



**STRATEGY  
RESEARCH  
PROJECT**

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

**THE ADVANCED STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAM:  
IN SEARCH OF ARMY STRATEGISTS**

**BY**

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL (P) HARRY A. TOMLIN  
United States Army**

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:  
Approved for public release.  
Distribution is unlimited.**

**19980605 074**



**USAWC CLASS OF 1998**

**U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050**

**DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4**

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE ADVANCED STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAM:**

**IN SEARCH OF ARMY STRATEGISTS**

by

Lieutenant Colonel (P) Harry A. Tomlin

H. Richard Yarger, Ph.D.  
Project Advisor

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:  
Approved for public  
release. Distribution is  
unlimited.



## ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Harry A. Tomlin, Lieutenant Colonel (P), U.S. Army  
TITLE: The Advanced Strategic Studies Program: In Search of  
Army Strategists  
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project  
DATE: 12 May 1998      PAGES: 44      CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The United States Army has been subjected to considerable criticism that it is devoid of strategists and strategic thinkers of the caliber of its past. This paper proposes the establishment of an Advanced Strategic Studies Program (ASSP) at the United States Army War College. The aim of this program is to educate in depth a select group of Army officers from the resident Army War College program in the strategic art at the national strategic level. The proposal includes an examination of the criticism of the Army's strategic education and strategic stature, an analysis of how a strategist is educated, and a detailed look at the design of an ASSP. Additionally, it recommends the development of a network of Army master tacticians, operational artists and strategic thinkers through a cooperative learning relationship between the Command and General Staff College's School of Advanced Military Studies and the Army War College's ASSP.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....iii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....vii

THE ADVANCED STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAM: IN SEARCH OF ARMY  
STRATEGISTS.....1

STRATEGIC VOID IN THE U.S. MILITARY.....2

ARMY SOLUTIONS.....8

THE ADVANCED STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAM DESIGN.....21

    CURRICULUM.....23

        Phase I, USAWC Resident Course--Selection.....25

        Phase II, ASSP Resident Phase.....26

        Phase III, Internship.....34

THE 24 MONTH OPTION.....34

RESOURCING AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS REVISITED.....37

A MORAL IMPERATIVE.....38

ENDNOTES.....41

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....43



**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

FIGURE 1, THE ASSP CURRICULUM ..... 25

FIGURE 2, EXAMINING THE ELEMENTS OF POWER ..... 28



**THE ADVANCED STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAM:  
IN SEARCH OF ARMY STRATEGISTS**

*A successful search for strategy and the mastery of strategic art by our senior leaders, military and civilian, is vital to the nation.*

Richard A. Chilcoat<sup>1</sup>

From the days of General George Washington to those of General of the Army George C. Marshall, the military services were renowned for their strategic prowess, and the nation relied on the military institution for its source of strategists. These captains of strategy contributed to the shaping of the American nation and of the globe. They comprehended and operated within the full spectrum of strategic life including the political, economic, informational and military arenas. Today, however, the strategic competence of the military and of professional military education is being challenged and questioned by numerous sources. This paper proposes the establishment of an **Advanced Strategic Studies Program (ASSP)**<sup>2</sup> at the United States Army War College (USAWC) whereby select Army officers can pursue the mastery of the strategic art at the **national strategic level** and thereby restore the role of strategist to Army officers and render a vital service to the nation and to the Army.

## STRATEGIC VOID IN THE U.S. MILITARY

A serious void in strategic thought within the military has existed for several decades, and, in the wake of the Cold War, that void has become even more pronounced. Today's absence of a peer threat and the ambiguous and complex strategic landscape make it more difficult than in the past to answer fundamental strategic questions. These conditions exponentially increase the challenge for coherent strategic thought. Uniformed military strategists play a key role in the cooperative effort to seek a proper balance in the employment of all elements of national power. History offers numerous examples of how military officers have answered the call during periods of great uncertainty, and how they made a profound mark on the strategic direction of the nation.

George Washington developed his strategic acumen long before becoming the first President of the United States of America. He was a long time militia officer and commander of the first American regulars, the Continentals, who had been immersed in the political, economic and military realities of his day. The culmination of his strategic thought can be seen in his "Farewell Address" of 17 September 1796 where he set the strategic azimuth for the

new nation as it charted uncertain waters.<sup>3</sup> In the decades following the Civil War and prior to World War I, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan applied his education and experience as a naval officer to integrate the military aspect of sea power with the economic and political aspects. His strategic thought set the tone for the United States as it emerged as a maritime power with global reach.<sup>4</sup> General of the Army Douglas MacArthur became a principal architect of the post-World War II recovery in Japan, and he had a profound and lasting effect upon U.S. strategy in Asia. Finally, George C. Marshall, the consummate soldier statesman, stands out as one of the greatest strategic minds in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Like Washington, Mahan, and MacArthur, Marshall's unique military experience and professional development were manifested in his strategic thinking at a time of great national and global uncertainty. He was the American architect of military victory in World War II and the mastermind of the "European Recovery Plan" or "Marshall Plan." Marshall may have been the last military officer to be generally acknowledged as an accomplished grand strategist.

Charges that there is presently a serious void in strategic thinking in the officer corps can be found in military as well as Congressional, academic and intellectual circles. Addressing

the great need for officers possessing strategic talent, retired General John R. Galvin, the former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and Commander-in-Chief, U.S. European Command, was compelled to write an article in 1992 entitled "What's the Matter With Being a Strategist?"<sup>5</sup> This article bemoans the military's failure to develop strategists, and it presses for the pursuit of a solution.

