

Summaries

Editorial – The armed forces: instrument of force

The use of the armed forces implies the use of force. Reactions after the use of force by Dutch soldiers in Iraq show us society's increasing awareness of this very fact. Moreover, public support for casualties appears to be rising. The evaluation of the use of military force proved to be complicated. Instrumental to democratic society, the armed forces should be accountable for the use of force: internally and if necessary in front of an independent judge. Developments in the tasks of the armed forces will be of influence on evaluating the use of military force. First of all, participation in combat operations appears to be near. Secondly, an increasing number of combat situations within 'peace operations' have occurred. Finally, the armed forces face an era in which they are tasked for domestic operations in support of civil authorities; these operations may include the use of force. The developments impose not only reconsideration, and if necessary changes upon the armed forces, but also on others outside the military.

P.A.L. Ducheine and G.F. Walgemoed – Military Functional Violence

The Dutch Armed Forces are actively engaged in a broad range of tasks where potentially functional violence may be used. Taking responsibility and to answer any charge in relation to the use of violence, comes with our constitutional state and does justice to possible victims. This may also contribute to legitimacy and may reduce uncertainty in future operations. In October 2004 the College of Attorneys General laid down a special Instruction for military who use functional violence. The authors first explain this Instruction. They then answer three questions: to whom does the Instruction apply?; In what situations is this instruction in force?, and: What is the effect? In the last part they discuss possible problems in practice. They round up with conclusions.

R. Dorsman – A Plea for Knowledge Sensitive Management

The Army Material Command is a so-called 'knowledge intensive' organization. Yet, the management of knowledge is no easy task. Where knowledge is to be found is only a first question. Information, the foundation of knowledge is, just like financial means, an important element of productive power. Putting information on a hard disc is one thing; using information based knowledge has to do with human talent. The author clarifies how this command deals with management of knowledge. The lessons will be useful for the coming Defense Material Organization. After all, in this organization management of knowledge and human talent will play a comparable role.

A.L.W. Vogelaar, P.H.J. Olsthoorn and F.J. Kramer – Decentralized leadership in peace operations

Peace operations are core business for the Armed Forces. Those operations demand organizational flexibility. They also appeal to independence of relatively young commanders, bearing heavy responsibilities. Mission Command is a leading principle in army doctrine. This demands delegation of authority. The authors present the findings of their research on autonomy, focussing on troop and platoon level. Their research is based on interviews with members of four battalions, serving in Bosnia-Herzegovina in different time frames. In their final observations they discuss the problem of delegation.

L. Polman – Good guys and bad guys

In Darfur there are no good guys and bad guys. Both parties, governmental soldiers as well as rebels, are guilty of murder, rape and theft. Pressure on Khartoum only strengthens the position of the rebels. Those rebels even hide between the refugees. Karremans said the same. In his 'safe' area, one out of ten was a soldier. Internationally they are known as 'refugee warriors', soldiers, militia and rebels posing as refugees everywhere in this world: Bosniacs, Palestinians, the Hutu-interahamwe, the Kmer Rouge, the Taliban, members of Polisario, etc, etc. According to UNHCR this is not allowed; it thus does not exist. Both in Srebrenica and in Darfur refugee-camps turned into prisons. The international relief organizations operationally fall down on their knees, at the mercy of riff-raff. What Karremans said was true. Then and there, and now in Darfur.

F. Matser – Mean & lean

From a historical perspective, the author addresses the future Defense organization up to 2020. In his opinion Defense will transform into a small governing staff, mainly manned by controllers and smart buyers. They will acquire the necessary manpower and equipment, made to measure a specific operation. These changes will also solve possible financial problems that face Dutch government in the coming decades.