



CHACR TAKE AWAY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 9, MAY 18 - MAY 22, 2020

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.**

LATEST FROM CHACR

CHACR continues to focus on both long term research (with some 4 books being written by our team at the moment) and providing timely analysis and insights from us and experts as well as supporting the work and development of various Army units. The latest **CHACR Lectures on the Go** is [delivered by our own Dr Matthias Strohn](#), reflecting on the legacy of WWII and how it still impacts us today, with a specific focus on Germany. Last week we also released a new **CHACR Take Away** interview. It [featured Shashank Joshi of the Economist, focusing on a discussion on how COVID-19 impacts global defence and what it might all mean in the future](#). And we launched a new line of products, **CHACR Podcasts** due to demand on providing audio files for our Lectures and Take Aways. You can [now listen and download them all here](#). They also work on ModNet computers! The **CHACR Commentary** released an [interesting article by Francesca Ghiretti on future of Chinese investments in Europe](#). Keep checking our website and @Chacr_Camberley on Twitter regularly for our upcoming releases!

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Every leader in the Army, from lance-corporal upwards, is familiar with the idea of conducting an 'estimate'. It may be quick or deliberate, it may be under the weighty and immediate pressure of combat, or it may be at a stately and considered pace in Whitehall. We are taught that, to do this effectively, we need to take a step back from the pressing demands of the immediate surroundings (to take a 'condor moment'). The first steps of that process, regardless of whether it is hasty or deliberate, urgent or measured, micro-tactical or grand-strategic, are always to gather as much information as one can about everything and anything that may be relevant, pause to consider each piece of information, and then ask oneself 'so what'? In other words, it's about data gathering, data management, data analysis and then, vitally, understanding the relevance of that data in order to understand context and then frame and set out choices for action. We all know that the more that we know about these 'factors' the more likely we are to make well-informed and thus sound choices. In war, we put enormous effort into collecting and processing useful data on all sorts of things: ground, going, the enemy, the civilian population, etc, even when (indeed, particularly when) that data is denied to us, or hidden from us, or deliberately dressed up to confuse us (as it inevitably will be if the factor that we are considering is, for example, 'the enemy'). In war or on operations the Army is pretty good at working out what it needs to know about. How good is the Army at working out what it needs to know about when not on operations? How good is the Army at collecting and using data? What does it collect data on? How does it process that data to make it useful? I hope that, here at the CHACR, we have sufficient step-back thinking-space to help by offering the Army a few 'factors' and even providing the occasional 'so what'!

Maj Gen (Ret) Dr Andrew Sharpe

PODCASTS



Podcast: CHACR Take Away Interviews Episode 7 – COVID-19 and Defence...
May 15, 2020



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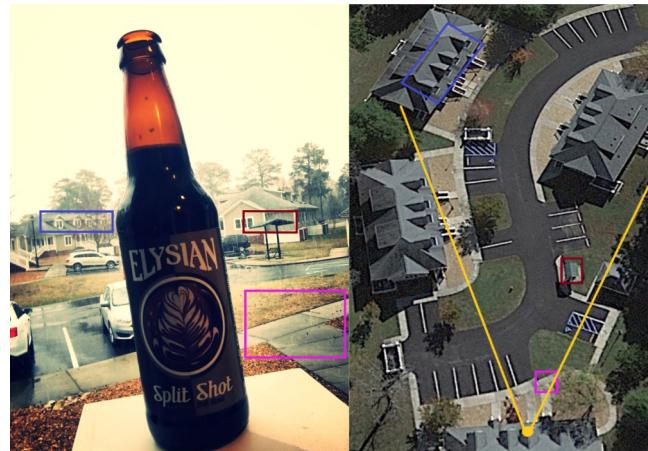


Podcast: CHACR Take Away Interviews Episode 7 – COVID-19 and Defence...
May 15, 2020

This is the fifth episode of CHACR Lectures on the Go, turned into a podcast in this CHACR Lecture on the Go, Dr Matthias Strohn...

HOPSEC: DRINK AND SHARE MODERATELY

If you remember, a while ago it emerged that a running app which tracked exercise distances for users had the undesirable outcome of revealing maps that showed where users are running and on which routes. It did not take [researchers long to realise that some of these were pointing out to classified military bases](#) and positions even in the remotest parts of the world. Now [it seems a new app that allows people to rate the pints they are having and the pubs and bars they are enjoying them reveals](#) a lot more than the drinks and the data can be used to pin down debit card details, addresses, locations of military and intelligence officers, who unwisely 'checked in' or reviewed drinks. Hopsec is now a serious concern! Drink and share moderately! Click on the picture to see how app data revealed more than the best beer in town, as demonstrated by the Bellingcat.



