like falcons trained by falconers, the violent passions which arise within professional soldiers in combat must be trained to strike only the right targets. Unlike falcons, though, human beings are trained through more than simple physical conditioning; we must also be educated via appeals to our faculties of reason and emotion.

2. This opening narrative is based on my own experiences as an assistant brigade S2 at this exercise.

3. Dexter Filkins, "The Fall of the Warrior King," *The New York Times*, 23 October 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/23/magazine/23sassaman.html?_r=1> (28 June 2010), 1.

4. Ibid., 2.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 12.

10. Ibid., 10.

11. Ibid., 11-12.

12. Ibid., 10-11.

13. Ibid., 11-12.

14. Ibid.

15. At the time, there was some confusion as to whether "unlawful combatants," a category coined by the Bush Administration to describe armed insurgents, were entitled to Geneva protections. This was due to policies signed by President Bush and his secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld, in early 2002, which denied these protections to members of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in cases of "military necessity." In its landmark 29 June 2006, decision in the case of *Hamdan vs. Rumsfeld*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that unlawful combatants were entitled at least to the protections granted by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. There was never any question in any theater, though, whether criminals were entitled to full Geneva protections.

16. Ibid., 11.

17. Ibid., 1.

18. Indicative of the level of press the Samarra Incident has received, a Tom Cruise movie about the incident is under development.

19. Ibid., 5-8; Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), 279-90.

20. William Kristol, *The Defense Secretary We Have*, 15 December 2004, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A132-2004Dec14.html> (28 June 2010).

21. One such tactical defeat was the near annihilation of the 2d Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, of the 1st Cavalry Division, on 17 November 1965, in the Ia Drang Valley. This battle is vividly described in retired LTG Harold G. Moore's and Joseph L. Galloway's book, "*We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young*."

22. The use of enhanced interrogation techniques is deeply entwined with the Gitmo, Abu Ghraib, and Bagram scandals. The Samarra incident was described above. In the Mahmudiyah killings, on 12 March 2006, five soldiers of the 502d Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, raped a 14-year-old Iraqi girl and murdered her family. The incident is the subject of a recent book, *Black Hearts*, by Jim Frederick. The Kunduz Massacre is the subject of a European documentary film. This massacre involved the deaths of hundreds of Taliban when they were transported in sealed, airless containers by Northern Alliance troops, allegedly under the oversight of a U.S. Army Special Forces team. The U.S. Marine Corps has had its share of moral scandals as well, the most notorious incidents occurring at Haditha, Hamdania, and Shinwar.

23. David Hackett Fisher, *Washington's Crossing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 375.

24. Ibid., 379.

25. David Bosco, "Moral Principle vs. Military Necessity," *American Scholar*, Winter 2008, <http://www.theamericanscholar.org/moral-principle-vs-military-necessity/> (28 June 2010).

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Dr. Francis Lieber, "Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field," *Law of War*, 24 April 1863, <http://www.lawofwar.org/general_order_100.htm> (10 June 2010), Articles 16 and 49.

29. Telford Taylor, "Foreword," *The Law of War: A Documentary History*, edited by Leon Friedman (New York: Random House, 1973), 6. According to Taylor, the Lieber Code "remained for half a century the official Army pronouncement on the subject, furnished much of the material for the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, and today still commands attention as the germinal document for codification of the laws of land warfare."

30. Lieber, Article 22.

31. President George W. Bush, "Memorandum, Humane Treatment of al Qaeda and Taliban Detainees, February 7, 2002," *George Washington University's The National Security Archives*, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB127/02.02.07.pdf> (28 June 2010), 2; Donald Rumsfeld, Memorandum for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Status of Taliban and Al Qaeda, 19 January 2002," *George Washington University's The National Security Archives.* <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB127/ 02.01.19.pdf> (28 June 2010).

32. Of the intelligence estimates I kept from the 1996 Advanced Warfighter Exercise described above, not one contains a single reference to a civil-military matter. These intelligence estimates discuss only the notional enemy's order of battle, equipment, and likely courses of action for its maneuver forces. Before 2003, I participated in three rotations at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, CA, and two rotations at the Combat Maneuver Training Center at Hohenfels, Germany. All but the last of these rotations were identical in the disregard for the civil-military aspects of warfare (and my last rotation in 2002 was not much better). The cliché that an Army trains for the last war it won, not the next war it will fight, certainly pertains here. The only purely military enemy we have ever fought that was remotely like the one we fought in our training exercises in the 1990s was the Iraqi Army, as we fought this army in the empty deserts of the Gulf War.

33. Dr. Don M. Snider, MAJ John A. Nagl, and MAJ Tony Pfaff, "Army Professionalism, the Military Ethic, and Officership in the 21st Century," U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, December 1999, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub282.pdf> (28 June 2010), 2. Since this document was written before the War on Terrorism, it does not draw a direct link between our "force protection at any cost" mentality of the 1990s and our "intelligence at any cost if it saves lives" mentality of the early years of this war. Still, this remarkably prescient document anticipates this connection, stating "that the Army's norms of professional behaviour are being corroded by political guidance on force protection." The paper also called for our Army to return to a professional military ethic rooted in principles.

34. GEN James N. Mattis, "USJFCOM Commander's Guidance for Effects-Based Operations," *Joint Force Quarterly*, 4th Quarter, 2008: 105-108, 107; LTC Tim Challans, "Tipping Sacred Cows: Moral Potential through Operational Art," *Military Review* (September-October 2009): 19-28, 19. In his command guidance to USJFCOM, General Mattis limited the scope of effects-based operational planning, saying, "Any planning construct that mechanistically attempts to provide certainty in an inherently uncertain environment is at odds with the nature of war." Challans makes a direct connection between effects based operational planning and an amoral mindset, saying that, "This approach, by whatever name, has little potential to accommodate important moral concerns that have proven to have strategic ramifications."