In 1989 the House Committee on Armed Services made a direct indictment of the decline of strategic thought within the officer corps. The Panel on Military Education report states:

*... that Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked not only the dawn of the nuclear age but also the beginning of a decline in the contribution of military officers to the development of U.S. strategy. With few exceptions, military officers have been absent from the ranks of prominent post-World War II strategic thinkers.*<sup>6</sup>

Academics, intellectuals and "think tank" consultants join in the criticism. Martin van Creveld<sup>7</sup> and Williamson Murray<sup>8</sup> are prolific in their criticism, and they place much of the blame upon the impotence of the war colleges. Carl H. Builder, a senior member of RAND Corporation, charges:

*If the operational thinking of our military is secure and without peer, and if tactical thinking has come to the fore, strategic thought has been all but abandoned. The difficulty lies in seeing the strategic side of national security increasingly as the province of politicians and diplomats while the operational and tactical sides belong to the military, free from civilian meddling.*<sup>9</sup>

In the midst of the controversy over the strategic void in the military, the U.S. Army is often singled out as being the service with the least strategic sophistication. Both van Creveld<sup>10</sup> and Murray<sup>11</sup> charge the Army's premier educational institution, the Army War College, with failure in this regard. The historical and traditional presence of the Army at the center of the "Common Defense" of the nation has been abdicated to Carl Builder's politicians and diplomats<sup>12</sup> and a potpourri of pundits and academics with little or no real military perspective.

One only has to look at the Army Officer Personnel Management System to see that the recipe for an officer's career success has little to do with strategic thought and competence. Assignments, command selection, promotion and selection for Professional Military Education (PME) are a function of a "muddy boots" mentality that has drawn concern and questions in Congress. Education is often seen more as an interruption than a necessity. The Skelton Committee criticized the "muddy boots" mentality that equates professional success almost exclusively to tactical and operational success. The end result is that the senior leaders who find themselves in positions of national strategic significance too often lack the education and experience that would serve them and the nation well in that arena. The Committee endorsed the value of professional

military education saying, "While today's readiness may suffer slightly when a fine commander goes to school, when he returns from school his increased knowledge should mean higher future payoffs." <sup>13</sup> It emphasized the point further in quoting the British author and soldier Sir William Francis Butler: "The nation that will insist on drawing a broad demarcation line between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking done by cowards."<sup>14</sup>

Major General Richard A. Chilcoat, a former Commandant of the U.S. Army War College, notes that the Army has made great progress since the 1980s in mastering the tactical and operational arts and in placing strong emphasis upon the development of joint doctrine. However, in assessing the Army's pursuit of similar competence at the strategic level he commented that "... national security and [national] military strategy are only briefly addressed."<sup>15</sup> Army general officers who had graduated from the Army War College were surveyed as to how well the College had prepared them to assume future duties and responsibilities. In regard to the strategic art, one general wrote, "I'll tell you, the 'delta' between yesterday and the future has never been so great and we are not prepared to deal with that change - it is an array of skills that we must work on now."<sup>16</sup> These observations are well taken.

There is little evidence that the Army as an institution is focused upon grand strategic questions as it approaches the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In former periods of so-called "strategic pause," the Army turned to its educational institutions to think critically about war in its totality and to ponder the strategic possibilities that were over the horizon. Other services did the same. In the 1930s, Marine officers considered the strategic possibilities of a future war in the Pacific and then wrote the doctrine and plans that led to the design and manufacture of the machines of amphibious warfare that were employed in World War II. Army strategists of this century such as Omar N. Bradley, Dwight D. Eisenhower, George C. Marshall and their peers had not only been accomplished inter-war students but also instructors. A case can be made today that there is a departure from this strategic intellectual trend in the Army, and that the focus, as seen in initiatives such as "Vision XXI" and "Army After Next," is almost exclusively the domain of the tactical and the technological. The Army's approach to the "Revolution in Military Affairs" is an infatuation with machines and technology and an absence of the intellectual analysis of the strategic conditions that warrant their existence.

## ARMY SOLUTIONS

There is both a need and a moral obligation for the U.S. Army to reassert itself and to regain its stature in the national strategic debate. The need has been expressed in this paper as the strategic void in the Army. The moral obligation is a function of the Army's sworn responsibility to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States," and, at the same time, to safeguard the lives of the sons and daughters of America who have been entrusted to the Army's care. It is the National Security of the United States and the supporting National Military Strategy that promote the national interests, objectives and policies that place soldiers in harms way. Clearly, therefore, the Army must ensure that it has an active and credible posture in the process of formulating national strategic interests, objectives, policies and decisions.

The question that remains is how to reincarnate strategic thought in the Army officer corps and, thereby, hold a commanding competence from the tactical through national strategic levels. The answer is to establish an Advanced Strategic Studies Program. To do this the Army must have a clear vision of what an Army strategist is; provide strong leadership support to the development of Army strategists; break the Officer Professional Management System's paradigm of

exclusive advancement through the tactical and operational or "muddy boots" assignments; select the appropriate executive agency for the development of Army strategists; foster an academic environment that is conducive to their education and development; seek integration and networking between the Army War College and the Command and General Staff College in the education and development of the Army's master tacticians, operational artists and strategists; assign graduates of the program to appropriate positions of national strategic significance; and, most significantly, select and encourage the best qualified candidates to become Army strategists.

What is an "Army" strategist? An Army strategist is a senior Army officer who fully understands and articulates the application of **landpower** in the pursuit of national strategic objectives and policy. Further, the Army strategist has an expert appreciation for the political, economic, informational and military elements of national power in the context of the ends, ways and means of national strategy, and can make competent and skillful contributions in this arena. Army officers who become masters of the strategic art are "... those who can competently integrate and combine the three roles performed by the complete strategist: the strategic leader, strategic practitioner, and strategic theorist."<sup>17</sup> While fully cognizant and supportive of Joint Warfare, the Army Strategist's

focus is on the integration and application of landpower in national strategy.

The critical first step in instituting any initiative aimed at deliberately educating and developing Army strategists must be the proclamation by the senior leadership of the Army that mastering the strategic art is not only a worthy quest but that it is an institutional responsibility. As with the renaissance in the study of operational art in the 1980s, the Army leadership must endorse and resource the study of the strategic art at the national level. This top down commitment is central to the proposition of educating Army strategists.

