

JOHN KIRK



2 DEC '95

John:

Attached find the only written outpourings I've done since '83. Only you/Mike Wyly have the Ernst paper.

It's harsh, sardonic, maybe self-defeating. Also the only way I can express outrage I feel with the pablum with which our troops march off to Bosnia. Note that you are mentioned in dispatches. Find it disappointing that while you're quoted, you were never really understood.

Pls give your usual candor, written or by phone.

Letter to Jim Etter I hope will stimulate thoughtful eruptions at AMU, among the services.

WR

A large, stylized handwritten signature, likely of John Kirk, consisting of a long horizontal stroke with a vertical line intersecting it from below.

JOHN KIRK



Jim:

Last chat you asked for summary of notions, timelines, sources of bucks. Just beginning on the first, questionable on the second, naive on third.

My opinion, you potentially have a tiger by the 'nads, not tail. With fresh, active serving troops, not old blood, you've got the potential for rich input to people, doctrine/theory and for the transition of future generations of professional soldiers to their next(civil) life. With continued thoughtful steerage, you might also sink one or more of those allegations of think tanks so tied to government's teat that they don't think.

Mike Wyly tells me you're starting an Independent Studies course. Well done! Seems to me a fit for many things that need doing. Some suggested start-ups, Inclosed, are ambitious. Would only suggest that the first and second bullets be tackled early because they're important to getting institutional thought processes out of trenches of inertia/arrogance of apparent success.

We have corporately(soldiers, academics, outside critics) confused what the thinking part of soldiery is about. Conundrum seems to be difference between students and scholars. Our professionals must be students, their teachers scholars bent on producing students, while acknowledging and serving the differing needs.

The distinction seems to lie between perceived/real needs for output. Students of our profession need simple, declarative, but well-studied bases for thought/doctrine/decisions by and for soldiers. Scholars seem to have to produce heavily bibliographed/footnoted (therefore erudite), turgid, pro-forma tomes. Like Clausewitz, some current "scholars" deserve entombment in the staggering piles of their works. I chucked Luttwak's stuff feeling the government shouldn't have to pay the transportation costs.

Doctrine for soldiers/students should be simple, thoughtful moving trains on which we can embark new concepts/technologies while maintaining a constancy. Scholarly doctrine should be put in the Library of Congress, bronzed, hung from the car mirrors of its authors.

No pretense of intellect here, just want to serve. Despite lack of credentials, hope to remain a player.

INCLOSURE

- Comparative USA/USMC doctrinal analysis already discussed. Start Jan '96, finish end of term '96. Target publication is Proceedings. Wyly leads. Student work, no cost to AMU. Mike says interest high.

- Unauthorized FM 100-5 has proven a provocative notion. Same approach as above. Sould be done by serving soldiers/airmen/marines/sailors, not old F's in their dotage, like me, though we might add useful pilotage. Some profit potential. Head for Stackpole or one of the military publishing U's vice Pentagon(Presidio) Press.

- New course: American Models of Combat Operations. Start ASAP. **Am more convinced than ever that the reason maneuver warfare and jointness haven't taken hold is that we haven't gotten them into the context of our national experience and idiom.** We've a hell of a heritage of doers, too few writers. Need to capture this rich stuff, stop snubbing it while iconizing royalists and elitists who fit neither our culture nor time. Self-supporting.

- New course:International Military Doctrine. Start fall,'96. Falklands/Yugo tipped an iceberg. The oilline may be the gulf, but our long-term lifeline's the orient, South America, Africa, muddled mess of former Soviet sphere. In 40 years have seen little on China, Japan. Our intel services, not to be trusted for decades, provide little utility or foresight. Study could. Self-supporting.

- New course:Decision Information. Start fall, '97. As a nation, and among armed forces who serve it, nobody's made a useful distinction between data/decision information. **More people are locked to screens looking for certainty than have their heads out of the turret looking for opportunity, willing to take reasonable risks.** If we/industry could grasp/articulate the problem, some heavy hitters might pony up.

