

The Blind Men and the Elephant

The personnel turbulence that cripples our Army
Places the career progress of the individual
Above the unit's need for stability.
This needs to change...

by Lieutenant Colonel Tim Reese

"Despite the repeated assurances of senior Administration officials, the readiness of our armed forces is suffering."¹

This 1997 statement by Chairman Floyd Spence of the House Committee on National Security was merely a reiteration of a campaign he began some three years before. The General Accounting Office (GAO) supported the Chairman in 1999 with its own report on the ineffectiveness of the Combat Training Centers (CTC) at improving unit readiness.² The Joint Chiefs began in 1998 to tell Congress that the military suffered from serious readiness problems and began in 2000 to say that the nation is at high risk to execute the two-MTW (Major Theater of War) strategy.³ Whether one compares CTC data from the 1980s, early 1990s, or today, the tactical lessons learned are essentially the same.⁴ The level of training among Task Force Hawk units still haunts the Army in the current war on terrorism. What do all of these official and anecdotal bits of evidence tell us?

The bottom line is that the great majority of Army combat units are not ready for combat without significant additional training. This is not a new phenomenon. While recent readiness and tactical performance trend lines may be down from the alleged "heyday" of the late 1980s, the same question has been asked for decades. Why, despite all the hard work and time spent



Photo by Robert L. Stevenson

Tank crews need to train together to get the most from their superior equipment. But how long can they stay together?

training, don't Army units perform well at our best approximation of combat, the CTCs? Why, no matter what training "fixes" are attempted, do units continue to make the same mistakes over and over again in training? At all levels, we have the same problem — we don't do well on the test.⁵

The Army is unable to find out why its units cannot reach or sustain high levels of readiness, for it is "feeling" or looking at only part of the problem and missing the real reason. We are like the proverbial blind men attempting to describe an elephant by feeling its appendages and thus finding themselves unable to describe the huge beast in front of them for what it really is. The elephant of low unit readiness cannot be explained by feeling its appendages — such as battlefield operating systems, leadership, or doctrine. *Army tactical combat units are poorly trained*

in many of their wartime tasks primarily due to personnel turbulence caused by the Army personnel system because that system places a higher priority on the individual soldier's personal professional development than the mission or training needs of the tactical unit.

Let us first take a look at some of these other proposed solutions and why they have not — and indeed cannot — fix the problem of unit readiness. Then I will propose a way that the Army could transform its personnel system to raise unit effectiveness to new heights.

Part I: The Problem

The United States Army has probably the best professional education system in the world; the Army Officer Education System and Noncommissioned Officer Education System are the envy of many nations. But ironically, these two systems contribute to the turmoil that prevents units from reaching peak performance. Unit commanders struggle daily to balance the absence of key leaders and soldiers completing their professional development requirements with their unit's training needs. Any 1SG, CSM, CO, or BN CDR can provide dozens of examples of training conducted while the vehicle commander is at BNCOC, the PSG is at ANCOC, and the BMO at CAS3. The effect on unit readiness is devastating.

And no 1SG or CDR wants to damage the professional development of subordinates by denying them timely attendance at schools. The centralized schooling system at MACOM and DA levels is extraordinarily inflexible and totally removed from the needs of the units it purports to serve.

Yet another layer of schools that detract from our readiness includes the local or skill schools system, courses such as the armorer's course, PLL clerk certification courses, NBC officer, and a myriad of others. Even if a unit manages to work these kinds of schools around its training and CTC schedule, units cannot avoid having key personnel missing from the train-up. We constantly find ourselves retraining on the most basic tasks since, as a unit, we cannot get beyond the rudiments of our profession when individuals are constantly missing from training.⁶

Second, could it be that our training doctrine is wrong? The answer here is, I believe, an emphatic NO — our training doctrine works. Training gates, METLs, the tasks-conditions-standards triad, AARs, O/Cs, OPFOR, MILES and the CTCs, and the role of the NCO in training are now almost immutable truths. The Oracle at Delphi has never spoken more definitively. Our training doctrine resurrected the Army out of the ashes of Vietnam; it won the Cold War, and by 1991 had made it perhaps the greatest army in the history of the world — more about that later. Even *FM 25-101*, however, acknowledges the negative effect of personnel turnover on unit effectiveness, but it greatly understates its degrading effect on unit training proficiency.⁷ We have known the risks since the inception of our training doctrine, but we have been unable to avoid those rocky shoals.