For example, a shift in the current Officer Personnel Management System paradigm, with its myopic focus upon tactical success, will not occur without the full endorsement of the Chief of Staff of the Army. The dilemma today is that officers have an extremely compressed career pattern in order to meet both Army and joint duty requirements. This situation has led to success through "muddy boots," and a clear lack of appreciation for the pursuit of academic and intellectual excellence within the Army. This environment and mentality presents significant limitations and career management challenges to both the individual and the Army. Without changing this paradigm, the officers who are best suited to reestablish the strategic reputation of the Army will not come

forward. Qualified officers must not only wish to pursue the strategic art, but they must know that the quest is valued by the Army and that they are not excluded from competitive advancement. Not all strategists have to become generals, but the Army must endeavor to fill those general officer positions of national strategic significance with officers who have been well prepared to assume such responsibilities. Conversely, officers who dedicate themselves to the strategic art must see a career path offering the potential to rise to the very top.

Responsibility for educating the Army's national level strategists must be fixed, and the U.S. Army War College (USAWC) is the appropriate and logical executive agent for this endeavor. The USAWC is uniquely qualified to support the education of Army strategists and the advancement of strategic thought within the Army. A faculty of military and civilian strategic theorists and educators is in residence. The existing strategic elements of the curriculum provide an appropriate point of departure for students of the strategic art. The resident class provides a pool of highly capable, experienced and readily available candidates for advanced strategic education, and these officers are at the appropriate points in their careers to make the transition to this realm. The proximity of Carlisle Barracks to the nation's political, economic, military and informational leadership and expertise

combined with the plethora of distinguished speakers who visit the USAWC make it an ideal site. The Strategic Studies Institute, Military History Institute, and world class strategic gaming and simulation facility at Center for Strategic Leadership represent significant and unique educational multipliers for an ASSP. Fixing the responsibility for the Army's strategic renaissance at Carlisle will clearly advance the College's vision as: "The nation's preeminent center for strategic leadership and landpower...pursuing mastery of the strategic art through education, research, and outreach."<sup>18</sup> All of this favors the establishment of the ASSP at the Army War College.

The education of strategists demands an appropriate educational environment. General Galvin gives a clear description of the environment that is best suited to the education of strategists.

The schools should emphasize education rather than training. They should minimize lectures and stress extensive reading, research, written analysis, and discussion in seminars. Without a solid grasp of practical and theoretical knowledge, it is impossible to take the crucial step - the combining of existing facts in new ways to provide strategic insights. Written analysis is required as well. Writing is not easy because it requires structured thinking - something that takes effort and discipline. The school must avoid overloading students with lectures and briefings given by high-ranking VIPs, generals, and flag officers. The treadmill of speakers is not as productive and inspiring as it looks. It would be better to bring in experts or retired officers with

*experience in strategic planning (and not constrained by the current "party line") to talk to smaller groups about strategic issues.<sup>19</sup>*

To create such an academic environment, the Army does not have to reinvent the proverbial wheel. Between 1978 and 1982, a flurry of studies, letters, notes and memorandums circulated across the desks of the Army's senior leaders, mentors and trainers. The names of General Donald Starry, General Glenn Otis, General Carl Vono, Lieutenant General William R. Richardson, Lieutenant General Howard F. Stone, Lieutenant General Jack Merritt, then Brigadier Crosbie Saint, Colonel Huba Wass de Czege, and others appear in the correspondence that led to establishment of the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) at Fort Leavenworth. They all sensed a void in operational thinking; they all realized that the resident instruction at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) was "a mile wide and an inch deep," and that the resident CGSC program could not be reengineered to fill the void. The product of the operational debate was the establishment of two rigorous programs at SAMS: the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) for select graduates of the resident CGSC program with a tactical and operational focus and the Advanced Operational Art Studies Fellowship (AOASF) as a Senior Service College equivalent with a focus on the theater strategic level.

One lesson learned from the Leavenworth experience is that the mission of a school for the advanced study of strategy at the national level is clearly distinct from the standing program of resident studies at the USAWC. The program and its faculty must enjoy a degree of autonomy that separates it from the traditional departments within the War College.

*This is a lesson learned from the establishment of the School of Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth in 1983. CGSC could not be transformed in order to fill the void (in operational art) primarily because of the current class composition. Curricula tend to find naturally the lowest level of student ability, interest, and need. Since reform of the student population proved impossible, reform of CGSC itself was doomed.<sup>20</sup>*

As with today's critics of the Army's strategic acumen, the distinguished officers who created SAMS looked back to the mentoring, education and experience of the successful leaders of the World War II era as the operational role model. There are striking similarities between the debate over how to educate operational artists and that of how to educate strategists. It is easy to see that the lessons learned during the development of SAMS are relevant to creating the appropriate academic environment and experience for educating strategists.

Obviously any advanced strategic studies initiative must be demanding and challenging, and it must stimulate strategic thought. The quality of the graduates and the reputation of the USAWC as the strategic center of the Army depend heavily upon a

rigorous and focused educational experience. Equally important, by stimulating critical strategic thinking through a robust program there is the real potential to make a direct and immediate contribution to the development of strategic concepts, doctrine and national military strategy. Extensive reading, writing, research, dialogue, defense of one's own views, complex problem solving and challenging exercises not only contribute to academic rigor, but also must lead to publication that contributes to the greater strategic debate. The goal of the ASSP is not only to create a body of Army strategists who publish and serve while in active duty positions of strategic significance, but to educate senior officers in the strategic art who will continue to make strategic contributions even after retirement from military service.

The quality of the faculty is directly related to the ability to challenge and stimulate the students, and it has a direct bearing upon the recognition and reputation of the program. One of the most searing and debatable assertions in Martin van Creveld's criticism of the U.S. War Colleges is his indictment of the faculty.