- Armed Forces Institute. My AirLand notion was shortsighted, understated the need. Mike Wyly's "Common Culture" seems closer, tho I'd suggest "Shared" vice "Common." Now more important than ever to gaining bang and bucks for the services. Not smart enough to suggest financing. Key would be to avoid the stupifying overhead of USNI, still have intellect, dialogue, clout. Harder road. '98?

- Studies:Correlation of Sports and Military Leadership. In the societal turmoil of last 30 years, we armed forces have suffered greatly. Yet thru these same periods, there have been sports coaches who maintained superb discipline and **won** despite the outside influences of society and with the same clay with which we tried to create successful soldiery, often flunking.

In 1972, as a battalion commander, had assigned a young man who had been a halfback starter on the UW football team. Broken home, adoptive parents, heroin habit. Used a combination of personal intervention, Lombardi's book(carried in field jacket pocket), parental support to get him thru.

There exists a declining pool of superb coach/leaders who achieved excellence despite political/ethical/moral/drug turmoil surrounding them. Some names: John Wooden, UCLA(at 85, about to escape us); John Ralston, Stanford; Eddie Robinson,

Grambling; Troy Donohue, UCLA; etc. The focus should be on those who successfully bridged our serious societal wrenches with winning/discipline.

Not having further studied this phenomenon was one of my failings.

Have some thoughts on the battlefield, but need more time to think on them.

JOHN KIRK

14 Nov '95

Carl:

Much delayed feedback/thanks. Treatment great, quarters fine. Sensorially good. Mary walked seawall. Ate well, talked to old friends. Our 16th and 17th auto Xcountries. 22 states, 10k miles, 40 days. Dramatic national change, not for better.

Sorry so late-angst. Reading material prompted walks, fly-fishing, cold showers, trips. Asked by Green not to prejudge, didn't. Fair trial, to extent getting past Table of Contents, 100-5, made possible. Mary suggested book burning to lower BP.

You're Training, not Doctrine. Stuff provided mostly doctrine, so are comments. As DOT, would have resigned loudly before agreeing w/most. Army of 60/70/80's made me discourage four kids from soldiering despite a 200+ yr continuous family service tradition, which I ended. No change for the next generation.

Personal ambition glitters where obligation, sense of service, primal urge for competence and war-winning simplicity should rule. Despite Storm, troopers' usual magnificence, our men/women aren't getting the clear concepts/objectives, unselfish leadership, decisive doctrine they deserve. We genuflect lots, blindly follow the encyclical of the day. Lieu of being militarily/intellectually honest, challenging assertions, we salute. Results: Synchronization, lite inf that isn't, trendy vice landmark doctrine, complex training systems, more infrastructure/overhead, dysfunctional labs, contract shills paid to help do all that. Gates'd barf! I did at BCTP!

Revolution in Military Affairs(RMA) is a rotting Orca being dragged down the beach to build a new Milind tribal complex and casino.

Ask four favors:

- You and Grant's private read inclosed.
- Convince CSA to personally review Army's cardinal manuals, get diverse responses to 'em, sign blame line, hang his professional future/lives of his soldiers on them. A harsh profession needs tough judges at every level. He's boss.
- Pls apologize to Starry for his wait, my hiccup at his briefing's pyramid.
- Get Dave Gross promoted to field marshall, replace you with him.

My failing with all whom I served was not devoting some of each day to not giving answers/making decisions. Should have issued more maps and compasses. Better to have shown a possible path than trail's end.

SCATTERSHOTS

•Spring, '82, Ed Peter called me in, asked, "John, how will we do at NTC?" Answer.. "Sir, if we don't win, you should fire me." NTC survives because of 5 Mech, brief service as DOT. Short story, there.

•Once told by DCG, FORSCOM, that I was too tough, responded that I never saw a kind battlefield. He rated me according to his sensitivities.

•Pls see Candide.

•Every officer in the Army should be detailed to see the Usonian house(Custis-Lee Estate) and Falling Water in PA, not to be confused with Lee's crossing of the Potomac. FL Wright used harmony, not synchronization, got decisive results in both cases.

SO

•Slay pedants/plagerists/quotists. Clausewitz was the Freud of military operations. Confused more generations than he helped. Quotists are closet martinets with miniminds. Center of gravity is the navel of a person with a big chest and butt. Jomini was closer, as were Mahans, Jackson, Grant, Grierson, Nez Perce, Forrest. They seem to suggest we think, not adhere.