Many have argued that the problem in recent years is that we do not follow our own training doctrine. Ask any leader at any level his opinion of the value of QTBs, training guidance, and training schedules and you will hear an unending tale of woe. Since 1991, the lack of resources, the burdens of peace support operations, and high OP-TEMPO all have made it more difficult to follow our training doctrine than it was during the Cold War era. We all talk about taking an "appetite suppressant" for good ideas, but we somehow just cannot quite manage to swallow the pill. Any unit leader can relate multiple horror stories about how our in-

ability to control our training calendars destroys what little personnel stability they may have been able to carve out in their unit. Given the international situation, our national interests and our national budget, there is little the Army or its leaders can do to alleviate the tempo and eliminate resource constraints.

Third, maybe our tactical and operational doctrine is wrong. Do our CTCs train the wrong tasks, missions, or focus on the wrong tactics? Gallons of ink and reams of paper have been consumed seeking an answer to this question. Frankly, we will never know the answer until the next war is fought. Who knew that AirLand Battle doctrine would work until February 1991? As the famous military historian Michael Howard once stated, "It is not the job of the military to get it right before the next war, only not to get it so wrong that it can't rapidly fix it before losing that war."⁸ Whether we "break the phalanx," "transform the force," or "maintain the legacy," our units must be well trained *as units*. Even if we have the future rightly understood, and yet can't field units that can carry it out because of the way we man them, it won't matter in the end.

Fourth, is the problem that we do not take our lessons learned to heart and focus our training to get better? Our training system and professional libraries are overflowing with CTC take-home packages, CALL newsletters, CTC quarterly training bulletins, the Chief of Staff's Trends Reversal Process, and CTC-focused rotations. Every year, some senior Army leader appears, like a prophet bearing witness to the burning bush, only to repeat what is already on the stone tablets of Mount Sinai — "We must train more, rehearse more, synchronize better, ..." ad nauseam. We know the tactical and doctrinal solutions. We repeat them over and over like a Tibetan monk reciting his mantra. Certainly all these efforts are helpful at the margins; things can always use a new gloss coat. But some of these "fixes" themselves contribute to the problem. Training units spend immense amounts of time trying to understand, manage, and implement the latest "silver bullet" at the expense of spending time fixing the very problem we are addressing!

Very few platoons, battalions, or divisions can progress in skill, intensity, or complexity from one exercise to the next because, in the interval between

training events, 5 or 10 percent (over a summer it may reach 33 percent) of the unit's personnel have changed. In a battalion, those percentages usually include the TF CDR, XO and/or S3, one or two company commanders, and handfuls of platoon sergeants and leaders and squad/vehicle commanders. It is near impossible to train a task force to conduct a deliberate breach of a complex obstacle belt against a well-prepared defender when part of the task force is still not proficient at terrain driving, part is not skilled at fire and maneuver, and part is still learning how to operate the tank plow. What good does it do to talk about using CTC take home packages (THP) or inspection results to focus a unit's post-FTX or post-CTC training when the unit is not the same unit it was only six months ago?⁹ THPs are at best another source of "good ideas" and the solutions recommended are generally applicable to any unit in the Army. At worst, they are doorstops, dust ball collectors, or personal souvenirs. We are awash in attempts to fix what's broke — but again, we're just not getting there.

Most of the officer and NCO corps, like whirling dervishes, work themselves into a frenzy, training harder, but merely spinning in place. In some cases, it is the personnel system that *dictates* the training schedule. Battle Command Training Program exercises and CTC rotations are scheduled so as to "fit" the command tenure of the commander, and the training calendar cascades downward from there. The logic is that every commander must "get a rotation under his belt" before he leaves command.¹⁰ The adage about putting the cart before the horse has never been more applicable. Perversely, the result has been no tactical improvement but a great decrease in morale and quality of life and an increase in officer attrition and command declinations. As individual leaders, we simply do not have the practice time to get good at our wartime tasks.

The CSA's recent initiative to fully man the divisions has greatly alleviated the chronic undermanning problem, though only in part of the Army. It will not, however, fix the problem of turbulence. Our units will at least be close to fully manned, but they won't be better trained as units because turbulence remains the same. Perhaps OPMS XXI will improve officer competency in tactical units by increasing time on

station and in critical positions, perhaps not. If so, leaders may over time become *individually* more experienced and competent. When a highly competent leader takes a unit through a major training event or CTC rotation, however, it will be likely that he will be leading and will be part of an ad hoc team that was put together for the event only a short while before. Often the commander will be brand new, having taken command after the train up and before the execution.

