



CHACR TAKE AWAY NEWSLETTER

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INTRODUCTION

This is the weekly CHACR Take Away newsletter, which we will issue regularly from now on. In these newsletters, you will find links to latest products by CHACR, but also links to key reports and studies by external experts and institutions which we think you should pay attention to. The aim is to continue advancing the mandate of CHACR to enhance the conceptual component of warfighting for the British Army personnel. **The views expressed or studies shared in this document in no way represent the official views of the British Army, Ministry of Defence or any components thereof, but only that of its authors and are shared to stimulate thinking and discussions.**

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

As COVID-19 continues to take its toll, and the Army continues to deliver support to the hard-pressed NHS (and stands by to deliver support to wider national needs in MAC(A), MAC(P) and MAC(C) contexts) an increasing amount of work is going into thinking about 'what next'? Projects across the Army, and wider Defence, are looking not just at the re-set post-COVID world's probable effects upon and implications for the Integrated Review, but upon the whole range of Army activity, stretching from the deployment of small training teams abroad to the very raison d'être of the Army, and, indeed, at the nation's whole approach to contingency planning and mitigation. The terms 'interesting times' or 'unprecedented times' are being bandied about daily, with good reason, to describe what is happening now. At CHACR we suspect that they will be even more apposite as a descriptor of what may happen next...

Maj Gen (Ret) Dr Andrew Sharpe

LATEST FROM CHACR

CHACR continues to adapt into focusing on products and ways we can use to fulfil our mission. The CHACR team continues to support wider Army analysis and thinking, and work on some exciting book projects. Our Fellows are working on finishing a book on concept of winning, one on urban warfare and one on religion and warfare. Some of them might even be out on the shelves in time for your Christmas wish list!

While we continue long term book projects, we are also increasing our regular outputs to provide you with analysis and insight on issues of relevance for the Army. Our latest **CHACR Take Away** video [interview on the Sahel with best selling author Tim Marshall](#) was widely welcomed, given that our people will be shortly deployed to the region. We will focus more on the region from now on to support them. This week's Take Away Interview will be on Turkish foreign policy with a leading expert of the country, Soner Cagaptay, discussing a wide range of issues from Syria to Russia, Libya and NATO. More exciting interviews are already scheduled.

This month we are also launching a new initiative, **CHACR Lectures on the Go**. Unlike the interview style of CHACR Take Away Interviews, CHACR Lectures on the Go will be 35 to 45 mins long uninterrupted talks given by leading experts to provide you with a resource you can use to brief yourself and units for your PME. The first three in the new series will be by Dimitar Bachev on Russia, Turkey and China in the Balkans, James Ker-Lindsay on Cyprus, and Kristian Ulrichsen on the Gulf crisis and tensions between GCC and Qatar in the lead up to 3rd anniversary of the sections. All will be uploaded onto [our website](#).

Meanwhile, our new **CHACR Commentary** section is building up a good backlog of short articles on our website, www.chacr.org.uk, to both 'stimulate' thinking and 'inform' decision making and analysis. This week, our AH, Col Al McCluskey, [wrote a challenging piece on urban warfare](#). He argues that the commonly heard idea that the 'city is neutral' in urban warfare is misleading. Our Commentary page is open to submissions, so do reach out if you have a piece that might be suitable for it.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

COVID-19 is continuing to hold the world firmly in its grip, and yet, all countries are currently thinking about or even implementing exit strategies from the current crisis. Several options are on the table, from continued lock-downs to a full re-opening of societies and businesses. In a very thought-provoking study, [the University of Glasgow has developed different scenarios](#) which show the potential impacts on Britain and the wider world. The prospects of the fiscal and economic recovery of the UK from 2022 depend very much on which of these options are chosen now and in the coming 6 weeks. Everything else – Britain continuing to take a leading role in the world politically, economically, in defence and security – will flow from that.

MILITARY AND THE PUBLIC

The DCDC had commissioned [a fascinating study](#) to challenge conventional thinking between the UK's military, government and the public. The study makes the important argument that the relationship between the three are sine qua non for an effective national security strategy. It highlights that societal ownership of national security underpins resilience, and public awareness of the need for security makes a more robust society with a stronger deterrence against 'hybrid warfare' and subthreshold aggressions by foreign states. It makes some tangible and good recommendations, and one we have to discuss as soon as possible, especially given what the current pandemic has demonstrated: the possibility of a British national service.