•Shred 100-5/525-5/Battle Labs/SATS. They're mixing vats, not thoughtful umbrellas for an Army. No FOCUS! Iron MAJs/COLs/budget lines/computer nerds lurk unhidden everywhere. Don't justify jobs, dollars, systems in bibles.

•Get Army product vice process oriented. Bullets/shell fragments have finality. What's the output and **FOCUS?** Who's accountable? Define winning/losing! Fire me if I flunk NTC! Training Development outputs itself masturbatorily, makes no judgements about its utility. Intel corps has survived 50 years on process, few useful estimates. The national centers(NTC, Red Flag, Top Gun, Wlm Tell, JRTC) should have career finalities, not training fatalities. Brutal business.

•Make info happen. After 30 yrs, we have data avalanches, little decision info. Conceive systemic lockouts for meddling cdrs/subs on "info hiway."

•Tackle virtual reality's serious moral, ethical, operational issues. Business/industry aren't moralists/ethicists/combat operators. Won't engage.

•Write/pub our tightly articulated, doctrine-based training strategy.

PANGLISSADING

•Following merely skeptical notes. Have yet to fall off a corrosive cynical cliff. All is right with the world.

•Conflict is a continuum. Neither it, nor training for it, can be boxed, shrink-wrapped for shoppers. You've inherited TRADOC's 3D slides from early eighties-great rectangular solids of tidily stacked boxes, few labelled. Numb & dumb!

•Battles/wars are economically won by beating minds/concepts, not metal. Unoriginal.

•Clausewitz is outta date. Whoever thinks ramblings of a 18/19th century authoritarian are harmonious with a XXI century republic is smoking hemp. Friction is the most useful concept he left us. Jomini/Napoleon are better. More later.

•VietNam has left us institutionally paranoid, promoted ostentatious, thin, fragile, unleading doctrine.

-Whether it's press relations in the Gulf, response to fratricides, criticism of our dogma, we hide from critics, dismiss disagreement, seem compelled to tip our hat to every budgetary/branch pagoda we pass. No central FOCUS or unifying theme.

-We must gain the ability to think, ruthlessly critique us, stop this penalty-free AAR mentality. War isn't a teaching vehicle. Neither is NTC. Measure the output, judge toughly, hire/fire accordingly. If we create peacetime systems that interfere with training to winning standards, we're running a wrong Army. We can't afford, American public would rightly reject, another Anzio.

•Technology's causing repeats of historical patterns we aren't gripping. Land battle assumes more of the characteristics of naval/air warfare as techies free us from some aspects of terrain/WX. Land masses look somewhat like seas/archipelagoes. Armies resemble fleets. Arty/air merge. And equations change. Are MBT/BFV battleships or PT boats? They ain't aircraft carriers.

•Army will see its Battle of the Coral Sea between mech forces this or next century.

-RPV, UAV, JSTARS, satellites, extended range, smart/submunitions, top-down kills, Tomahawks, GPS, simulations imbedded in C4I will diminish the importance of direct fire outfits thru corps. Main mech fight will go to Arty/Atk Avn, protected by ADA/air. So where do we put our \$ now?

-Army has much to learn from naval surface/air/space warfare. I'm not smart. Fuller said that in 1918. AT Mahan belongs in new Army texts/doctrine as do lessons of Battles Coral/Philippine Seas.

-Navy CIC's, tech antiques, have dealt for decades with dimensional problems of combat we're only now recognizing. Can we learn from 'em?

-Army Aviation contributes hugely to outcomes, but less than it should. We/USAF have constrained them with role/mission/budgetary stupidities. Apache/Comanche potentially better than F-anything for ground spt and attack to combat radius, given a Wild Weasel equal and PAVE LOW. USAF could help, won't, 'cause they stay enthralled of budgets/Douhet/Seversky/career patterns.

-Aviation needs detailed study of Vandenberg/Quesada, recce, protection of a mobile force/CAS. Part of a model there.

-Arty's gotta mobilize minds/machines to dominate future battle, not just keep up/support it. Conceptual prisoners of firebases, nuke/chem precision, they have to maneuver their forces and fires. See Buena Vista. Arty forces/machines must shoot on the move.