*Even less than in the staff colleges do the military faculty at the war colleges form part of any clearly identifiable elite. Some are there because they like to teach or do research and because they believe that what they are doing is important. Many, however, are where they are because they have decided to abandon the pursuit of promotion and enter a comfortable*

*sinecure prior to retirement. Others resent their appointment, correctly realizing that it probably spells the end of any chance of being promoted to general rank. With some exceptions, they represent the system's castoffs.<sup>21</sup>*

While this charge is extremely cutting and obviously open to debate, the point that an expert strategic faculty must be recruited is well taken. No faculty seminar facilitator can be expected to possess a comprehensive expertise in the strategic implications of the political, economic, informational and military elements of national power. Faculty facilitators must possess the requisite knowledge of strategic leadership, practice and theory and have a firm grasp of adult learning methodologies in order to guide the students through the academic waters. They must be able to integrate a diverse curriculum. However, subject matter expertise must come from a blend of resident faculty and outside experts who can engage the students from a position of intellectual and practical authority. The composition of the faculty must be of such an academic and experienced caliber that the students are given the best possible opportunity to learn while the program wins the respect of the critics as well as its advocates.

Complimenting a highly qualified and respected faculty is mentorship. The association of experienced strategic mentors with the Army's emerging strategists and with its strategic education is indispensable. Strategic mentors bring with them

credible real-world accomplishments and experience. The contribution and wisdom that they share with the apprentice strategists is invaluable. Mentors bring textbook reading and academic research to life, and they challenge and shape the mind of their students. Great care must be exercised in recruiting mentors for strategic education. First, and in spite of the fact that the aim of this paper is the education of Army officers as military strategists, the strategic mentors should represent all of the elements of national power. This suggests that the mentors must be both military and civilian. Second, the mentors must bring with them relevant and recent experience in the highest levels of national and military strategy. Rank is not as important as the relevance of the mentors' strategic background and experience. Third, the mentors must be committed to advancing the Army's strategic competence and accept the long-term implications of their association with strategic candidates. A relationship between students and mentors must continue as the new strategic thinkers apply what they have learned and continue to develop their mastery of the strategic art long after leaving the educational institution.

Another lesson from the experiences at the Carlisle and Leavenworth colleges is that the association of an advanced academic degree with advanced strategic studies is a potential red herring. It is neither a mandatory ingredient nor

indicative of the quality of the program. The accreditation process is cumbersome and the return is not justifiably significant to warrant linking such a program to civilian degrees as advocated in previous proposals. While advanced degrees can contribute somewhat to a favorable reputation of the educational experience and perhaps attract some officers to participate, it is the achievements of the graduates and the academic rigor that provide the telling credentials that mark the program's success.

More significant than an advanced degree and consistent with the Army's Officer Personnel Management System is the award of an Additional Skill Identifier (ASI). A new ASI that is distinct from the present "6Z" strategist ASI should be established to identify and track the graduates of the ASSP. A distinct ASI attests to the unique qualifications of the graduates, and it highlights their records for subsequent assignments to key strategic positions.

The ASSP's rigorous and focused effort to educate strategic masters at the national level completes the circle of professional military education and presents the opportunity for the synergetic integration and networking of Army expertise at the various levels of war. An appropriately integrated triad of AMSP, AOASF and ASSP provides the nation and the Army with an integrated network of tacticians, operational artists, and

landpower strategists at the theater and national strategic levels. Through the proper integration of these three advanced programs, the Army can harvest annually a network of artists and specialists who know each other, share a common language and experience and can achieve a synergistic impact. The networking that has been a valuable byproduct of SAMS over the past 15 years clearly illustrates the potential.

As with the AMSP and AOASF, the Army's ASSP must address the issue of elitism. For some there is the fear of the rise of an elite cast within the Army's ranks or even the specter of a German General Staff through advanced educational programs that are afforded to a select few. Advancement in the Army since the National Defense Act of 1920 has been a competitive based system. While this paper will not get into a debate over this apprehension, it suffices to say that neither AMSP nor AOASF has produced elitism in the officer corps over the course of the past decade and a half. The general officer corps and the senior commands of the Army are not held hostage by graduates of Leavenworth's School of Advanced Military Studies. Elitism is another red herring that is not substantiated by the evidence.

Students in this intense strategic studies program must be posted to follow-on assignments that serve as strategic internships. Connectivity with ASSP continues following graduation so that the curriculum can be improved; the

effectiveness of the program can be measured; and, the academic support of the student can continue through dialogue with the faculty and mentors. Assignments for graduates may include strategic positions on the National Security Council, advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the Chief of Staff of the Army, Army "think tanks" or offices dealing with futures, assistant to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, strategic planner on the Military Committee at NATO, special advisor or assistant to the theater CINCS on national strategic matters, advisory positions in the Department of Defense or Department of State, and similar positions of national strategic responsibility. Beyond the initial postgraduate assignment, the focus of the remainder of these officers' careers must be dominated by a continuation of strategic assignments that is only diverted by the opportunity to command. Eventually, some graduates rise to general officer ranks while others become engaged in teaching new strategists, occupying key strategic positions, writing doctrine and ultimately strategic mentoring.

Lastly, and certainly not least, the selection of Army officers possessing the strategic spark is the crucial element. The primary ingredient in successful strategic education that is most commonly identified by numerous authors from military, Congressional, academic and intellectual circles is the student of strategy him or herself. Requisite skills required of these

individuals include: demonstrated talent and interest pursuing the strategic art; solid competence in the tactical and operational arts; relevant civilian and military education and experience; a firm institutional appreciation of one's own service, sister services and joint commands; an understanding of the relationship between the disciplines of history, international relations, political science and economics; the ability to think conceptually and critically; the facility for quick and accurate information assessment using the tools of the information age; an appreciation for the social, ethical, and cultural spirit of the time; the ability to inspire and persuade; the ability to work in the cross-cultural and interagency environment; and, a view to the future.<sup>22</sup>

#### **THE ADVANCED STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAM DESIGN**

The proposed Advanced Strategic Studies Program (ASSP) at the USAWC entails the focused study of the strategic art at the national level by a group of eight to ten Army officers per year selected from the resident USAWC program. ASSP offers a curriculum specifically designed to educate Army officers in the strategic art at the national level. As such, it is cognizant of the Army culture and operates within the bounds of the positive attributes of that culture even as it attempts to modify the "muddy boots" paradigm. The manifestation of this

focus is found in the selection process, the curriculum design and the utilization of graduates as discussed herein.

