SMALL WARS JOURNAL

smallwarsjournal.com

The Army after This

Vegetius

The American defense establishment today is torn in two directions. It is agonizing between becoming a high tech, cutting edge 21st century fighting force poised for the uncertainties of tomorrow's challenges, or spending more money on preparing for the wars we currently have and are likely to fight in the next five years. The irony is that there does not need to be a choice. The United States has to be able to confront hostile high tech state actors as well as to handle the messy problems spawned by radical Islamic movements and the associated chaos caused by a breakdown in governance in many parts of the third world.

Rumsfeld was Right

Donald Rumsfeld was absolutely correct when he worried about the possibility of a supple, high tech enemy being able to defeat a lumbering American military machine unable to get out of its own way, much less being able to deploy quickly to battle. He encouraged the Pentagon's futurist, Andrew Marshall, to game the potential scenarios in which the US might find itself in the future, and most of the scenarios found that the existing force structure of the American military was simply too ponderous to respond to an adaptive enemy who had studied our weaknesses thoroughly.

Rumsfeld's insistence on creating a light, hard hitting force package for the invasion of Iraq in 2003 that would avoid the embarrassing amount of time it took the nation to build up its forces to liberate Kuwait in Operation Desert Storm. At the end of the day, he proved the vision for a lighter conventional fighting force was possible. Critics, this author among them, who criticized Rumsfeld for being slow to realize that an insurgency required a different kind of force structure, were also correct; however, the kind of problem that Rumsfeld was trying to solve still exists.

In a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, defense analyst Andrew Kepinevich described the "wasted assets" that exist in the US force structure which might well be a liability rather than a strength in a future conflict because they depend so heavily on massive and increasingly vulnerable US bases in key regions of the world.[1] A Rand study that postulates a U.S. loss in a Taiwan Straits crisis to a China that is rapidly developing an "Access Denial" strategy reinforces the concern of Kepinevich and like thinkers.[2]

---

[1] Andrew Krepinevich, "The Pentagon's Wasted Assets", *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2009, Volume 88, number 4.
[2] Some critics have pointed out that the Rand study has many caveats in its findings regarding its eventual conclusions, but the point made is that their development of an access denial strategic approach, sometimes called "Assassin's Mace", has matured considerably since a similar RAND study in 2000.

Gates is Right

The current Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, largely managed the "Surge" that turned the tide in the multi-faceted insurgency in Iraq, and he has famously vowed to cancel weapons systems that are not truly needed and some that simply do not work to pay for the wars we currently have. This pragmatic approach has made him a darling of the Washington press and even among military personnel who would be saddled with unneeded equipment at the expense of true war fighting assets.

However, there is danger in the temptation to configure the military so far to the side of being able to fight counterinsurgencies that it cannot respond adequately by training, equipment, or temperament to the possibility of high intensity wars with rising peer or near peer competitors. The challenge of being able to "walk and chew gum at the same time" has never been greater than it will be in the coming decade.

Getting it Wrong; the Western Powers on the Eve of World War II

France, Great Britain, and to a lesser extent, the United States got it badly wrong in the run up to the Second World War. Each believed that the ponderous conventional armies that won the First World War would be adequate for fighting the second. Each was also engaged in small wars, which would now be called insurgencies, on the periphery of their empires or spheres of influence (as the Americans preferred to think of their overseas interests) and the bulk of their military effort and forces were engaged in these small wars. By and large, their standing military cadres were small but professional forces that were somewhat proficient in such irregular conflicts.

Britain, France, and especially the United States firmly believed that they had enough time to prepare for a real war when they saw one coming. When Hitler and the Japanese militarists rushed their nations to war prematurely, the Axis powers were unready, but they were much less unready than their western foes. The French and British were roughly equal, and in some cases better equipped in terms of technology, than their German adversary; however, the Germans had used similar technology to forge a much quicker, more supple and adaptive fighting machine than their ponderous foes.

In the case of the Americans early in the Pacific War, the Japanese outclassed them in many cases in both equipment and training, particularly in naval and aviation forces. In any case, all of the western partners in the grand coalition that eventually defeated the axis had allowed a great gap to occur between their conventional war fighting and low intensity conflict capabilities.