-Am told USN/USMC have an ongoing series of seminars on TacAir in CA. Might be useful to monitor.

•Stealth is as important to ground as air forces. How'll we do it?

•Mobility needs serious study in strategic/tactical contexts.

-A force projection question but also when we get there, how do we do ours,

destroy theirs? Depriving threat of mobility and quickness, while retaining own, remains the surest way to beat anyone.

-Ho beat us at strategic/tactical mobility while physically/psychologically limiting us to tactics. And he was painstakingly slow in time/space. We never took his mobility.

-Tactically, in a transportation-deprived area, what do we do if threat slashes our HET/HEMTT tires?

-How do we exploit our mobility in the Greater Chinese Co-prosperity Sphere? What do we know about their transportation infrastructure?

•Doctrine must cage the computer's compass, distinguish between data/info.

- More guys are paralyzed groping for certainty among data than make timely decisions from information.

-Operational matrices/decision diagrams should be banned as antithetical to human thought. Industry/ARI babble seems aimed at justifying AI studies/solutions, big bucks, more institutional staff, not problem-solving.

-You'll get this redundantly, but see John Boyd. Patton said it, too. **Quick's generally better than excellent. If you're stuck on excellence, you often stab winning to death with slowness(sloth?).**

-Environment's emphatically data, not info rich. You can't get into Boyd's OODA cycle thru DATAMAZE.

•Intrusion lockouts must be conceived/designed for info systems, stated clearly in tactical/training doctrine.

-Hierarchical compression's a dangerous theory until we design practical blocks for human nature-bosses looking down,out and everywhere else to seek succor, place blame.

-Potential for stultifying downreach is appalling. What prevents a higher commander from dabbling in his subordinate's stuff? And subs looking up, down, out, continually questioning.

- Number of times I might have been fired by a data-reading boss, thinking me running on diesel fumes/pot smoke or worse, makes me shudder.

•Virtual reality, seemingly accepted as just another training aid, is the most serious intellectual/ethical/moral challenge of our lives, at every societal level and in our services.

-We thinkRap/movies/video/games are destructive? Hah! Have personally known at least four division-level commanders who would have abused such a tool to reach their personal ends, politically, morally, judicially. Orwell's here.

-Businesses and defense industries, having little interest in ethics/morals, won't lead. Who will?

•Nobody's shown what our doctrine-based training strategy is, how much training's enough, how we'll account for it to ourselves/our people/Congress.

•Neither I nor Army's come to grips with our future Alpine Elite.

•Principles of war/five para order deserve serious revisit. Century XVIII does not equal Century XXI. Where do logistics fit? Space? Time? What of info systems? And the BOS!

•We're letting AI nerds demand we think like machines so they can try to clone us electronically and fail. Kill matrices!

-Can see some guy who just flunked at NTC running up and saying "But, sir, not my fault. Here's where I was in my (IPB)(Decision matrix)(synchronization matrix)(select). OPFOR didn't stick with my process. They also didn't adhere to the (estimate)(force ratio)(doctrine as I understand it)(decision matrix)(select another one) and the troops are so poorly trained by the institution that they didn't understand my (intent)(goal)(aim)(objective)(imperatives)(tenets)(main lines of thrust)(vision) (synchrony)(select more than one).

-And besides, Bedouin Bikers slashed the tires on my HETS/HEMTTs."

- Must train the Army to fight and win battles/campaigns on frags alone.

•We have a national compulsion to put concepts in shrink-wrapped paks.

-Pyramidalism/columnitis are mental diseases. Having spanned the Golden Gate, sent men to the moon, we can't find a better depiction of human thought than 3000 year old pieces of engineering? Belch! **In the age of paradigms/metaphors, only real pyramid I ever saw was inverted- the hierarchy being carried by the common soldier.** Mayans were elegant engineers, building sturdy structures, often with flat tops for a helipad (airbase?).

-Though I probably too often failed, my approach was to get you guys to understand enough that you'd do the right thing yourselves, with no orders from me. In 5 Mech, did three handbooks, no written orders. You all did good on frags. Learned that from Rogers, Forrest, Mosby Balck, von Mellenthin.