When forced, or allowed, to speak openly, we admit the problem. In the 1999 GAO study, 49 percent of the responders stated that personnel turnover had the most negative impact on readiness at the battalion level; 54 percent said the same thing about readiness at the company and platoon levels.¹¹ Officers are routinely pulled out of units to serve in allegedly key positions, such as aide-de-camp to general officers, without regard to the unit's needs.¹² Our soldiers and leaders at the battalion level and below know well the reality of personnel turnover.

In 1995, Colonel John Rosenberger boldly asserted "... We, the officer corps, particularly battalion and brigade commanders and our staffs, are incompetent."¹³ The key reason behind his assertion is that officers spend insufficient time practicing the nuts and bolts of their profession. He also concluded that given the conditions that exist in the Army today, particularly the personnel system that does not train officers well at combined arms operations and which inhibits repetitive practice by key leaders, officers simply *cannot* become tactically skilled.

All these systems that are designed to improve readiness have, at best, a marginally positive effect; some even have negative effects. Like an incurable infection, we take the personnel system as a given and merely apply different types of salve to the wound. None of them can cure the glaring problems caused by the turbulence of the personnel system. History, practical experience, common sense, and even our doctrine tell us that soldiers and leaders must train together as a unit, over long periods of time, to perform well in training or in combat. But we don't follow through. In fact, we can't follow through because our manning system won't let us. Intuitively we know it.

When it really "counts," we do all we can to limit the damage of our personnel system. Since 1990, it has really "counted" quite a number of times. Both the Persian Gulf War and our deployments to various regions of the Balkans are great case studies.

Part II: Points of Light

The United States Army is still the best in the world. Some leaders and units manage to perform amazingly well despite these many shortcomings. Whatever our current challenges in recruiting may portend for the future, the Army still attracts and retains large numbers of superb leaders and soldiers. Evidence of outstanding warfighting skill and combat readiness, using our

One of the NTC's OPFOR battalion commanders summarized his secret: "Rigorous and repetitive training is the core of our training program."

very own soldiers, leaders, personnel system and training doctrine, is staring us in the face. We could learn some critical lessons by examining them and applying them on a broader, Army-wide scale.

One can find evidence of readiness excellence at the CTCs in the form of the various OPFOR units who routinely embarrass BLUFOR on the laser battlefield. Moreover, they do it with antiquated weapons systems.¹⁴ BLUFOR leaders bemoan the advantages of the OPFOR — they know the terrain like the backs of their hands,¹⁵ they fight missions over and over, they are experts at MILES gunnery, etc. Constant repetition, as a unit, makes them masters of the battlefield. The complaints are true and interestingly enough contain the answer to our training dilemma. One of the NTC's OPFOR battalion commanders summarized his secret: "Rigorous and repetitive training is the core of our training program."¹⁶ The key word above is repetitive. An OPFOR company probably fights ten times the number of battles its BLUFOR equivalent fights in the same period. Even the CTC OPFOR, however, must live within the Army's

personnel management system. Their unique set of tasks and conditions enables them to overcome its most damaging effects.

Another less obvious example of what happens when units and their leaders train together, without major personnel turnover, can be found within BLUFOR units while at the CTC. All soldiers, leaders, and O/Cs can attest to the improvement in their unit's skill over time at the CTC. The problem remains that they enter the CTCs at a low level of readiness, make solid gains, and then return home only to lose whatever was gained due to personnel turnover. Every battalion commander drools at the prospect of keeping a captain in command of his company long enough to take him to two CTC rotations as a company commander. Every task force S3 relishes the prospect of the scout platoon sergeant who knows the terrain at the CMTC and can focus on his mission — not land navigation and cold weather survival.

How many commanders have at the final AAR said to themselves, and perhaps to their units, "Boy, if we could only come back here in two months and do this again, we could really kick some OPFOR a*!" Instead, BLUFOR units redeploy home and the PCS diaspora begins. Within weeks, PCS moves and intra-unit moves render it a wilted, pale shadow of what it so recently became. Most of our tactical units remain mired at a rather low level of combined arms proficiency, unable to get better due to personnel turnover and lack of experience.