Getting it Right: Roman Balance in Small and Big War Fighting

The Romans did not dominate the world as they knew it for nearly a thousand years with heavy legions alone. As Adrian Goldsworthy points out in *Why Rome Fell*, the Roman Army maintained a mix of regular legionary formations and specialized units for the messy little confrontations of the marches of the empire. These multifaceted units are often dismissed as auxiliaries, but Goldsworthy shows that by the late empire, many of these formations were

considered full military partners in their own area of expertise; he also points out that their demise coincided with the real beginning of the end for Roman imperial supremacy.[3]

Hybrid Wars

Because the primary enemies we face in the two conflicts that we are currently engaged in are non-state actors, some observers have opined that we are seeing a period when wars between states are becoming obsolete and that nation-states will increasingly fight for survival against non governmental entities. This theory of "Fourth Generation War" was first articulated in the late 1980s.[4] One theorist, Martin Van Creveld, went so far as to postulate that conventional wars between nation states would become obsolete.[5] He had the bad fortune to have his book on the subject published just before the 1991 Gulf War; but the messy situations in the Balkans, Somalia, and Liberia and in other failed states led some to believe that Desert Storm might have indeed been the end of the "big battalions". Ironically, big battalions are generally sought in small Fourth Generational conflicts; the small and supple formations of Rumsfeld's vision appear less relevant in such counterinsurgency environments.

The Second Iraq War mutated from a situation where a state actor appeared to have won decisively by conventional means on the battlefield but quickly it found itself bogged down in a messy unconventional conflict with a number of diverse non state actors. Military analyst Frank Hoffman coined the term Hybrid War to describe this kind of conflict.[6] Although the original invasion of Afghanistan was done by a combination of conventional and unconventional means, the United States and its allies are now involved in a war that fits the hybrid definition in that conflict as well.

The 2006 War between Israel and the Lebanese Hezbollah was a deliberate attempt by a state actor to crush a non state actor. In this version of hybrid war, the non state actor chose to use conventional rather than guerilla means. Armed with Iranian supplied weapons, Hezbollah fought the Israelis to a standstill and punished Israel itself with a rain of rockets.[7] This sapped the Israelis of the will to finish the job. The Israelis knew that they could eventually have occupied South Lebanon, but then once Hezbollah conventional capabilities had been degraded, the Israelis would have been forced to wage a counterinsurgency campaign similar to the one they abandoned in 2000. It was a "lose-lose" situation for the Jewish state.

---

[3] Adrian Goldsworthy, *Why Rome Fell; Death of a Superpower*, Yale University Press, 2009. Goldsworthy maintains that these forces were functional and not subservient from a point of view of class or as; he argues that there were few military elites in the mature Roman imperial system.

[4] A series of articles by a group of Marine Corps officers in the *Marine Corps Gazette* in the late 1980s by a group off officers, including future Commandant Charles Krulak, introduced this term.

[5] Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*, Free Press, 1991. The 1991 conflict between Iraq and a U.S.-led coalition (Desert Storm) occurred just after Van Creveld's book was published. It was a very conventional conflict. However, Van Creveld's writing began to seem more relevant as events Somalia, Rwanda, and on the West bank and Gaza of the Israeli occupied territories dominated military events in the last decade of the Twentieth Century and conflicts with non-state actors organizations such al Qaeda, the Taliban, and wild assortment of militias in Iraq have dominated the first decade of the present century.

[6] At the time, Hoffman was an analyst at the Marine Corps Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities.

[7] A good assessment of the conflict can be found in Andrew Exum's study: www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubPDFs/PolicyFocus63.pdf.

Potential American adversaries have no doubt taken note of the lessons of 2006.Through a combination of conventional and unconventional warfare in an area far from our shores, a potential state actor might well be able to convince the American people and their government that a conflict over an interest that the Americans originally considered vital, might not be so vital after all. Recent polls show that this may well be happening regarding American opinion toward Afghanistan.[8]

The ability to wage a quick conventional war to crush an opponent's regular forces and then to successfully wage a protracted follow-on conflict against irregular forces or other non state clients, may well be the greatest military challenge that this nation has faced since Vietnam. Unfortunately, much of the debate among military professionals seems to be over which threat to prepare for rather than to prepare for both.