•Jointness comes from recognizing/using the capabilities of other services, past, present, future and understanding their dogma.

-More than mouthing a word or futile little assignments, it must come from doing, appreciation of capabilities, doctrine, results.

-Their principles/fundamentals should be in our doctrine, without suborning us to an Air Tasking Order. Try appendices to 100-5.

-And we must better influence them toward our common goal.

•TRADOC/academia must expose America's past greats to our nation and their soldiery, with just pride.

-We undervalue us! We've a hell of a heritage-from wars to insurrections to hurricanes to helping starving nations to postal strikes to CCC. Washington starred at Trenton. Damned shame Jackson died before he could put concepts into turgid prose that we could quote for generations.

-There's more to American arms than the Trail of Tears, Wounded Knee, Little Big Horn, Chosin Reservoir, Khe Sanh and ventriloquist renditions of the continentals.

-But most of what history teaches belongs in courses on history/philosophy of war, not doctrine. Keep it simple/logical and we'll win.

-Our Army's "professional journals" are self-serving vacuums, absent substance. Those who write are club members, academicians or iron staff pukers with little experience or personal risk. Most lack credibility. When Cav Journal died, our self-expression atrophied, producing Twinkies/petrified wood called *Military Review*,

parameters, **ARMOR** et al. No organization, no freedom, no power.

- Army needs to hear from practitioners/students, not scholars or members of

the Milind club. And they need a place to express themselves contentiously, without footnotes/labored historical examples/penalties for contrarian thought. Hence my unanswered fax to you.

-Victoria's Secret cares more about me than my Army. They'll happily sell me holey bras, etc. I've been solicited for nothing-membership, subscription, letters to editor, book reviews, financial support etc by any professional Army organization or journal. The Milind club's allergic to challenge, wasting good minds. They sure as hell haven't gotten the same mailing lists the rest of the world has--or are they disinterested in folks that aren't mutually supporting? Why does the Naval Institute think more of us than the Army does?

•Monroe's too nice a place for a cauldron of ideas to happen-no agony. Move TRADOC to Irwin, surround it with din of battle, or kill it. Outfit has earned retention of the old CONARC patch. Attitudinally unchanged from two bucolic post-wedding nights spent there with bride in 1956.

MANUAL/SLIDASET OBSERVATIONS

Dizzy Dean said "They'se two kindsa things, the good an' the ungood." He was right. Most of what I was issued is ungood.

LUCKY WAR

Having read only a dozen or so books, numbers of articles on Shield/Storm, am shamed that personal/corporate justification/gain/profit/position seem to have governed reportage/debate. PVP(Post- Vietnam Paranoia) seems to have gripped our press relations and ability to be honest with ourselves/others.

- As always, soldiers were merely magnificent.
- Have we doomed ourselves to an arrogance of apparent success? We didn't win anything but logistics, and that, strategically, is questionable. Big tanks, little lift, lotsa slowness.
- Contributes little to history but ill-illustrated recitation of unit journals, thoughtless repetition of bad doctrine. Author belies his discussion of Kant, p. xiii. Personal vendetta w/CINC has no place in something sponsored by Leavenworth.
- Shallow analysis, unless you were mentioned in dispatches.
- Simple envelopment hardly deserves title "Hail Mary."
- XVIII Corps deserved applause it didn't get enough of; VII needed a spanking and its commander, relief from his agonies.
- Gunnery was pretty good.
- Our umpteenth straight intel failure didn't get space/criticism it deserves.
- Pagonis aped AT Mahan logistically, did better at it than groundops did with Schlieffen. Aping good is good. Don't like his 3X5's, but he done good.
- Those inspired to cash in on the adventure deserve a Mauldin each.
- Jim Burton's closest to the mark. Why are we better analyzed by airmen than us? Do thought/intellectual courage only happen at 30,000 feet in a blue suit? Have we become so hidebound/career-oriented that it's fatal to challenge hypotheses?

100-5

•**Consign to shredder.** Wouldn't go to war with anyone who takes it seriously. In 81, would have forbidden reading, locked me in Log Cabin 'til I could turn out something useful to you.