CHINA

As the debates in the UK over our China policy continue, there are a few noteworthy pieces to read from non UK resources. [This reflection, "Covid19: Reading the tea leaves in China"](#) written by Vijay Gokhale for a leading Indian think tank captures a fascinating mix of historical insights on dissent in China with traces of dissent in China's heavily controlled internet. The former Foreign Secretary of India makes the observation that two recent online petitions written by former members of the Chinese establishment caused ripples and were quickly removed from public view. This piece by H.R. McMaster, ["How China sees the world, and how we should see China"](#) is an important one that draws both from scholarship but also personal encounters and warns: "China's leaders believe they have a narrow window of opportunity to strengthen their rule and revise the international order in their favour."

WAR LANGUAGE FOR PANDEMIC

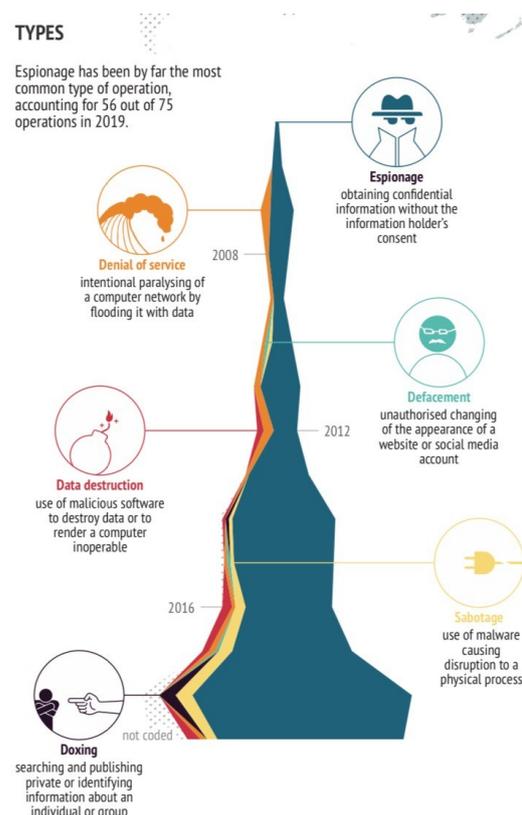
Efforts to contain Covid-19 have been widely compared to a war, with numerous references to 'fighting an invisible enemy' and analogies between lockdown morale Blitz spirit. However, the securitisation of a disease is problematic, as the use martial language can promote belligerent nationalism, and problematic policy responses. [This article explains why virulence](#) cannot received the same semantic treatment as violence.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Institutional change and diverse thinking typically wanes at the middle-ranking officer level. But how does an institution with closed recruitment, that requires specific competencies, reinvigorate it middle ranks? [This article reflects](#) on the challenge and benefits of lateral recruitment in the Australian Army officer corps and unpacks the prevailing arguments against mid-career recruitment.

CYBER CONFLICT UNCODED

A [very good briefing](#) on the current practices and future possibilities of preventive action in relation to conflict in cyberspace. The graphic below is from page 2 of the briefing by the EU's ISS:



BATTLE OF BERLIN

April and May see the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Berlin in 1945, the final major battle of the war in the European theatre of war (see "this week in history"). The battle remains relevant for modern armies that want to study urban warfare and it is therefore not surprising that battlefield studies to Berlin are in high demand. [In this audio interview, Sir Antony Beevor talks](#) about the battle and sheds light on the pure military aspect, but also addresses questions relating to psychology and why the Germans continued to fight this desperate and futile battle. It is a very good starting point for anybody with an interest in the battle itself and also for those units and formations planning to visit the battlefield.

PHILOSOPHY FOR PME

PME typically incorporates military centric topics to military-centric education to enhance career performance. [This short piece](#) argues that philosophy should be incorporated into PME curricula to understand the differences between others, interpret action and decisions in context, and enhance our critical thinking capabilities.