The Coinistas versus the Troglodytes

Although the debate in national security circles is generally polite, it is often contentious. [9]Conservative officers who want to get back to the "real business" of war fighting want to reinvigorate armor and artillery organizations stripped down to infantry formations to feed the insatiable maw of the counterinsurgency fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. The officers who have largely fought and won in Iraq, particularly the younger ones, feel that the conventional leaning officers are troglodytes. The youngsters and their more senior mentors who favor a further honing of counterinsurgency (COIN) are often dubbed "Coinistas". Fortunately, there seem to be relatively few who are shortsighted enough to take an "either or" view of the future.

Students of military history will recognize this form of debate. There was a very similar one in the Marine Corps in the years of the Banana Wars between the world wars. The veterans of the Banana Wars argued that fighting guerillas was the future of the Corps while advocates of the new concept of amphibious warfare operations wanted to prepare for the war with Japan that they were certain was coming.

At that juncture, the Marine Corps did a smart thing. Some of the firebrands for amphibious warfare were sent from Quantico to Nicaragua and China where they could fight Sandinistas and observe both Mao's guerillas and their future Japanese foes. Simultaneously, some of the hard core jungle fighters were assigned to the experimental amphibious brigade at Quantico. When war came, the nation had a force that was equally prepared to conduct high intensity amphibious assaults as well as long campaigns in the jungles of places like Guadalcanal and Bougainville.[10] It was the perhaps the only formation fielded by the western allies that was prepared to fight the

---

[8] A *Washington Post* poll published on 16 September, 2009 showed that American support for the Afghan war is slipping, particularly among Democrats who constitute the core of the present administration's support base.

[9] A recent review of Tom Ricks' new book, The Gamble in The Columbia Review of Journalism argues that Ricks is a COIN advocate who used the book to attack Army Colonel Gian Gentile who advocates a more conventional approach to war fighting. The author is familiar with the writing of both of these individuals and thinks that the review article overstates the case, but it does point out that passion runs high on this subject.

[10] For a good discussion of this topic, see Keith B. Bickel, *Mars Learning; the Marine Corps Development of Small Wars Doctrine 1915-1940*, Westview Press, 2001.

war that really happened rather than the one conventional thinkers expected. America needs to create a joint version of what the Marine Corps was creating in 1940.

What Have We Learned?

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have created perhaps the most combat experienced ground fighting force that the nation has ever fielded. That is the good news. The bad news is that the combat arms of the Navy and Air Force have been largely left behind. So too have the heavy combat assets such as tanks and artillery as well as the expertise to put large, mobile formations into action coordinated with airpower and fast moving reconnaissance and surveillance. Many senior officers, including the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Chief of Staff of the Army, have expressed a desire to get back to a more balanced approach to providing military forces for employment. The Navy and Air Force have continued to provide highly trained air and ship crews to go to combat if, and when, the proverbial balloon goes up.

Our Army has learned to operate on a non-linear battlefield where every truck driver, mechanic, and technician must be prepared to become a rifleman at a moment's notice; this is something that the marines have always believed. Care for combat trauma casualties is at unprecedented level of excellence. The integration of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance with maneuver operations is at an all time high. The ability of both our soldiers and officers to operate in and adapt to new cultures is stronger than perhaps any army since that of the Romans and very junior officers and enlisted men are routinely entrusted with independent missions in a high threat media intense environment; the era of the "Strategic Corporal" predicted by Marine Corps General Charles Krulak over a decade ago has truly arrived. Small, agile forces win conventional campaigns, but big battalions are needed for COIN.

Lessons that Need to be Unlearned

Every silver lining has its cloud. The price of combat power on the modern battlefield in a sustained counterinsurgency has been the rise of huge bases such as the Victory Base Complex in Iraq and Baghram complex in Afghanistan replete with Burger King and Taco Bell joints to keep an army of support personnel and contractors, most of who will never go outside the wire, amused and out of trouble. Against a better armed and more technologically sophisticated hybrid opponent than the ones we are currently fighting, we would be vulnerable to the kinds of threats postulated by Krepinevich in his *Foreign Affairs* article.

Slow moving insurgencies with a high IED and booby trap threat environments tend to generate extraordinary force protection measures, particularly when the war is unpopular and high casualty rates are unacceptable. This can lead to creating a force that is ponderous and slow to act at the tactical level. Small unit missions can be several days in planning and simple escort mission are too often orchestrated with the kind of coordination and multiple days' worth of prior notice that now rivals the legendarily bureaucratic Air Force Air Tasking Order process. This poses the danger of the loss of the maneuver warfare mindset that made the 2001 Afghan campaign and the 2003 invasion of Iraq such wonders of modern military execution.