Occasionally, a unit does manage to conduct two or more CTC rotations, with large parts of its leadership and soldiers remaining in place, and shows great improvements. Anyone who has been through a CTC rotation with a unit whose key leaders and the majority of its soldiers have remained together as a team has seen this first hand. COL Dan Bolger's *Battle for Hunger Hill* chronicles the experiences of an air assault battalion with two JRTC rotations in 12 months. He clearly lays out the lessons learned at his first rotation, 94-10, the changes he and his leadership made in the intervening year, and the much improved performance they achieved in Rotation 95-07. There are many other less-heralded examples that illustrate the same point. The personnel

system does not allow much more than nibbling around the edges of the problem.¹⁷ One can occasionally delay a key leader's PCS move or school date to take him to a major training event or CTC, but not often.

To a similar degree one can see the same thing in units that deploy for peace operations. Personnel stability policies are put into effect months before the deployment to enable the unit to reach peak performance before the mission begins. Units usually undergo an intense mission rehearsal exercise at home-station or a CTC that prepares them for the unique tasks of the mission. Extensive right-seat ride programs with units in theater further increase the unit's proficiency before that magical milestone, the transfer of authority, is allowed to occur. Then, during the six months of deployment to the Balkans or other exotic locales, the unit reaps huge dividends in unit cohesion, morale, esprit, and effectiveness (albeit effectiveness at non-combat tasks, in most cases). Again, personnel stability is the key — it can't be achieved in normal times, but the Army strives to put it in place for our "real-world" deployments. The system has worked, however, only because the "real world" has given us time to get ready for it.

The most obvious example of how good Army tactical units can be, if given the time to train with one set of leaders and soldiers in the unit, is the Persian Gulf War of 1991. Whatever one's opinion of the operational and strategic aspects of the campaign, at the tactical level Army units performed brilliantly. It is important to note, however, that the Army had several months to ready its units for combat. We did not deploy and fight within *FM 25-100's* mystical "band of excellence." We deployed, trained extensively, then fought at a time and place of our choosing against an incompetent foe.¹⁸ We were able to overcome the limitations of our personnel system and peak for the war.

To get there, many aspects of the current personnel system were put into abeyance — stop-loss, PCS moves, NCO and officer professional schooling, retirement, and command tours. Why? Was it because we knew they would hobble our ability to field units that could fight and win? Was it because the prospect of a "real war" enabled us for a moment to see through the fog of our own mistakes? The months of unit training in the U.S.,

Germany, or at the NTC were the most intense training and team-building experience most had ever experienced. What would have been the result if Saddam Hussein and his incompetent generals had continued their attack in August 1990, or if our units had to fight only hours or days after unloading at the ports in Saudi Arabia? What would have happened if NCOs and officers continued to go to schools and left their units days or weeks before we attacked?

The biggest obstacle blocking our path to fielding effective combat units is the Army's personnel system. Our personnel management system trains individuals in a wide variety of tasks over their professional lifetimes. We train individuals who belong temporarily to a unit. They move in and out of those units based on their personal professional development timeline. What the unit is doing is of little or no consequence.¹⁹ We count on having time for these individuals to coalesce into effective combat units when needed. Those individuals learn, perhaps counter-intuitively, to correct the system's own faults when lives are on the line. This requires large amounts of time, extensive retraining, last-minute changes in our personnel system, and luck. We got all four of these in 1990/91 in the Gulf. Our foes in the Balkans have not really put us to the test. Will any foe be that stupid again?

Part III: A Modest Proposal

If the Army wants units trained to a high level of proficiency and ready to fight on very short notice, then we MUST change the personnel system to support our training system and ensure our readiness. The Army's transformation process — to create new types of forces and make them rapidly deployable to anywhere in the world — is a recognition that the world has changed. Unfortunately, there seems to be no recognition that to generate these kinds of units the Army must change the way it mans and trains those units.²⁰ The transformation must reach down into our readiness-eroding personnel system. We must be able to win the first battles of the next conflict without the need for "peaking" before the first round is fired.

The Army should adopt a system somewhat akin to the naval battle groups fielded by the Navy, the amphibious ready groups deployed by the Marines, and the air expeditionary

forces (AEF) now being used by the Air Force. Naval battle groups rotate through an 18-month cycle of training, maintenance, and operations, with 25 to 33 percent of the fleet in operations. The Air Force has created ten AEFs which rotate through a 15-month cycle of training, deployment readiness, and recovery, with two of the ten being at peak readiness at any given time and the rest able to rapidly train and deploy in a time of crisis. The Navy and Marine Corps have done this for generations; the Air Force has recently adopted it for both readiness and quality of life reasons.

In the same way, Army tactical units could have a "life cycle" between 24 and 36 months — longer than the other services due to our unique training requirements. In the first or "activation phase," units should be filled with soldiers (filled to 110 percent of required manning levels to account for attrition) and trained to a high state of individual and collective readiness. Soldiers would report and remain assigned to the unit throughout its entire life cycle.