•**Put sense/accountability in it.** Any manual having a topic sentence, seventh para Offense(p 7-1), that says "Inflicting physical damage is frequently necessary for offensive success." is an affront to a nation, its citizens, the generations of soldiers who gave themselves and is bankrupt. Someone should pay.

•**Doctrine should have a headwater, tributaries, confluences, an ocean-entering flow.** It's an ecosystem. Everyone should understand that. One change changes the system, not an each. And it isn't immutable. Minds, technologies, politics, geopolitics change things.

•**Uncompelling. Incoherent. Fails every standard for logic, simplicity, clarity, brevity. Budget line in every bush.** Absolutely no understanding of our language. Show me the clear devolution of:

Construct	Battlespace	Tactics	Close/deep/rear
Strategy	Fundamentals	Tenets	Functions
Principles	Imperatives	National Strategy	BOS
Synchronization and			

tactical offense, operational offense, strategic offense, OOTWA, Main Lines of Thrust. Horsehockey! Authors couldn't diagram a sentence, let alone logically outline their work. We're building our own defeat mechanism.

•**Drive a wooden stake thru the heart of synchronization.**

-With forward defense, one of the two greatest conceptual tragedies of my lifetime. We meant harmony, with the outward appearance of cacaphony!

-Synchronization damned near killed Storm with metronomics when Saddam couldn't with force. Knew this would happen from VII Corps BCTP. You can't afford misnomers in the hands of anyone as pedantic as some Army leaders.

•**Same with agility.**

-Displays author's unfamiliarity with English. Ability to hop about from tramp to balance beam has no **FOCUS!**

-Did we mean quickness or Mahan's celerity?

•**Chain of command is the central nervous sytem of an armed force, not wiring diagrams. It should be analyzed/discussed as such.**

-The success of the whole must be less dependent on top-down control than the ability of the parts to react right to general/individual stimuli in accord with some **central design which all understand, respond, adhere to.**

-And swollen manuals, long-winded concepts of ops, interminable meetings ain't it! We need an education and training system that works, from the trooper up.

•**We ain't us in 100-5.**

-Pershing made us Francophiles in WWI. We've never recovered.

-Huba made us continental Europeans in the early eighties. Nice try, but we

haven't recovered, gotten to our own roots. His generals weren't smart enough to get him/Holder pointed right. Visited them while with you at CATTS. Came away convinced that unless I did something, you'd get nothing but Manchurian adventures and nebulousness. Hence Pzgr.

- We're Americans, a unique experiment in human history. We've much to learn from us-father/son Mahans, Rogers, Washington, Looking Glass, Crazy Horse, Grierson, Miles, Crook, Grant, Sherman, Jackson, Mosby, Forrest et al. Drather learn from them in our language than a translation of a Sino odyssey that teaches us to behead one concubine to gain order among the rest.

•Classicists aren't writ in stone. They're there because they were bright for their time, but not forever. We leave them there, too lazy, too wed to a system or too thick to credit ourselves with smarts and break molds.

-Jomini did the best job, laid no claim to timelessness.

-Clausewitz was a brilliant diarrheist who seldom understood himself, in ten volumes. Regurgitation of culminating point is a giant having an orgasm or a doctrine-writing staff puke who didn't understand that C's point applied to nations/whole forces, not rifle platoons. Centers of gravity work well for Newtonian physics/falling apples/Gingrich. Jugulars seem more apt.

-du Picq was an elitist whose model created the German General Staff. Neither his nor Clausewitz' logics/conclusions generally fit our society.

-Herman Kahn theorized for an episode, but dominated a half century. Unreferenced. Nukes, bugs, gas haven't disappeared, except in our wishful thinking.

-Douhet/DeSeversky/Billy Mitchell haunt us. Army pays too little attention to what Quesada did, apply it to our future with Apache/Comanche. We must learn from the past pointedly to control the future. Ira Eaker, Brick Lessig and Chuck Kirk, the three of whom invented the Air Tasking Order in 1942, wouldn't support such idiocy today.

-Last thoughtful modernists seem to have been the Mahans/Fuller twins(JFC, Bucky)/ Marshall McLuhan/ JohnBoyd. Read 'em all before graduating to major, 'cept Boyd. He deserves a better place in history. Kerouac belongs somewhere, as does Malcolm X.