MENTORSHIP

Mentorship can be an important element of personal and professional development. [This article documents](#) the relationship between Carl von Clausewitz and the Prussian General Gerhard Von Scharnhorst. Von Scharnhorst was Clausewitz's teacher, superior and mentor, helping to shape his career and his thoughts on war.

THINGS TO KEEP ON YOUR RADAR SCREENS

- **UAE in Libya**

[UAE groups implicated in violating arms embargo to Libya.](#)

- **Iraq mulls S400s**

Rather unhelpfully, some [Iraqi members of the parliament are discussing](#) whether to purchase advance Russian missile systems.

- **South Korea Defence Budget**

[South Korea cuts defence budget](#) due to the pandemic, a trend that will see other countries do so too.

- **Islam and Lockdown**

[How Arab states are using religion](#) to enforce lockdowns.

- **Turkey in Libya**

Turkey is escalating its operations in Libya in support of the UN backed government and ['turning the tide'](#).

- **German Military**

The [Bundeswehr been proactive in helping](#) allies to respond to pandemic.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On 16 April 1945, the last major battle of the Second World War Started, the Soviet offensive on Germany's capital Berlin. The Germans were able to hold their last defensive line along the river Oder between 16 and 19 April, inflicting very heavy casualties on the attacking Soviet troops. The Germans destroyed over 700 Soviet tanks in this first phase of the battle. Nevertheless, by 19 April the Soviets had broken through and the road to Berlin was open. The Soviet troops reached the outskirts of the city on 21 April. The defence of Berlin had not been properly organised by the Germans and the following days saw very bloody street-fighting in the capital of the German Reich as the Soviet troops fought their way to the centre of Berlin and towards the New Reich Chancellery where Hitler was hiding in his bunker.



The Brandenburg Gate, Berlin

CHACR TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Tony Le Tissier, *The Battle of Berlin*

Tony Le Tissier is a retired British Army officer who served as the last British Governor of Spandau Allied Prison. After his tour of duty ended with the death of Rudolf Hess, Le Tissier stayed in Berlin as a writer and historian. He has spent years researching the epic battle of Berlin and has conducted a comprehensive study of the ground and led numerous battlefield tours. His publications are of great value for everybody with a general interest in the battle of Berlin, and also for units and formations organising battlefield studies to the city. This book provides the overview of the battle of Berlin and analyses both the German and Soviet sides in this epic final struggle of the Third Reich.

Alexander Souchen, *War Junk*

While numerous volumes detail the incredible challenge of industrial mobilisation during World War II, little is known about what happened to the tons of materials produced but never used. *War Junk* the complex political, economic, social, and environmental legacies of post war equipment and munitions disposal. During the Second World War, the British Empire produced mountains of munitions and supplies. Although they were crucial to winning the war, these assets turned into peacetime liabilities when hostilities ended in 1945. Victory presented an economic dilemma: how to divest of assets without deflating markets? *War Junk* documents the policies that enabled certain war time supplies to be reused and recycled to facilitate post war reconstruction. *War Junk* also describes the environmental legacy of wartime production – an aspect of total war that is largely overlooked.

Terry Pratchett, *Monstrous Regiment*

If you want to understand what makes soldiers tick there are the timeless classics that are always recommended, like *Quartered Safe Out Here* by George MacDonald Fraser or *Band of Brothers* by Stephen Ambrose. If you are feeling a little less conformist, however, then this exploration of the soldier's mind by the late Sir Terry Pratchett is invaluable. And if you are a stranger to the works of Terry Pratchett, this will serve as a good introduction as to why his particular brand of insight into the human race made sure that he was (and remains) one of the widest-read authors across the globe.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MA'AM



George McDonald Fraser, *Quartered Safe Out Here*.

George McDonald Fraser's (author of the Flashman novels, amongst others) memoirs of his experiences as a Pte and LCpl during the Second World War in Burma is a well written, humorous, engaging and sometimes moving account of the authors' war experiences. This book is his recollections of the campaign; it is no great historical account of Brigades manoeuvring, nor is it a campaign history – the stories and anecdotes from his, and his Section's experience of the war in Burma resonate to today and help to illustrate the Nature and Character of the war he fought, and offers a fascinating insight to the character of the Soldiers who fought it.

ABOUT THE CHACR

You can learn more about the CHACR at www.chacr.org.uk

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