The proposed selection process takes place during the later part of the USAWC core curriculum, and it consists of four steps. Candidates for the ASSP may request attendance in the program and/or are nominated by the USAWC faculty members or strategic level Army leaders. For selection they must demonstrate the requisite academic potential and interest, obtain the endorsement of their Faculty Advisor and Faculty Instructors and complete a written examination. The purpose of the written examination is to assess the candidates' tactical and operational knowledge and to evaluate their analytical and critical thinking skills. It also establishes a standard for rigor. Following successful completion of these steps the candidates appear before a board consisting of the ASSP faculty and the Commandant. The evaluation of the board in conjunction with the previous requirements provides the slate of recommended students. The Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel screens the list of candidates to ensure that all have the potential to work at the highest strategic levels. From those so acknowledged, the Commandant makes the final selection.

During the ASSP resident education, the students work as a seminar group. The seminar is the focal point of shared learning, and the ASSP experience is a combination of self-study

and seminar participation. Self-study is a core attribute of the ASSP. It is an in depth study at the graduate level whereby the students explore the full spectrum of the strategic art through extensive and guided reading, research, writing, introspection and dialog. An ASSP instructor, with proven skills to challenge students and integrate the studies, guides the individual students and the seminar through the program. Experts from the resident faculty as well as from the government and private sector provide the "professors." Each seminar is assigned strategic mentors who accompany the students through their strategic journey at ASSP, and, hopefully, a relationship develops that continues long after the students leave Carlisle Barracks. Dialog with visiting strategic leaders, practitioners and theorists representing all the elements of national power and travel to relevant organizations round out the seminar activity and provide opportunities for experiential learning.

#### CURRICULUM

The detailed content of the curriculum for the ASSP must be developed by the faculty team in conjunction with the academic dean and Commandant. Conceptually the program should build on the success of the USAWC model. The curriculum outline that follows provides a point of departure for dialogue on the development of the ASSP.

The curriculum rests on the foundation of the deliberate integration of three fundamental strategic concepts. First, the idea of strategy in terms of the USAWC model of "ends, ways and means." Second, ASSP students seek an appreciation of national security strategy from the perspective of General Chilcoat's strategic leader, practitioner, and theorist domains.<sup>23</sup> And finally, but of equal importance, each domain is considered against the diplomatic (political), economic, military and informational elements of national power with a view toward their application, integration and exploitation.

One important consideration is the question of how much further time the Army can afford to devote to the education of senior officers in an already severely compressed and fast paced career model. Analysis suggests a two year ASSP program following Leavenworth's AMSP and AOASF models; however, under the existing career development constraints, it may be more practical and realistic to confine the program to a much shorter duration. A 13 month and a 24 month option are addressed herein. Both options consist of three phases as depicted in Figure 1's 13 month model: Phase I, resident USAWC attendance; Phase II, resident ASSP study; and, Phase III, an internship in the form of a follow-on strategic assignment. They differ in the amount of time allocated to the Phase II resident study. The application of adult methodologies throughout is understood.

## The ASSP Curriculum

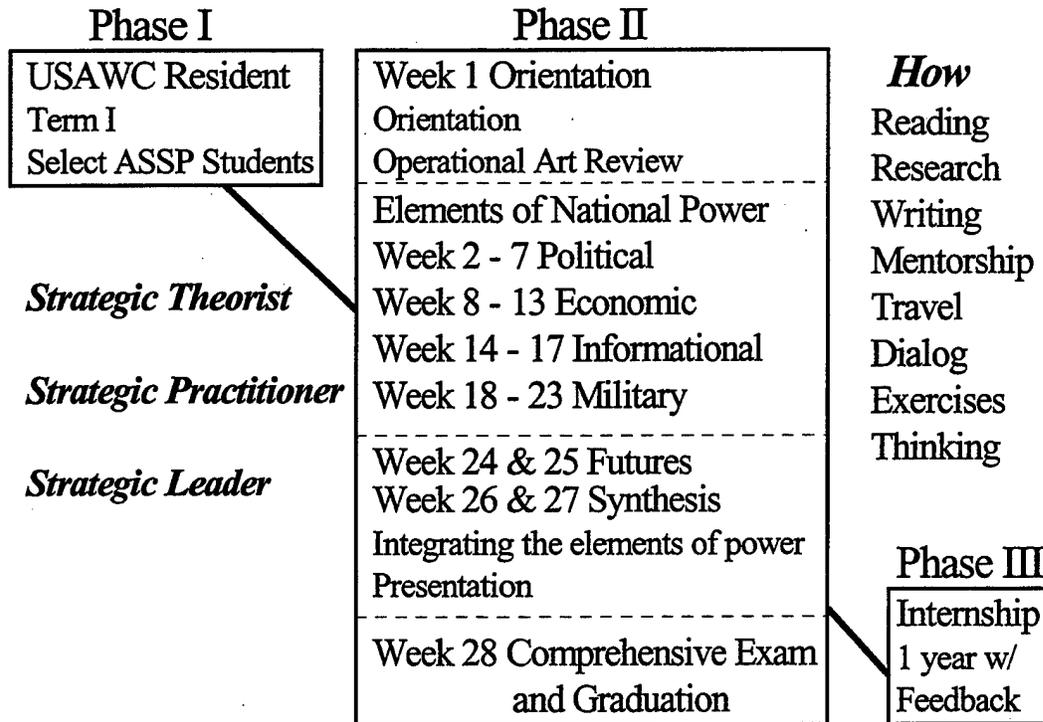


Figure 1

**Phase I, USAWC Resident Course--Selection.**

In Phase I, ASSP students participate in Term I of the resident War College curriculum as regular class members. During this phase, like their contemporaries, they study: Strategic Leadership; War, National Policy and Strategy; Joint Systems and Processes; and Implementing National Military Strategy. This study provides them with a general foundation in the strategic art that is on par with their classmates, and it allows for the evaluation of the candidates. Additionally, this period integrates the ASSP students into the USAWC class and provides the basis for the professional relationships and

friendships that will sustain them in the remainder of their careers. Participation in this phase serves as the basis for awarding the Military Education Level 1 (MEL 1).

