

Book Reviews

Special Warfare

Breaking The Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century. By Douglas A. Macgregor. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 1997. ISBN: 0-275-95793-4. 283 pages.

In *Breaking the Phalanx*, Colonel Douglas A. Macgregor has written the best book to date concerning what the U.S. Army must do if it is to be successful in war-fighting into the next century.

Written while Macgregor was a fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., the book takes the position that today's Army is like the Macedonian army prior to its defeat at the hands of the Romans.

The Macedonian phalanx was considered unbreakable in its time. An elongated rectangle of heavily armed soldiers that stood 16 ranks deep and was composed of up to 10,000 men, the phalanx overwhelmed enemies by brute force. Phalanxes would run directly at the weak point of an enemy formation to break the formation and defeat the enemy.

But at Thessaly in 200 B.C., smaller, faster and more agile Roman legions, averaging 5,000 soldiers each, outmaneuvered the Macedonians and defeated them. The defeat compelled the Macedonians to surrender their control of Greece and the Aegean Sea. By breaking the phalanx, the Romans precipitated a revolution in military affairs.

Macgregor's observations are trenchant: We need to be less like the Macedonians and more like the Romans. Our current primary war-fighting formation — the division — is a dinosaur of sorts. The division



is too large, requires too much logistical support, is too slow in making decisions in the "Information Age" and, with the singular exception of the 82nd Airborne Division, takes too long to deploy to trouble spots around the globe.

Our Army, through its division structure, is largely a brute-force organization. Massed firepower has always been its calling card. But today, massed firepower has distinctly less utility than it had in years gone by. Desert Storm cannot be used as a model for the way future U.S. battles will be fought. Most military analysts agree that future battles will be won by forces who can capitalize on new technologies, weapons, organizations, and tactics in the new war-fighting environment created by near-real-time intelligence and subsequent rapidity in the decision-making cycle.

Dispensing with the division structure would be difficult for our Army —

perhaps impossible. The division structure has been in use since the time of Napoleon. The U.S. Army has used it in various forms since the Civil War. Yet, if we are to defeat the most likely threats of the 21st century, Macgregor says, the division must go.

Macgregor proposes standing-down the divisions to create lighter, faster, independent, self-supporting regimental combat teams, or combat groups, based on the brigade task-force model.

His recommended organization would mirror what has occurred in many American corporations: Supervisory chains have been flattened. Decision-making authority has been given to lower-level managers, encouraging innovation and risk-taking.

Brigadier generals would command the combat groups. Colonels would serve as their chiefs of staff and as their deputy commanders. Lieutenant colonels would serve as staff heads in personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, and Civil Affairs/Psychological Operations. With its excellent tooth-to-tail ratio, such an organization is designed for fighting. Because the organization's command structure is flattened, decisions can be made rapidly in order to gain and maintain the initiative in a battle.

Divisional staffs could be maintained in the unlikely event of a general war on the scale of World War II. Army corps would be formed as joint task forces and manned jointly by all the services, further enhancing interoperability and interservice cooperation. Macgregor does not discuss special-operations forces at length, but in some of his analyses, it is inherent that SOF would figure prominently.

has also provided scripting and simulations support.

Purple Dragon. During Fort Bragg's recent Purple Dragon exercise, a representative from the PSYOP Training and Doctrine Division participated with the other members of the PSYOP Task Force. The exercise not only fostered coordination between PSYOP and the other members of the joint task force, it also offered a field test for the revised ARTEP 33-725-60-MTP, *Mission Training Plan for the Psychological Operations Task Force*, scheduled for publication during the third quarter of FY 1998.

Innovations improve SF training

The 1st Battalion of the SWCS 1st Special Warfare Training Group continues to integrate innovations into the Special Forces Qualification Course.

The battalion is organized into five training companies and a headquarters and headquarters company.

Company A conducts the SF Detachment Officer Qualification Course. This course focuses on mission planning and the leadership of the SF detachment. Company A will reorganize in the near future in order to present instruction in a small-group-instruction mode.

Company B conducts the SF Weapons Sergeant Course and the SF Engineer Sergeant Course. The weapons detachment will soon add light-infantry squad and platoon tactics to its curriculum in order to place more emphasis on tactical training and weapons-system employment. The tactical training will include a live-fire exercise and several force-on-force missions using the multiple integrated laser engagement system. The engineer detachment has introduced training on various pieces of equipment,

including the modernized demolitions initiator, the time-delay firing device, and selectable lightweight attack munitions. The detachment has also modified its mine-warfare training to emphasize demining operations.

Company E conducts the SF Communications Sergeant Course. In FY 1999, Company E plans to integrate the Advanced International Morse Code Course into the SF Communications Sergeants Course. Company E also conducts a joint course on the Special Mission Radio System.

Company F conducts Phase I (land navigation and small-unit tactics) and Phase III of the SF Qualification Course. An additional 12 days of training have been incorporated into Phase I, so that all of the students can be trained to a uniform level of proficiency in common tasks, patrolling, fieldcraft, survival and hand-to-hand combat.

Phase III training consists of air operations; special operations; mission planning; direct-action pre-mission training; and an unconventional-warfare field-training exercise, Robin Sage. Robin Sage has been designated as a CINCSOC-directed event. The exercise has seen significant improvements as a result of the integration of students from the SF Warrant Officer Basic Course. In addition, there has been an increased development of the local auxiliary, which has enhanced the effectiveness of the exercise.

Company G conducts the 24-day Special Forces Assessment and Selection phase of the Special Forces Qualification Course. SFAS is the process through which personnel are selected to attend the SFQC. Company G works with agencies such as the Army Research Institute to improve SFAS testing and selection procedures.