-There are a few smart guys about, but they're being treated as gadflies.

•Operational art/operational level of war are saran-wrapped snares/delusions.

-Taken from Germans and Russians, who applied them to miles in thousands, operations in months/years, men/machines/horses in whole or large fractions of millions.

-When first written by us, the terms were badly used to try to divide the corps/army sandbox from divisions. And that's how they were read by an Army fatigued by the drug wars. Flunked.

-I was there when that apray hit the ground. Suddenly corps/higher commanders were operationalists, while the rest of us were mere tacticians. Notion never fit the modern battlefield. Distorted concepts, stated in continental European linguistics, never got the point across. And who's squaring "battlespace" with operational art?

-Technology/transport/compression of time and space have long overtaken

many concepts. Today, as a tank platoon leader, get on the boat in Savannah ready to fight in Shanghai.

-Area of interest of a tank division has always been a tank of gas. From time assigned as G3, 1 AD, in '75, always carried a road map with a 200 mile circle on it centered at Nuremberg. Division's combat radius. Was that tactical or operational?

•Naming is a game which seems a substitute for thought.

-Close/deep battle, operational art, synchronization are products of small minds struggling heroically to decompose a continuum to KFC nuggets. Byte sized, but indigestible. Problem is that **we haven't devolved or articulated conceptual unity in military operations, from the national level down to troops or laterally with other services/industry.** Pihl's undisguised plea for more(AFGI Nov 95) is as good an example as I've seen.

-OOTW is an infantile term from which we should all be spared. It's something the Army has done for its entire history. I shrink in fear of my grandchildren, clad in OD-T's doing their morning usual chanting "OOTWAH."

-Did we mean Non-Combat Operations? If so, where are their principles, imperatives, fundamentals, et al?

•Poor use our language,syntax, acronyms are mind-numbing, defeat understanding in detail, provoke stomach cramps.

-Find a guy who really understands simplicity of expression, chain him to an editorial desk forever, promote him to Field Marshall and clone him.

-Use eager CPTs as authors, not iron MAJs/COLs who see their future wedded to the product. Find guys who understand the difference between a dictionary and a thesaurus/how to use them.

-Only worse writing I've seen comes from granddaughter's grammar school in a small Oregon town, now nearly bankrupt from logging losses. All authors need Writing 101.

•Strip authors/approval structure for these manuals of their sabres, buttons, drum from the fort. No less than CSA should read every word, note every punctuation mark, personally sign his name and future to Army's keystones. They're his personal responsibility to his country/ soldiers/their NOK to be the right stuff, not something to be cascaded to unaccountable committees and echelons. Marines do it. Right or wrong, GEN Al Gray signed thrice

•Americanize doctrine. We've had a hell of a lot of very bright guys in our short history. Trouble is that most performed, not wrote, hence it takes research to get at them. TRADOC/academia must expose Mahans, others to our nation/soldiery, with great pride. Grant knew what focus was. Crook was a winner. There's a hell of a lot more to American arms than Gettysburg, Trail of Tears, Wounded Knee, Little Big Horn, RVN. We've successfully done a lot-from winning big ones to insurrections to hurricanes to helping starving nations to postal strikes to CCC.

•Resurrect DH Mahan. He trained Jackson, Lee, Grant others who became the focus of intense European study. If Europeans can learn from us, why can't we? Mobility, surprise, celerity.

•Demand a logic tree. I'm not too bright. Five months later, still struggle to find relationship between principles, tenets, imperatives, dynamics, functions, fundamentals, range of milops, frameworks, tactics, techniques. Is there one?

•Demand explication of FOCUS of effort. Doesn't come thru. But don't say schwerpunkt, like I did.

•Restrict 100-5 to 100 pages, with room for notes.

-Get it output vice process-oriented.

-Intel's been a holocaust my adult life. IPB formally blesses incompetence, makes thoughtlessness routine. We can't let them keep giving us 50 years of process without useful output.

-Strip it of the quotes/historical examples. They're condescending, erroneous, disrupt flow, are dreadful. Pretensions of thought, not its substance!