**Phase II, ASSP Resident Phase.**

The ASSP Resident Phase Curriculum is based upon a 28 week course of study that begins immediately following the end of the USAWC Term I and concludes on or about 1 September. It is in this phase that the ASSP specific curriculum and study methodologies are applied.

In an oversimplified elaboration of the basic methodology outlined previously, the ASSP methodologies retain the strength of the USAWC approach and integrate many of the key strengths of the other war colleges and graduate level civilian institutions. Melding this into a detailed curriculum is a complicated task and only the key conceptual ideas are captured in this paper. This phase of the ASSP applies various techniques in adult education including cognitive learning, cooperative learning and experiential learning.

Integrated into this curriculum are the Regional Appraisals and the Strategic Crisis Exercise of the Army War College curriculum. ASSP students constitute a distinct seminar in allocation of regional areas and receive special assignments in the Strategic Crisis Exercise (SCE) that enable them to observe strategic level processes and dynamics under direction

of their faculty. ASSP students also participate and observe other strategic level exercises hosted in the Center for Strategic Leadership or other War Colleges. In addition they visit the NSC, JCS, DOD, DA, and a combatant CINC, and they attend lectures and seminars in selected civilian educational institutions and think tanks where they are exposed to strategic thought and processes.

Factored into the curriculum are a Spring Recess in April with the USAWC resident students and a two week Summer Recess in June at the time of the USAWC resident course graduation. ASSP students graduate with their USAWC as members of the class and remain at Carlisle for completion of their program.

Week 1, Orientation.

The first week orients the ASSP students to the program and its educational methodology, and, reviews the basic concepts of the levels of war (including operational art), levels of strategy, and strategy as a concept. Students are tasked to develop and submit their individual self study programs. This approach is designed to set the tone for critical analysis and critical thinking that must characterize the student seminar.

The strategic mentors and students make their initial contact at Carlisle during this first week, and agreements are made as to how they will work together during the program. All materials are issued at this time.

Week 2-7, The Political Element of Power and Strategy.

The focus here is an in depth consideration of the political element of power and the international and domestic political aspects of national strategy. An understanding of the civilian role and lead in national strategy and how the student's civilian counterpart in the strategic arena is educated and developed is explored. To be relevant, this segment will require exposure to civilian theorists, practitioners, and leaders. This suggests the integration of attendance at selected seminars at universities, visits to think tanks, attendance at strategic conferences, and discussions with civilian authors, theorists and retired or active strategists from State, Defense, NSC, or other agencies. Travel is essential, and it requires adequate funding.

**Examining the Elements of Power:**  
**The Basic Approach**

<i>Week</i> 1-3	Read, study, seminar dialogue
<i>Week 4</i>	Travel
<i>Week 5</i>	Exercise
<i>Week 6</i>	Analyze, defend, write

Figure 2

The mechanics of these six weeks as shown in figure 2 set the tone for the remainder of the course. The first three weeks involve a substantial amount of reading related to this element of power. Readings are accompanied by scheduled seminar discussions. Pertinent topics for writing requirements are selected during the first two weeks. ASSP students travel to various institutions and agencies studying strategic issues with strategic leaders, practitioners and theorists during the fourth week. For example, all students might visit with the National Security Council staff as a group but go in individual directions to educational institutions and think tanks or government departments. Week five is dedicated to an exercise or series of case studies and practical vignettes of strategic significance in the political arena. During the sixth and final week the students complete a written requirement and brief and defend its logic and conclusions to the seminar (including the faculty and strategic mentor). Undergirding these studies is a fundamental assumption that the purpose of the study is not to train a political strategist, but educate a military strategic thinker with an appreciation for political strategic considerations. This examination of the political realm in terms of strategic level political theory, practice, and leadership is accomplished under the tutelage of War College faculty and senior mentors.

The War College's Strategic Crisis Exercise may provide an appropriate forum for this seminar, albeit SCE occurs at a different time, and integrates the ASSP students back with the resident class. Other uses of Collins Hall during the year may afford similar opportunities. In such participation the role of the ASSP students is to critique and evaluate the strategic political considerations and process during the exercise, not to act as resident War College participants.

Week 8-13, The Economic Element of Power and Strategy.

The methodology follows the approach contained in weeks 2-7. During these six weeks the ASSP students acquire a firm understanding of the relevance and application of the economic element of national strategic power. As with the examination of the political element, the implications for military strategic art are considered. The expertise of the civilian community is exploited. Travel includes visits to national and international economic centers and appropriate government agencies. The written requirement is completed and defended in the ASSP seminar. Again, the SCE may offer a useful exercise opportunity.

Week 14-17, The Informational Element of Power and Strategy.

Acquiring a grasp of the informational element of national power is the aim of these four weeks. Since this element transcends the other elements of power, some aspects will

logically be addressed in other phases. Here the focus is on the unique aspects of the element and its rising importance in global strategy. The informational element is addressed by two weeks of reading and seminar dialogue; travel to appropriate agencies that develop significant informational aspects of U.S. strategy; and, a relevant written requirement. Other War College faculty and invited subject matter experts also address the ASSP seminar in Carlisle.

Week 18-23, The Military Element of Power and Strategy.

As with each of the elements of power that are addressed in the ASSP, the military element is considered from the three strategic perspectives of theorist, practitioner and leader at the national strategic level. How the military element is integrated with the other elements of national power is the central theme of these six weeks. The first three weeks involve a substantial amount of reading and individual study related to this element. This study naturally has a joint perspective while emphasizing landpower. Readings and study are reinforced with seminar sessions. A pertinent topic pertaining to military strategy from a landpower perspective is selected. Students travel to military agencies and headquarters charged with strategic responsibilities during the fourth week--JCS, DA, CINC, etc. Week five is dedicated to an exercise or series of case studies and practical vignettes of military strategic

significance. During the sixth and final week each fellow completes the written requirement, in this case an article on landpower at the strategic level, and presents and defends the document in seminar. Following this dialogue the paper is revised as necessary and submitted for publication. Qualified War College faculty, senior mentors and experienced guests facilitate this examination of military strategic theory, practice, and leadership.