For more information, telephone the 1st Battalion S3 at DSN 239-4343/

5619 or commercial (910) 432-4343/5619, fax -6260; or visit the 1st Battalion on the World Wide Web at www.usasoc.soc.mil/swcs/tng/1/index.htm.

Archives document SOF heritage

An archive at Fort Bragg holds a wealth of information about the history of U.S. special operations.

The archive, maintained by the Army Special Operations Command's History and Archives Directorate, contains materials related to the history of Special Forces, Rangers, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations, as well as SOF antecedents, such as Francis Marion's Revolutionary War partisans and World War II's Office of Strategic Services. "It's one of the most complete SOF archives in the world — some quarter of a million items," said Dr. Stanley Sandler, an assistant command historian.

The archive maintains a collection of recorded interviews with SOF troops and veterans, including former members of World War II's Detachment 101. The archive also contains photographs dating back to World War II. Archivists are in the process of digitizing the facility's print and picture holdings.

Archive records also document the history of USASOC's subordinate commands. New material is regularly added from ongoing SOF missions. The archive is located in Fort Bragg's Special Operations Academic Facility, Room 355. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information, telephone Dr. Stanley Sandler at (910) 432-5794.



"In practice, the contemporary Army still treats warfare as an activity that can be carefully orchestrated," Macgregor says. That thinking, if permitted to continue, may sound the death knell of American pre-eminence around the globe. Macgregor offers the reader an organization that is faster, more agile, and better-suited to the modern war-fighting process.

Macgregor's book is a must-read for those interested and involved in military affairs and in national-security issues. If you read no other book this year, read *Breaking the Phalanx*.

LTC Robert B. Adolph Jr.
U.S. Army (ret.)
Fayetteville, N.C.

U.S. Foreign Policy and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Humanitarian Relief in Complex Emergencies. By Andrew S. Natsios. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 1997. ISBN: 0-275-95921-X (paper). 192 pages. \$15.95.

Andrew S. Natsios has all the credentials needed to provide complete, insightful coverage of complex humanitarian emergencies, or CHEs.

Natsios is vice president of World Vision U.S., a key faith-based non-governmental organization, or NGO. As a high-ranking official of the Bush Administration from 1989 through 1993, Natsios navigated the depths and straits of several U.S., foreign and international bureaucracies on a daily basis. As director of the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, he worked with theater strategic- and operational-level U.S. military leaders on a number of humanitarian operations. As an Army Reserve Civil Affairs officer, he helped lead the recovery effort in Kuwait City after the Gulf War cease-fire. His diverse roles and

experiences have served him well. There is something in this book for almost everyone, from the policy wonk to the warrior in BDUs.

In the future, we may expect the scale of U.S. military support to CHEs and lesser relief efforts to vary based on political, social and military factors. One certainty is that America's armed forces will remain engaged in humanitarian work. Military officers need to understand the anatomy of a CHE, and Natsios provides a good dissection. Chapter 2, "Complex Humanitarian Emergencies and the U.S. National Interest," will appeal to officers interested in policy. Chapter 3, "The Bureaucratic Politics of Disasters," explains why coordination of U.S. interagency effort can be so problematic. Chapter 4, "Nongovernmental Organizations," contains descriptions of NGOs that are essential for Civil Affairs and Special Forces professionals who are likely to work with those organizations.

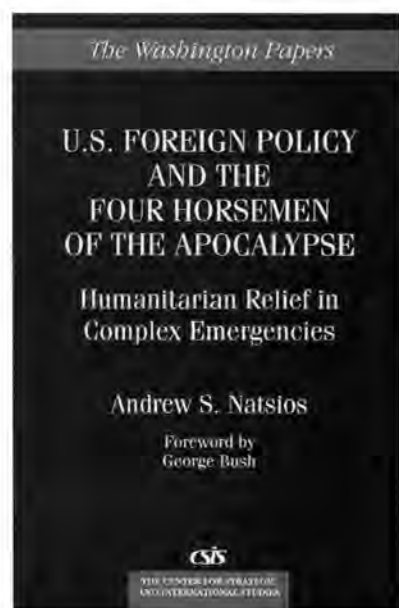
Natsios discusses the military strengths and weaknesses in relief efforts and provides seven principles that should be required reading for

civil-military planners at all levels. The book contains important recommendations for establishing objectives, gaining consensus, leveraging assets and improving timeliness and the impact of intervention.

Comprehensive and incisive, the book is not beyond improvement. Natsios extols the virtues of the U.N. for achieving international consensus and for taking collective action in CHEs, but he does not fully discuss the merits of NATO, which may become the U.S. instrument of choice for military support of CHEs in Europe and in parts of Africa. Natsios also predicts that CHEs will subside in 10 to 15 years as the new world order begins to stabilize. Few analysts share his optimistic view. They assert that demographics, cultural dynamics, economic impacts and environmental problems will create near-constant conflict well into the 21st century, with no letup in U.S. involvement. Ironically, if they are right, Natsios' book is even more important.

Natsios asks for balance between moral precepts, political-military imperatives and bureaucratic realities. He calls for strong U.S. leadership as part of a comprehensive strategy to change the course of conflict for the better. He asserts that, without the leadership of the world's only superpower, even the best structure and process will fail to make a serious difference. A review of AARs from Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia strongly suggests that he is right.

LTC Kenneth H. Pritchard
Policy and Strategy Division
USSOCOM



Special Warfare is available on the Worldwide Web at www.usasoc.soc.mil/swcs/dotd/sw-mag/sw-mag.htm.