35. LTC Allen West was, like Sassaman, a 4th Infantry Division battalion commander during Operation Iraqi Freedom I. In order to extract intelligence, West allowed his soldiers to beat a detainee before firing two shots from his pistol near the detainee's head. CW3 Welshofer, a contemporary of West and Sassaman in Iraq, was the senior interrogator for the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment. Welshofer was found guilty of negligent homicide in the case of a detainee who died during an especially brutal application of an enhanced interrogation technique.

36. SGT Sara Wood, "Petraeus urges troops to adhere to ethical standards in recent letter," *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Official Website of United States Forces-Iraq*, 14 May 2007, <http://www.usf-iraq.com/?option=com_content&task=view&id=11869&Itemid=110> (28 June 2010). In the report, mistreating noncombatants was defined as either stealing from a noncombatant, destroying or damaging property when it wasn't necessary, or hitting or kicking a noncombatant.

37. GEN David H. Petraeus, "Appendix I: General David H. Petraeus on Values," in *A Tactical Ethic: Moral Conduct in the Insurgent Battlespace*, by Dick Couch, 113-15 (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2010): 114, 113.

38. Couch, 46.

39. "About the CAPE," U.S. Army Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (29 July 2010), at <http://acpme.army.mil/about.html> (15 August 2010).

40. Couch, 77. Perhaps to avoid confusion in the minds of counterinsurgents, Couch actually calls these immoral individuals "pirates" rather than insurgents, even though their role is much more akin to an insurgent's role.

41. Couch, 54. Exacerbating the problem, Couch points out, is that today's generation of recruits (largely consisting of "Millenials") demonstrate a greater "need to belong" than previous generations.

42. MAJ Tony Suzzi, email to MAJ Doug Pryer, 16 June 2010.

43. Matthew Alexander, email to MAJ Doug Pryer, 23 June 2010. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was a Jordanian militant and the founder of the terrorist group, "al Qaeda in Iraq." Before his death by guided bombs on 7June 2006, Zarqawi was the most wanted man of coalition forces in Iraq.

44. Couch, xvi.

45. According to MAJ Kevin Cutright, a former philosophy instructor at West Point, the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic conducts a one-week course

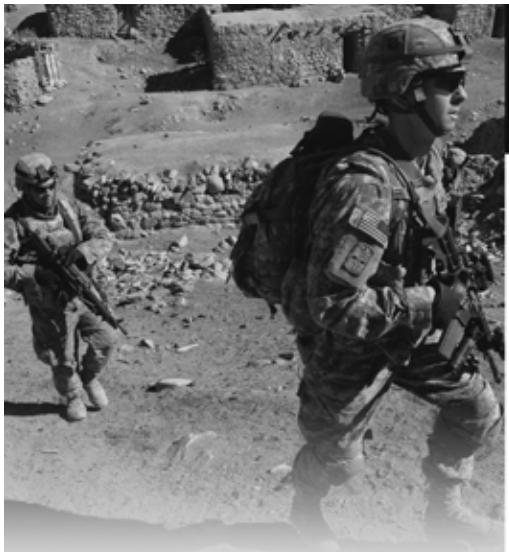
at West Point called the "Master Army Profession and Ethic Trainer Course." A third of the students, he says, have been chaplains, with the remainder being staff officers, senior noncommissioned officers, and drill sergeants. Regarding the proposed Phase II training, teams from Special Operations Command and various civilian agencies have been cycling through the training facility belonging to Close Quarters Defense®, a civilian company, for two decades now. What marks the Close Quarters Defense® (CQD®) program as unique is its integration of Internal Warrior™ Training, ethical precepts, with close-quarter combat techniques. A soldier fights better, the program teaches, if he is not just fighting for his fellow soldiers but also for his family and nation. The program also teaches that true soldiers exhibit such qualities as respect, compassion, and courageous restraint. A course run by this company incorporates unarmed and armed training, progressing from individual to team. Each course is specialized for the group's mission. The company's "Hooded Box Drill™" is one particularly effective technique the company employs for reinforcing the right responses in soldiers to various scenarios. In this drill, the trainee is placed within a hooded box, and when the box is lifted, he must react quickly to a "lethal" or "non-lethal" situation.

46. MAJ Douglas A. Pryer, *The Fight for the High Ground: The U.S. Army and Interrogation During Operation Iraqi Freedom*, May 2003-April 2004 (Fort Leavenworth: CGSC Foundation Press, 2009), 88. Cited here is the story of a platoon leader of Task Force 1-36 Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force 1st Armored Division. In the early summer of 2003, this weak platoon leader stood by as his platoon descended into pure thuggery. The platoon extorted money from locals to purchase luxury items, beat looters, and apparently battered at least one innocent Iraqi just for the perverse pleasure of it. For the platoon's crimes, the platoon sergeant did jail time while the platoon leader was separated from the Army. This is just one of several recent examples in Iraq and Afghanistan of young lieutenants being changed by, rather than changing, a small unit's immoral subculture.

47. CGSC is hardly alone in this regard among our military's service schools.

48. On 13 May 2010, GEN Stanley McChrystal called the conflict there "a draw."

49. A "mature" democracy is one in which the people have acquired genuine power over their government. Samuel P. Huntington's definition of a mature democracy is probably the most commonly referenced definition. According to Huntington, a democracy which has seen the ruling party replaced by an opposition party twice in a peaceful and democratic fashion can be called a "mature" democracy. Often debated by political scientists is whether true mature democracies ever wage war against one another.



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