Week 24-25, Futures.

In this two week period the ASSP students complete assigned readings and conduct individual research with a view over the horizon at future strategic challenges and possibilities. The strategic perspectives gained earlier in the ASSP are critically applied to determine future implications for military strategy. War College faculty and invited futures analysts and/or theorists participate in daily seminar dialogue. There is no specific written requirement for this subject. Visits to think tanks or other organizations and activities on the cutting edge of futures are programmed.

Week 26-27, Reflective Synthesis.

In this two week period of reflection the ASSP students as individuals and as a seminar internalize and synthesize what they have been exposed to during the previous 25 weeks of specialized study. Using their follow-on strategic assignments

as a backdrop, they prepare an assessment of the relevance of the elements of national power to the environment in which they will be completing their Phase III internship. This written assessment is briefed and discussed in seminar during Week 27, and it is submitted to the faculty instructors for evaluation. Participation by the strategic level mentors during the seminar discussions is included in order to capture their experienced perspectives. This reflective period also provides the opportunity for students to prepare for the comprehensive exam. Week 28, Comprehensive Exam and Graduation.

An oral comprehensive exam is administered to each ASSP student during the final week of Phase II. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is two-fold. First, it gives the students a rite of passage as strategic thinkers and certifies their accomplishment. Second, it completes the cycle of rigor imposed on this program and publicly displays this rigor, much as civilian academic institutions have traditionally done by requiring the students to defend their work and demonstrate academic competence. It also provides immediate feedback to the USAWC concerning its success in stimulating and instilling strategic thought.

The examination is administered by an academic panel composed of a strategic level mentor, appropriately credentialed faculty members, the Commandant, and one outside authority of

suitable credentials and reputation. The curriculum and the written submissions that the ASSP student prepared during the course of study serve as a basis for the dialogue. After the comprehensive examination and following a brief period of consultation by panel members, the student is critiqued on his or her performance during the exchange. Unsatisfactory performance results in removal from the program and ineligibility for the award of the ASI.

### **Phase III, Internship.**

The follow-on internship assignments provide the ASSP students with real world opportunities to further develop their strategic skills. During the internship phase the strategic mentors, faculty, and other USAWC resources remain available to the students. After one year at the follow-on assignments, students and their senior raters submit formal assessments of the ASSP program and its product to the USAWC. The feedback provides another mechanism for future modifications to the program. This internship completes the formal educational journey in strategic thinking; however, the quest to be a master strategist continues throughout the graduates' careers and beyond.

### **THE 24 MONTH OPTION**

The curriculum outline above is designed to minimize the length of the formal program of study to facilitate the needs of

a resource constrained Army and the career progression needs of the officers involved. However, a full 24 month program offers significant enhancements to the education process. The precedent has been set for this approach by SAMS' two year long AOASF program. While the 13 month course of action may be most viable at this time, consideration of a full two year program offers the following benefits and enhancements:

- ASSP students complete the full War College Resident Curriculum (Terms I, II and III) with their class. However, selection for ASSP occurs in Term I and electives for the ASSP students in Terms II and III contribute directly to the second year of study.
- During the first weeks of the second year ASSP students validate their understanding of the operational art before moving on to strategic studies.
- Without over duplicating the focus of the AOSF at Fort Leavenworth, time is spent examining theater strategy in greater detail than was done in the first year at Carlisle.
- ASSP students are involved in supporting the practical review or development of strategic doctrine or in supporting the study of specific strategic issues. As with AOASF and PRAIRIE WARRIOR, ASSP could support strategic exercises.

- In addition to the study of strategic theory, practice, and leadership in the context of national security strategy, a study period is added to examine the institutional strategic issues and practices of the Department of the Army. Managing change is an important aspect of this seminar. This institutional strategic element is also in remission in the Army as attested to by numerous guest lecturers at the USAWC and by staff officers in the Pentagon this author interviewed in the conduct of research.
- The examination of the four elements of national power is expanded somewhat, and reading and writing requirements are enhanced with greater focus on publishing.
- Connectivity is expanded and exploited between ASSP at Carlisle and the AOASF at Fort Leavenworth and similar programs at other War Colleges. Through distributed exercises, video-teleconferences and other means, the Army's programs for theater and operational expertise and the Army's program for educating national level strategists can be linked to compliment one another. This enhances the global network of operators and strategists who serve the Army and the nation with a common frame of reference and a highly enhanced background in education and experience.

## RESOURCING AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS REVISITED

The resource implications of a USAWC ASSP are not insignificant but they are not prohibitive either. Applying the 13 month option, students are retained at a cost of 90 days per student, minimizing impact on the individual and the Army. As structured, the workload per student is significantly greater than the average workload for other USAWC students. Faculty resource requirements are increased by the adoption of this program. ASSP can only be as good as the resident and external faculty and the strategic mentors. These individuals must be carefully recruited.

The implication for faculty is greater than pure man-hours. Such a program demands an exceptional faculty member, one who largely meets the criteria of a strategic theorist as identified by MG Chilcoat and is a proven MEL 1 educator. It also suggests the faculty be credentialed in a manner acceptable to academia at large and the Army War College's critics in general. Frankly, much of the faculty does not meet such criteria. USAWC needs to develop supporting programs for further education of faculty. In addition, the ASSP faculty's relationship with the students is fundamentally different than in the current USAWC resident seminars. It is less instructor facilitated and more mentor and co-learner propelled. The required interaction in a successful program will challenge the ASSP faculty

significantly. On the other hand it provides the opportunity for the intellectual growth of both faculty and student.