After perhaps 12 months of training, these units would then be certified and made available for deployment to unforeseen missions or deployed to ongoing missions as needed. These units would have a stable population of soldiers and would conduct sustainment training when/if not actually deployed. Repetitive training would sustain and hone their warfighting skills. Due to a stable base of soldiers, these units would not be in the maddening personnel manning vs. readiness predicaments faced by our units today. Training together as combined arms teams would further increase their battlefield prowess. These probably ought to be brigade-sized battle groups, à la Colonel McGregor's ideas, though size and task organization would perhaps vary by theater and mission.²¹ Some would be forward deployed and some based in CONUS. This portion of a unit's life cycle could be called the "deployable phase."

This would require a massive change of our individual-based promotions, particularly for senior NCOs and officers. While assigned to a unit, leader promotions should be limited to those that would not require moving the leader to a new position. For example, 2LTs would be promoted to 1LT, but 1LTs would not make CPT until they leave the unit. A PVT could be promoted to SPC, but a SFC would not

make 1SG. An alternative would be to have leaders selected and promoted but not reassigned in order to provide stability in key positions. Tank companies might end their life cycle with two CPTs — the original commander and a newly promoted CPT serving as the XO. It is essential that promotions not be allowed to undo key leader stability, unit cohesiveness, and warfighting readiness.

At the end of a unit's deployable phase, it would be "deactivated" and the cycle started over again. Some soldiers in those units might be staying on as a cadre for a repeat tour with the unit in a position of greater rank and responsibility. Others would be headed off to school, TDA assignments, and eventual reassignment back to the same or other deployable units.²² Leaders should attend all NCOES and OES schooling during PCS moves or between tours in a unit if staying for a repeat tour at a post. Unlike the COHORT system of the 1980s, many families could remain in place for long stretches of time while soldiers participated in 36-month unit tours. Perhaps we could even make a true regimental system a reality.

At any given point in time, some portion of the Army would be fully trained and deployable for whatever missions arise, some would be in their activation phase and some would have just deactivated. If a crisis arose that required more of the Army than that part of it which was in their deployment phase, training for other units could be intensified and sped up. Essentially, this is what we have been doing for decades on an *ad hoc* basis. It is what the Navy has always done, and what the Air Force now does. A critical aspect of this mix would be to determine how much and what portions of the force need to be in the deployment phase at any given time so that they could respond to a crisis and await the arrival of the rest of the Army should that crisis expand.

The above notion is admittedly simplistic and would need far more work to implement. Probably not all of the Army could adopt such a system. The part of the Army that deploys and fights as units, however, must do so. The personnel system must be stood on its head. The training, education, and promotion of individual soldiers must become tied to the "life cycle" and needs of the unit to which they are assigned. In particular, leaders would join

a unit at its "activation" and remain in the duty position until the "deactivation" of the unit. Individual career progression would serve the unit. Units would cease to be (or perceived to be) promotion platforms for individuals, especially officers. It would require a massive shift in priorities — from training individuals at the expense of unit readiness, to training and fielding combat ready units with soldiers whose primary purpose is to support that unit's readiness. The Army will also realize huge benefits in morale and retention as its training and deployment pace becomes more predictable.

Conclusion

The evidence is clear, overwhelming, and available for anyone who wants to look at it (including our potential enemies). It is not new — in different guises we have been dealing with the problem for at least 50 years.²³ Our current personnel system does not support combat readiness and, in fact, indirectly works against it. The elephant of low unit readiness is in our living room, but we can't see the whole beast at once because each of us feels only that part of it that is immediately in front of us. Our attempts to improve unit readiness have at best limited utility because they address only its appendages. We've become so used to its corrosive effects on readiness that we have developed work-arounds to try to overcome the problem.

If we are indeed transforming ourselves for a new era — an era in which a force projection Army must be ready to fight across the entire spectrum of conflict on very short notice against asymmetric threats, and so on — then this old problem is intensely more acute than at any time since the end of WWII. It is time to take unit readiness to a higher and sustainable level. It is time to take bold measures before the future is visited rudely upon us.

Notes

¹Chairman Floyd D. Spence, "Military Readiness 1997: Rhetoric & Reality," (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, House Committee on National Security, April 9, 1997), p. 1

²Mark E. Gibicke, Ed. "Military Readiness: Full Training Benefits From Army's Combat Training Centers Are Not Being Recognized," (GAO/T-NSIAD-99-2, Feb. 2, 1999).