LIBYA: TURNING TIDE

Direction of the competition over who will govern Libya has taken a strong turn away from strong-man-in-waiting Haftar, who lost a strategic airbase. It is interesting to note how Turkish use of drones and proxies have tilted the direction of war in favour of UN and UK backed GNA. There are signs that Haftar might not lose his main backers, UAE and Egypt. Though Russia is still present in support of him at a limited capacity.

ISIS UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

ISIS is adapting, and has developed new governance structures. [This briefing provides a useful breakdown](#) of how ISIS is currently organised, who is who in critical posts. It draws from information from the Iraqi intelligence and locally based researchers.

EXOSKELETON

For decades, the idea of a protective exoskeleton has been pursued as a solution to the challenges of force protection and lethality for the combat soldier. The first prototypes of exoskeletons were debuted in the 1960s. Hollywood has been captivated by the notion of an exoskeleton, bringing us its version in the form of Iron Man. Five years ago, US Special Operations Command revealed its plans to develop its own version of Iron Man: Tactical Assault Light Operator Suit (TALOS). This was designed as a load bearing suit providing enhanced armour, and an enclosed helmet equipped with a range of sensors and displays to maximise situational awareness. The potentials of such an exoskeleton were debated and discussed at the 2017 Agile Warrior conference – could this revolutionise the infantry soldier, making him or her less vulnerable? [This article expounds on the serious flaws](#) within the TALOS design and concept and suggests possible alternative applications for the technologies developed.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND NUCLEAR COMMAND

Over the past decades, international treaties and national practices and procedures to have been introduced to safeguard countries' nuclear capability and prevent erroneous use. So, what might happen if artificial intelligence entered the nuclear security equation? For now, there is a general agreement amongst nuclear states that deployment decision-making should not be divested to machines, [This article outlines why some regimes might be open](#) to incorporating automation into nuclear decision making, whilst others might be more reluctant to remove a human from the loop.

CLAUSEWITZ LETTER

The debates about Clausewitz, his theory and his contemporary relevance are ongoing. These debates are healthy, because they sharpen the intellect and force everybody to do some deep thinking about war and warfare. Broadly speaking, there are currently two camps: one that argues that Clausewitz and his ideas are no longer relevant -or, at least, only partially relevant in the 21st century- and the other that argues that Clausewitz's ideas have stood the test of time and that they are as relevant today as they were at the time of writing in the early 19th century. But what would Clausewitz himself have to say about all this? In this light-hearted article, Clausewitz 'himself' addresses the critics and tells them why they have got it all wrong. [This 'letter' is worth a read and it is a good and light-hearted introduction](#) to the complex Clausewitzian philosophy on war.

PME: NEW USA INITIATIVE

The 2018 *National Defense Strategy* boldly declared that, not only had American professional military education stagnated, the professional military education system failed to adequately provide officers with the necessary knowledge and skills to fight in future conflicts. The Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed with the critique, and this month responded with a new guidance and vision document for PME, entitled: *Developing Today's Joint Officers for Tomorrow's War*. It envisages a PME system that incorporates more active learning methodologies, such as wargaming, to enhance the development of problem-solving and critical thinking skills. [This article captures the positives and possible challenges in implementing it](#), which is important for us to pay attention to.

THINGS TO KEEP ON YOUR RADAR SCREENS

- Yemen and COVID-19

A good [breakdown of current conditions and what they might mean](#)

- A coup that never was

Report on how [Saudi based social media accounts put out a coup narrative](#) in Qatar.

- COVID-19 and R Number

An [interesting take by a veterinary epidemiologist](#) on what we know about virus infection and second wave.

- Post INF Deterrence

The INF treaty saw its demise recently, which raised questions on European defence and missile balance. [Read more on the topic here.](#)

- Defence against disinformation

A [good article by Keir Giles](#) on how our defence against disinformation must be a team sport.

