

Summaries

Editorial – Who writes stays on?

The articles that were discussed by the editorial board in December 2004, as well as the contents of our issues in that year represent the Janus face of the Armed Forces. On the one hand there is the world of operations. On the other there is the running of the so-called 'peacetime establishment'. Different worlds. Can we thus be satisfied? The answer is no! We certainly need more contributions concerning 'operations'. Not only to inform readers, but also to add to professionalism. Perhaps this idea might be an extra mental note on the eve of 2005.

W. van den Berge – Mutiny in France. Combat readiness in the First World War

The author discusses in this article the still relevant and current question which factors contribute, positively or negatively, to combat readiness. He uses the so-called Nivelle-offensive during the First World War as a historical case. What happened there on the Western front brings the opportunity to compare French and British forces. Why was the French army confronted by large-scale mutiny in and after April 1917, while the British Army was not? The author analyses morale, discipline and combat readiness in both armies. The Nivelle-offensive was the mental breaking point for the French. Morale was eroding much longer. He argues why the same did not happen in the British Army. The lessons are as important today as they were then and there.

E.J.A. van Zijderveld, M.G. Maris and D.M. Brongers – Robots in the field

Twenty hardened robots entering Tora Bora-like caves; they jointly built a communication-chain to relay observations. Fourty under-water robots clearing a landing-corridor and after that transforming into a belt of friendly under-water mines. Or scout-robots in a city, co-ordinated by robots flying overhead. Ar those the visions of Dutch military on the use of multy-robot systems (MRS)? The authors reflect upon the findings of a workshop on this topic in december 2002. Different 'snapshots', such as a landing, operations in built-up area, and operations in a mountainous area were used to streamline the brainstorm. The participants agreed that MRS might play a role in future operations. This may take some twenty years. Yet brainstorms like this one might bring first doctrinal thinking about the role and use of those robots.

M. J. M. S. Hekkens – Chess around the Trans-Caucasus has started

The United States and Russia play chess. The winner hopes to control the distribution of gaz and oil from the Caspian region. The ulterior motive is the economic dominance of Europe. A possible extra might be the partly marginalization of NATO. The field of play is the Trans-Caucasus, an erea between Europe and Eurasia. An area full of seperatism, ethnic contrasts and other sources of instability. The author discusses how the players influence developments and describes the position and role of Georgia, Azerbeidzjan, Armenia and Turkey. The US want to prevent terrorists to use porous boarders in western direction.

G.J.M. Boink –The European Airlift Centre at Eindhoven

In July 2004 the flag of the European Airlift Coordination Cell (EACC) at Eindhoven airbase changed into European Airlift Centre (EAC). The author clarifies the background of the EACC and its contribution to a more European approach to strategic air-transport and Air-to-Air Refueling. Coordination matured. In June 2004 the member countries of the European Air Group decided to raise EAC. The author reflects on its potential and touches on developments, such as the Helsinki Force Catalogue, the support of NATO operations, and the Sealift Coordination Centre, also at Eindhoven.

L. Polman – KFOR's list

Serbia-Montenegro is the distribution centre of international smuggling: cigarettes, rifles, cocaine, women and children. Kosovo is not only a corridor: there are also 'users'. Amnesty International reported how a small local prostitution market transformed into a large industry. Kosovo is governed by the UN, guarded by NATO. There are no laws against the criminal networks. And when snow comes checks disappear till spring.

E.J. Oliemans – Bureaucracy, ethics and a game of golf

Whenever I can, I play a game of golf in the weekend. Recently I met an old friend. We discussed bureaucracy, rules and offenders. In his company there was only one strict rule: own profit is inadmissible. If the violation of this rule was clear, the answer was simple: discharge. Real sanctions in Defence are a problem, because so many rules prevent this. Rules should not be made by bureaucrats, but by the top, and those at the top should be blameless. Otherwise neither rules, coaching or sanctions will do. My friend did not need a book of rules, nor a referee. It is a pity that he does not work in Defence, I thought...