³Rick Maze, "Congress Hears Readiness Woes," *Army Times*, 12 October 1998, p. 4.

⁴Each CALL publication is a veritable gold mine of good ideas. They are, however, old ideas

that have been mined many times, over and over again.

⁵Spence, "Military Readiness: 1997," p. 14. See also GAO, "Military Readiness: 1999," pp. 2-3

⁶Spence, "Military Readiness: 1997," p. 5

⁷U.S. Army *Field Manual 25-101, Battle Focused Training*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), pp. 1-6 to 1-7, and figure 1-3.

⁸Michael Howard, oral remarks made at the United States Military Academy to the Department of History, 1992.

⁹GAO, "Military Readiness: 1999," pp. 21-22, also Table 2.

¹⁰Author, personal notes. Information about the BCTP comes from observing, via VTC, the Combat Training Center Quarterly Training Briefs to the CSA. Information about MACOM CTC scheduling comes from personal experience as joint readiness officer, a battalion commander, and a CMTC Observer-Controller in USAREUR from 1996 to 2001.

¹¹GAO "Military Readiness," p. 12.

¹²Author, personal notes. One USAREUR armor task force executed its CMTC rotation in 2001 without a battalion executive officer because he was selected to serve as an aide-de-camp two weeks prior to deployment and a replacement was not available. Another task force had its battalion executive officer replaced one week prior to a real-world deployment in 2000 when he was "pulled up" to become the brigade S3 when that officer was selected to serve as an aide-de-camp.

¹³COL John D. Rosenberger, "The Burden our Soldiers Bear: Observations of a Senior Trainer O/C," *Combat Training Center Quarterly Bulletin*, (Ft. Leavenworth, Kan.: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 4th QTR, FY 95), Part I, pp. 1-2, and Part IV, pp. 1-2. See also his article, "Reaching Our Army's Full Combat Potential in the 21st Century," *ARMOR*, (Ft. Knox, Ky.: U.S. Army Armor Center, May-June 1999), pp. 8-14.

¹⁴History is replete with examples of forces using less effective equipment defeating technologically superior foes.

¹⁵We'd better get used to it. In any future conflict outside of Korea, this will be true of our real enemies.

¹⁶LTC Jim Zanol, "Training to Achieve an OPFOR Level of Proficiency," *The Combat Training Center Quarterly Bulletin*, (Ft. Leavenworth, Kan.: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 1st Qtr FY98, No. 97-2), p. 1.

¹⁷Dan Bolger, *The Battle for Hunger Hill* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1997), pp. 58-60.

¹⁸GEN Fred Franks, Jr., *Into the Storm*, (New York: Berkley Books, 1998), Chapters 7 & 8. This is just one of many books and articles that stress this point.

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¹⁹MAJ Donald E. Vandergriff, "Truth@Readiness.com," *U.S. Naval Institute: Proceedings*, Vol. 125, Issue 6, June 1995), p. 56. MAJ Vandergriff attributes our current readiness problems to a wider problem of officer leadership, culture, passivity, and reluctance to speak the truth. While I do not subscribe to the more nefarious tone of his article, I believe he has correctly identified our personnel system as the culprit. He is one of many authors addressing the same issue.

²⁰The recently released results of one of the CSA's "Blue Ribbon Panels" on officer training and development acknowledges that, "many [officers] do not know or understand what right looks like" and "units cannot conduct home station training according to Army doctrine ..." Unfortunately, the panel's recommendations are that officers must adopt the so-called "enduring meta-competencies" of self-awareness and adaptability. How these new buzzwords will improve officer skill and unit effectiveness is left as an exercise to the reader. It does not directly address personnel or officer turnover nor call for any significant changes to the personnel system. "The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study, Report to the Army," May 2001, pp. OS-2, 3, and 14.

²¹COL Douglas McGregor, *Breaking the Phalanx*, (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), pp. 56-86.

²²The German Bundeswehr used a similar system for many years during the Cold War. Their system worked within battalions and brigades instead of across the entire Bundeswehr.

²³It is by now axiomatic that unit cohesion, esprit, trust, and pride, among other intangibles, gained through long periods of training men together under tough conditions, are the key to small unit battlefield success and individual survival. The U.S Army's individual replacement system of WWII and the individual rotation system of Korea and Vietnam all violated this principle. See for example, Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behavior of Men in Battle*, (New York: The Free Press, 1985), pp. 31-73 and 261-63.

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