Lessons that Remain Unlearned

The Need for Ground Micro-robotics and Sensors. It has become a maxim of counterinsurgency that you need many more "boots on the ground" in a counterinsurgency situation than you do in a fast moving combined arms conventional campaign. That masks the fact that if we had more eyes on the ground, we would need fewer boots. Our infatuation with unmanned aerial vehicles and other overhead surveillance and reconnaissance assets sometimes hides their limitations. Eyes at ground level can see things that aircraft, manned or otherwise will never see; this is particularly true if the eyes are covert, but we can only hire so many spies. Hundreds of very small covert sensors with accurate cameras can allow a much smaller unit to react to lethal threats as well as potential opportunities and control a much larger area that we can today. Small, mobile robots could covertly infiltrate suspected safe houses and insurgent strong points and gather information.[11] However, the kind of small, cheap, and persistent micro ground sensors and robots needed for these kinds of missions remain vastly underfunded in comparison to their more glamorous airborne cousins. This author has watched in frustration as insurgents and terrorists in both Iraq and Afghanistan have run rampant in areas that could be monitored and controlled relatively easy by such robotic micro sensors.

The Need for Advanced Non Lethal Weapons. In Somalia and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the last decade of the last century, we saw a disturbing asymmetrical tactic of using non combatants to shield combatants. This caused a sudden interest in advanced non lethal weapons that might deal with such situations in a manner that would not unduly kill unarmed civilians; this included the stand up of a Joint Non Lethal Weapons Directorate. However, the feeling rapidly passed and some very promising weapons did not get fully developed.

In the past year, we have seen a very sophisticated Taliban effort to deliberately fight among civilians forcing friendly forces to use lethal fire on structures where civilians and fighters are present causing civilian calculated casualties that can be exploited for propaganda purposes.

Perhaps and ultimate affirmation of this asymmetric tactic was the recent hijacking of two International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) fuel tankers by Taliban fighters. The German commander in the region feared that they would be used for an attack on his forces. He requested and revived permission for an air strike on the wayward tankers. The airstrike was subsequently found to have killed and wounded Afghan civilians. The resulting public relations debacle gave the Taliban an information operations victory and has further strained the ISAF alliance by causing friction between the Germans and Americans in ISAF.

An airborne energy directed non-lethal weapon could have kept everyone, civilian and Taliban away from the vehicles long enough for ISAF to send a reaction force to secure the tankers and defuse the crisis. We have the technology; we lacked the foresight and will to develop and deploy it properly.

The depressing thing about this is that many in the defense community saw this asymmetric approach of the part of our potential future adversaries coming in the 1990s and tried to prevent

[11] This is not to say that they have not been used, in Iraq and Afghanistan, but they are very low density items, not available to combat refinements and brigades on a daily basis.

it with the development of directed energy weapons that could incapacitate everyone in a structure and sort out the fighters from non combatants. Though a combination of stupidity on the part of senior military officers, and a lack of moral courage on the part of conventionally thinking senior Defense Department civilian officials in several administrations, particularly in the area of public affairs and policy, research and development in this area has failed to reach anything approaching potential. Much of the military problems came from general officers who refused to spend money on weapons that do not break things and kill people. Civilian officials tend to be deathly afraid of the human rights Nazis in the non governmental community who hate all non lethal weapons because of the possibility that they might be used to torture someone someday. The fact that the same effect could be achieved with a two dollar pen knife rather than a multi-million dollar system seems to elude them.

This failure of anticipation was caused by a combination of an inexcusable lack of military foresight and an accompanying lack of moral courage, is placing our forces at risk by making them afraid to use lethal force in situations where they have not been given the non-lethal tools that could have prevented this dilemma.

The Next Enemy and the Enemy after Next

We need to stop equivocating about who we may fight in the future. Iran and North Korea are known to be studying the implications of the hybrid warfare and are our most likely near term adversaries. China is developing an access denial capability. She may never use it, she may feel forced to use it in a Taiwan crisis, or she may try to use the threat of using it a strategic leverage to force us out of the Western Pacific at some point of her choosing.[12] Access assurance is not a topic examined in this paper, but it is another area of growing concern. Certainly, non-state actors that we may face in combat are taking notes from the experiences of the Taliban and Hezbollah against conventional military forces. That said; the best way to deter hybrid warfare and/or access denial warfare is to prove capable of defeating such strategies.