A successful program also implies a significant degree of travel and the subsequent TDY costs. This sum could be substantial in a well-developed program and is probably more than USAWC would want to absorb in-house. In addition to student and faculty travel, funds must be programmed for the strategic mentors. While retired personnel might volunteer their time, the travel and living expenses must be assumed by Carlisle Barracks. If strategic mentors insist on the prevailing value of their services, costs increase dramatically.

There are other resource implications that merit some consideration. Even the retention of eight to ten students could adversely impact on the local housing market and on post quarters for incoming students. Seminars also require a suitable physical plant, and some consideration should be given to designated individual study areas for these students with enhanced automation and multi-media support.

### **A MORAL IMPERATIVE**

Strategic masters can be developed if the Army chooses to implement the Advanced Strategic Studies Program. The proposal for the ASSP is based upon four premises. First, there is a void in strategic education and thought in the U.S. Army. Second, there is a need to address this void because it is in

the best interests of the nation and the service to do so. Third, the U.S. Army War College is the logical and most appropriate institution for this education, and it can provide the impetus and resources. Fourth, the U.S. Army as an institution has the inescapable moral obligation to embrace and address the strategic art as it has the tactical and operational arts. The ASSP as proposed achieves the end of providing a core of highly qualified strategic leaders, practitioners and theorists to the nation and to the Army who can rise above the volatile and uncertain realities of the present and future. It provides the way to fulfill the Army's institutional responsibility to contribute to a coherent national security strategy and national military strategy. The ASSP provides the means of regaining the reputation of the Army for strategic excellence. The remaining question is whether Army leadership has the vision and the courage to follow the moral imperative to embrace the strategic art and complete the triad of war - tactical, operational and strategic. General John R. Galvin's challenge beckons:

*We owe it to those who follow us to educate them and prepare them to assume the heavy responsibility of providing military leadership and military advice in the service of the state; in other words, to make some of them, the best of them, military strategists.<sup>24</sup>*

(word count: 8,875)



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Richard A Chilcoat, Major General, U.S. Army, Strategic Art: The New Discipline for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 10 October 1995), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Barrie E. Zais, U.S. Army, Chairman, Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, U.S. Army War College, "Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," memorandum for the Commandant, U.S. Army War College, PA., 9 January 1995. In this document the author introduces idea of an "Advanced Strategic Studies Program (ASSP);" however, the concept in this paper differs significantly with Colonel Zais' views.

<sup>3</sup> George Washington, Washington's Farewell Address to the People of the United States (Washington D.C., 1796).

<sup>4</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, Captain, U.S. Navy, The Interest of America in Sea Power, Past and Present (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1897), see also Alfred Thayer Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783 (New York City, NY: Hill and Wang, Inc., 1890).

<sup>5</sup> John R. Galvin, "What's the Matter With Being a Strategist?," Parameters vol. XIX, no. 1 (March 1989): 4.

<sup>6</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Military Education, report prepared by the Panel on Military Education, 100<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 3 April 1998, Committee Print 4, 10. Here after referred to as the Skelton Committee.

<sup>7</sup> Martin van Creveld, The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance (New York City, N.Y.: The Free Press, 1990), 83.

<sup>8</sup> Williamson Murray, "How Not to Advance Professional Military Education," Strategic Review vol. XXV, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 75.

<sup>9</sup> Carl H. Builder, "Keeping the Strategic Flame," Joint Force Quarterly (Winter 1996-97): 77.

<sup>10</sup> van Creveld 83.

<sup>11</sup> Murray, 75.

- <sup>12</sup> Builder, 77.
- <sup>13</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, 18.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Chilcoat, 22.
- <sup>16</sup> U.S. Army War College, U.S. Army War College 2000: Army Senior Officer Education (Carlisle, PA., August 1992), 51.
- <sup>17</sup> Chilcoat, 8.
- <sup>18</sup> U.S. Army War College, Curriculum Pamphlet: Academic Year 1998 (Carlisle, PA.: U.S. Department of the Army, 1997), i.
- <sup>19</sup> Galvin, 5.
- <sup>20</sup> Colonel Barrie E. Zais, U.S. Army, Chairman, Department of Military Strategy, U.S. Army War College, "USAWC Second-Year Program," memorandum for the Chairman, Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA., 15 September 1992.
- <sup>21</sup> Van Creveld, 85-86.
- <sup>22</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, 28-33. See also Chilcoat, 9 - 10.
- <sup>23</sup> Chilcoat, 8.
- <sup>24</sup> Galvin, 3.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Builder, Carl H. "Keeping the Strategic Flame." Joint Force Quarterly (Winter 1996-97): 76-84.
- Chilcoat, Richard A., Major General, U.S. Army. Strategic Art: The New Discipline for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 10 October 1995.
- Galvin, John R. "What's the Matter With Being a Strategist?" Parameters vol. XIX, no. 1 (March 1989): 2-10.
- Lykke, Arthur F. Jr. "Toward an Understanding of Military Strategy." Military Strategy: Theory and Application. Carlisle, PA.: U.S. Army War College, 12 March 1993: 3-8.
- Mahan, Alfred Thayer, Captain, U.S. Navy. The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783. New York City, NY: Hill and Wang, Inc., 1890.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Interest of America in Sea Power, Past and Present. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1897.
- Murray, Williamson. "How Not to Advance Professional Military Education." Strategic Review vol. XXV, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 73-77.
- U.S. Army War College. U.S. Army War College 2000: Army Senior Officer Education (Carlisle, PA., August 1992).
- U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services, Military Education. Report prepared by the Panel on Military Education. 100<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 3 April 1998, Committee Print 4.
- van Creveld, Martin. The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance. New York City, N.Y.: The Free Press, 1990.
- Washington, George. Washington's Farewell Address to the People of the United States. Washington D.C., 1796.

Zais, Barrie E, Colonel, U.S. Army, Chirman, Department of Military Strategy, U.S. Army War College. "USAWC Second-Year Program." Memorandum for the Chairman, Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, U.S. Army War College. Carlisle, PA., 15 September 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Memorandum for the Commandant, U.S. Army War College. Carlisle PA., 9 January 1995.