- Geopolitical Aftershocks

There are inevitable geopolitical aftershocks of the pandemic. [This article raised some worrying scenarios](#) for the UK.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On 26 May 1940, the British started the Dunkirk evacuation, code-named Operation Dynamo. The operation lasted until 4 June. The operation commenced after large numbers of Allied troops had been cut off and surrounded by the Germans during the six-week Battle of France. In a speech to the House of Commons, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called this "a colossal military disaster", saying "the whole root and core and brain of the British Army" had been stranded at Dunkirk and seemed about to perish or be captured. However, in the end, the bulk of the British Expeditionary Force was evacuated back to Britain. The question remains why the Germans did not destroy the Allied forces in and around Dunkirk. In France, the unilateral British decision to evacuate through Dunkirk rather than counter-attack to the south, and the perceived preference of the Royal Navy for evacuating British forces at the expense of the French, led to some bitter resentment. All the heavy equipment had to be abandoned. Left behind in France were 2,472 guns, 20,000 motorcycles, and almost 65,000 other vehicles; also abandoned were 423,000 tonnes of stores, more than 76,000 tonnes of ammunition and 165,000 tonnes of fuel. Almost all of the 445 British tanks that had been sent to France with the BEF were abandoned. However, over 338,000 Allied soldiers were evacuated. The evacuation was an impressive achievement and one that raised the spirit of the British population in these otherwise dark days for Britain.

USMC DOCTRINE ON LEARNING

US Marine Corps continue with their reform process. They have just issued their first ever doctrine on learning, as part of the push to take PME seriously at both personal and strategic levels, and they will elevate the command of the Training and Education Command to the three stars levels. [You can read the new doctrine here.](#)

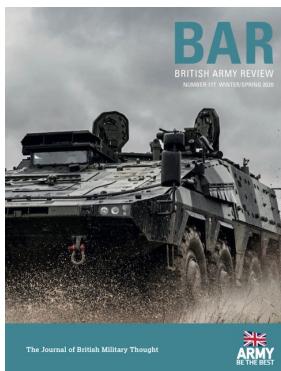
CHACR TEAM RECOMMENDS

Niccolò Machiavelli. *The Prince*

Machiavellian, in modern parlance, has become a word that means devious, underhand, scheming, back-stabbing and a wide variety of other uncomplimentary terms. Which is a shame. *The Prince* is one of the greatest and most enduring (and, mercifully, shortest) works on strategy available to us. It contains a simple core message: work out what is best for you (and for those for whom you are responsible); work out what your ends are; then use whatever ways and means are available and appropriate to you to achieve those ends; and don't allow other people's distractions to pull you off course. In that context, and in very loose terms, he makes an interesting distinction between 'bad things done by bad rulers, and unfortunate things that good rulers have to do'. Taken in its setting (Renaissance Florence and her neighbouring states), this book is a timeless classic for anyone interested in politics, strategy or leadership.

BAR PICK

The British Army Review (BAR) is now publicly available and can easily be [accessed on the Army's public platform](#). CHACR takes pride in its support to the continual development of BAR. In our Newsletters, we will draw attention to interesting and noteworthy articles, and point to their page numbers, which you can read by clicking on the cover of the issue they are in in this section. In the current issue, we recommend the essay by Captain Robin Winstanley that explores the 360 degrees reporting (pages 62-70). This is a proven and effective strategy in corporate, NGO and IGO worlds, and helps to promote the right people and help them to grow into better leaders, while also giving their subordinates a chance to be heard and give feedback on things not seen from above.



Hugh Sebag-Montefiore, *Dunkirk: Fight to the Last Man*.

In this book the author describes the events in and around Dunkirk during the battle and evacuation in 1940. The emphasis of the book lies on the histories and stories of individual soldiers and units rather than on the strategic picture. Thus, the book gives an insight into what the battle was like for the individuals and how they experienced the events as they unfolded. It is a somewhat "popular" history which offers a good and easy read. The stories told can be used for battlefield studies to Dunkirk.

Samantha Power. *The Education of an Idealist*.

The Education of an Idealist follows Samantha Power's life and career, from her fractured childhood in Dublin, to her years as war correspondent in the Balkans, to presidential Cabinet official in the Obama administration. A Pulitzer Prize winning author and vociferous advocate for human rights and humanitarian intervention, Power's writings on US foreign policy came to the attention of Senator Barack Obama. After Obama was elected president in 2008, Power spent four years at the National Security Council (NSC) as a human rights advisor, attempting to put her ideals into US foreign policy and practice. In 2013, Power was appointed US ambassador to the UN, engaging in high stakes diplomatic wrangling over interventions in Libya, the Syrian War, the annexation of Crimea and numerous other crises, challenges and successes. *The Education of an Idealist* illustrates the complexities of process, policy and politics, and the calculus behind the Obama administration's military interventions and notable lack of intervention in some cases. Power's memoir demonstrates the potential and limitations of American influence, the importance of alliance relationships to the exercise of American power, and the challenge of using military instruments for humanitarian purposes.

ABOUT THE CHACR

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

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