What Should the Next Military Look Like?

The Decisive Arm of the Joint Force. In twenty years, we have beaten a large conventional army twice using a combination of superior reconnaissance, surveillance, precision strike, and a superbly trained ground force of two heavy armored corps. We took much more than that to Operation Desert Storm but the force that provided the decisive blow was about two corps in composition (one Marine and one Army). The force that overran Iraq in 2003 was very nearly equal in size, but without the large reserve in back up that its 1991 predecessor had available. There are very few conceivable conventional land war scenarios on the horizon that would require a much larger force to deal a decisive blow to an Iranian or North Korean incursion and stabilize the situation.

[12] Ralph Peters, *War of Blood and Faith; The Conflicts that will Shape the Twenty-First Century*, Stackpole Books, 2007. Military analyst and author Ralph Peters has often pointed out that we need to be careful lest we turn a potential conflict with China into a self fulfilling prophecy, but we also cannot ignore the potential military threat from this rising economic hyper-power.

It would therefore be logical to build our decisive expeditionary land force around two regular heavy corps sized elements, The bulk of one of these should be amphibious capable in order to deal with the increasingly likely situation of not having free access to ports an airfields in a crisis area, A heavy army corps and a two division Marine Expeditionary Force, one division of which is amphibious- capable, should be more than enough to decisively defeat the probable and plausible conventional threats on the horizon in the next decade. As a hedge against miscalculation, we should maintain a third corps in a high rate of readiness in the reserve establishment.

The Rapidly Deployable Hold Force. The decisive arm can be made more rapidly deployable, and many of the initiatives started in the Rumsfeld era to that end are still underway. However, when a crisis such as the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait breaks, there is a need to attempt to deter further aggression, or at least contain it, before the decisive arm can arrive. This has always been the mission of the XVIIIth Airborne Corps and the Marine Expeditionary Units; three of which are always forward deployed in key regions. These are light forces, but light is a relative term. Precision strike, persistent air support, and pinpoint reconnaissance/surveillance have made these rapidly deployable forces much more lethal and effective. At the height of the Cold War, the these collective units were known as "speed bumps" designed to slow down a surprise attack or show American resolve in an emerging crisis. Those of us who were assigned to such forces knew that we were in for a very rough time of it in the event that our deterrent message failed. The potential of a hold force actually fighting an aggressor to a halt and forcing him to consider a negotiated settlement is infinitely greater than it was just three decades ago. A three division Army Corps built around the existing forces assigned to the XVIIIth Airborne Corps along with the existing Marine Corps Expeditionary Units should provide the nucleus for this rapidly deployable "hold" force package.

The bridge between the hold force and the decisive force should be the three brigades of the Marine Corps Maritime Prepositioned Force (MPF). These air ground task forces can reinforce the hold force and then become part of the Marine Corps contribution to the decisive win force package; they are perhaps the only force that can be "double counted" as contributing to both the rapid reaction and decisive win packages.

The General Purpose Force. In the near- to- mid term, this will include the forces we need to pursue the War in Afghanistan, the close out of Iraq, and the conduct of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) or whatever name the current administration decides to give it. For purposes of this discussion, special operations forces are included in this category; their size is miniscule but their cost and impact are immense. This piece is not designed to discuss them, but neither does the author intend to minimize their worth.

In sizing the force for the immediate future, the general purpose force is the critical variable. Ultimately the force needed to conduct operations in Afghanistan and pursue the GWOT will determine what the size of the general purpose force should be. We need to keep in mind that the number of units needed in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the GWOT must be multiplied by three to give Army and Marine Corps personnel enough time to catch a breath between combat tours in order to avoid "breaking the force". We probably will not know what that size is for at least a year.