-Who can describe how we're going to train intuition?

•Italicized idiocy, p 3-7, would cause me to write a parody.."Standing on the tarmac, watching all the planes go by."

525-5

•Shortsighted in huge domains. See naval battle/Mahan stuff above.

•" Battlespace" leaves us fixated on geography/roles/missions, ignores time, psychology, values. Really shallow.

-Ho beat us in our "battlespace" because he understood the continuum while we never got the picture.

-Shali unplugged DCCS during BCTP because it predictably doubled his decision-making time.

-The whole argument about "how deep is deep" is ignored, leaving the Army/USAF conflict of Storm unresolved.

-Please have the handful of officers, active/retired, smart enough to "Battlespace" hold up their hands.

•" Simultaneous attack" is a corrupt concept with no FOCUS, leading the less than damned bright to do what it says, not what it means. This is exactly how Schlieffen got watered down in WWI, countless others to see too many ghosts at once.

Army RD&A

•Training's bureaucratic morass is a sucking headwound to an Army.

-Training development's today's LaBrea tarpit. Men/units slurp into a bottomless sticky hole in a place where simplicity should be king. TD established/sustains a huge, unrewarding overhead. But we'll find its skeletons well preserved.

-Training management's regressed. Proposed system's a disaster. Notion stolen from me by BDM in '84, only now coming to sad conclusion. Baseplate is Ft Lewis Flop, '84(ATMS). Probably employs same failing people. Shame! Big Stoop's still alive.

-A training system not conceived as a seamless day-to-day interface/C2S2 simulation system/C4I component flyaway? Criminal.

•I know people who did this to Army- all oughta be locked up for bilking you of millions, if not billions, and depriving future soldiers of their lives in interest of their petty-assed jobs.

THE OTHER STUFF

Candily, lack energy to dribble thru the rest of it. Think the mass provided was intended to constipate me with volume, prevent me from interchange, ducks/salmon. Minor notes:

- Hartzog's TRADOC brief is dysfunctional. Knowing he's ultimate leader:
 - Transition slide is awful. Intellect per se has seldom led anything. History's most often driven to new solutions by thought, technology, instinct, leadership, politics, economics, experience.
 - Which makes "unknown dangers" a total vacuum of expression.
 - But then I don't get "unknown dangers'" relationship with the changing nature of warfare. It all started with rocks/sticks and is where it is.
 - Anyway, it's bad, not worth my time to muck through, yours to read my comments.
- Battlestaff Training System shows mostly authors don't know what the hell they're training for. Compartments, not integrals. Please have them look seriously at John Boyd-again. He's mostly right. And they won't get there from here.
- Force XXI training program folder was designed by ARI nits. Show me a 6/10/11/51 Inf company commander who would or should understand it and I'll show you an educator/sociologist in the wrong job! That's why commander 54 Inf, 1 AD, and his bn flunked in '77/78. Find him a cowpasture. Tall guy. Dumb!
- Question: How do Hartzog's hexagons overlay Hartzog's hexagons?(Strategic Plan, TRADOC Overview).
- Question: Where would imposition of all these systems have put you as a commander us as combat leaders?
- BN-BSTS will leave commanders/staffs in their CP's watching screens, lieu of seeing truth from turrets.
- The long shadows/mucky thumbprints of four men I know are unfortunately everywhere. That they still prosper in the public trough shows how badly folks understand training. Can't we find new heads somewhere?
- Simulations look more like a kaleidoscope than a symphony. What's the integral?

DIVAD lives! Am more certain than ever that there neither was a "good old Army," nor is there a good new one. Ambiguities, uncertainties, politics, stupidities, and need for contractual coverage rampage, maybe exponentially expanded and protected by a bodyguard of false expectations/logics from projectmanageritis & computer nerds. Success is compliance/continued funding. Failure is having a pet rock killed.

The constant, other than ambition/greed, is the soldier/sailor/airman. Man or woman, they're magnificent bastards to put up with and perform despite us, deserve better.

In early '82, COL Bill Graf, then a PR flack for recruiting command, sent Suzanne a letter and a "Be All You Can Be" t-shirt. Responded that I was being more than I could be already, had no t-shirt. No reply.