This brings us to a critical national security issue. If we are penny wise and pound foolish and try to double count forces in the Afghan/GWOT rotation with those in the decisive win or hold forces, we will run the risk of having an army so internally conflicted that it is ill-prepared to fight either type of war. The French and British learned this the hard way in World War II. However, this is not an argument for two types of Army. We cannot afford to have an A team/B team mentality. This can be avoided by judiciously rotating personnel in the regular establishment routinely between units in the general purpose, the decisive force, and the rapid reaction forces. (This would not be possible in the reserves where personnel are geographically based.) This would ensure that, as was the case with the Marine Corps between the World Wars, a healthy mix of new ideas and combat experience flows through ground forces. The Marine Corps still does this, but the army is showing a disturbing tendency toward specialization among its combat arms units.

Air Support to Ground Forces. The ability to provide both manned and unmanned air support to ground forces and to provide strategic air supremacy should be a major area of concern based on the work of Krepinevich and war games by the Department of Defense Office of Net Assessment. Access assurance is not the subject of this article, but the need to disperse aircraft to a large number of remote sites as well as the need for a large number of high performance vertical take-off and landing aircraft should be a major priority in an environment where large fixed bases will be increasing at risk.

A Strategy for the Emerging Force

In the world of pure political-military theory, strategy should drive operational planning, force structure design, and tactical doctrine. In the real world, reality drives everything. There are two ways to avoid messy hybrid wars. The first is deterrence, the demonstrated ability to show that we can fight and win such conflicts. The second is to rethink regime change as an option of first resort. Hybrid warfare is the last choice of state actor faced with regime change, or a non sate actor threatened with extinction; if given no other choice, an opponent may well exercise that option.

A return to carrot and stick behavior modification and limited objective warfare supported by active diplomacy is something we need to seriously consider in cases where the other party is not acting like a rabid dog. We were successful in modifying both the Sunni and Shiia insurgents in Iraq by driving political and economic wedges between them. This largely happened despite grand strategists in Washington; it was large a bottom up process. Attempts to “flip” the Taliban or elements of it should continue in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Someday, we may even see exploitable breaks in the terror franchise that al Qaeda has become.

After it defeated Carthage, its great rival for superpower status in the Mediterranean, Rome, never really had a grand strategy. It has had a series of general operating principals that were modified changed or replaced over time as situations changed and common sense seemed to dictate. In his forthcoming book, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, Edward Luttwak points out that the Eastern Roman Empire eventually put its strategic principles on paper, and backed those prescriptions up with an Army trained and ready to fight on different fronts against

different enemies.[13] Since the end of the Cold War and the success of its grand strategy of containment, the United States has likewise had also operated on a series of general principles rather than as part of a coherent grand strategy. Until such a new strategy is articulated, it would appear that the force described in this paper be considered as an appropriate one for the foreseeable future.

Potential opponents will use hybrid warfare as national security strategy if they fear regime change. Our predilection lately has been absolute warfare designed to turn our enemy's leadership cadre and institutions into a smoking hole in the ground. This absolute strategy begs and absolute response; thus hybrid warfare. If an opponent cannot wear us down militarily with conventional tactics, he will most likely be willing to go guerilla and wear us down that way. Faced with absolute destruction, an enemy may well use absolute means. Perhaps behavior modification is a better first option in many cases. Luttwak argues that the Byzantine Empire used a combination of what we now call soft or "smart" power interchangeably with military force interchangeably to achieve it strategic objectives.

The reality is that the Cold War was never a conflict of absolute objectives. George Kennan and George Marshall were hoping to contain Soviet style Communism until it modified itself into something that we could truly live within peaceful co-existence. The fact that the whole rotten edifice collapsed inward on itself was a surprise to all but the most hard line of the Cold Warriors.

Armed with a force structure that is prepared for both conventional and hybrid warfare, we are more likely to be able bargain from a position of strength in compelling to convince potential adversaries to modify their behavior or risk a conflict that they cannot possibly win.

Posturing for an Unsure Environment

The Roman, and later the Byzantine armies faced a myriad of uncertain threats and survived them for a millennium. The Marine Corps of the era between the world wars postured itself successfully for what was to come when the armies of Western Europe and the United States were preparing for the wrong war. Both organizations embraced uncertainty and institutionalized the flexibility to adapt to the threats that arose, not necessarily the ones that they might have desired.

When Donald Rumsfeld said that, "you go to war with the army you have, not necessarily the one you want", he was wrong. We went to war with the army that the U.S. Army wanted; it turns out, the Army wanted wrong. Now is the time to correct that mistake.

Vegetius is a government employee. He has seen service in four wars.

[13] Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, Harvard University Press, p. 266