

Summaries

Editorial – Communication, Culture and missed Opportunities

Since 2003, Defense focuses on the so-called 'new balance' that is wanted. Is this balance still clear? Can decisions be explained? What does this all mean for the individual, for me? There is a constant need for communication. It is harsh to discover that the communication-organization has to contribute to economy. Especially if one understands that those professionals do not only contribute to communication within Defense, but also within society. That is a missed chance. Then culture. A change in culture is critical for success. Again communication is the key. It is better to stop half way than to preserve in an error in order to make the most of a chance.

C.J. Matthijssen – Al Muthanna: a step ahead

Between July and November 2004, SFIR-4 fulfilled her tasks in the province of Al Muthanna in Iraq. The author was in command. He clarifies the mission and operation of this Dutch battlegroup. The tasks were manifold, ranging from building up Iraqi Security Forces, to 'Normal Framework Operations', CIMIC, and the collection of intelligence. SFIR-4 started after the transfer of responsibilities to the Iraqi's on June 28, 2004. He also addresses the period of tension in August. In his final observations the author presents some of the many lessons identified. He clarifies how special circumstances, a complex environment and the intensity of the mission made SFIR-4 a telling experience.

A.C. Tjepkema – Right and wrong during the Cold War

The author uses two recent publications to present an overview of the circumstances that influenced the debate on nuclear weapons within and outside the Armed Forces. He discusses the role of major general Van Meijenfeldt, the influence of this debate on Dutch security policy, the attempts of the GDR to undermine this debate and how Defense struggled with dissident officers. He does not hesitate to include his personal experiences in this debate. His conclusions contain the position of our country within NATO, the question whom the peace-movement served, and that servants of the state benefit distance to mass-movements.

E. Muller – Security Sector Reform

The author was posted at HQ MND(SE) in the Security Sector Reform Branch, during SFIR-4, from June till November 2004. He presents his observations on Security Sector Reform (SSR); the build up of the Iraqi Security Services, in this case in the south-eastern part of the country. Security is essential to develop democracy and home rule. The author describes the SSR-cell, the goal of SSR, the spectrum and the players, the SSR-plan and its phases. In his final observations he touches on several bottlenecks that influence reform. The elections were a first test. Now the Iraqi Security Forces have to demonstrate their ability to preserve internal security.

L. Polman – Lion or Gnu?

When we watch suffering on television we want action. Someone has to do something. It's a must: to help is a moral duty. We are convinced that we *can* do something. Don't we have the money, the planes, the food-surplus and the soldiers? In our own country we let nature have her way. Or don't we? Animal lovers forced the State Forestry Service to kill the oxen that can't take care of themselves. In Africa we thus should kill the gnu that is in the mouth of hyenas, not the hyenas. People were asked what they would do if a lion caught a deer, while they had a gun. Most people would kill the lion. A minority would kill both. Very few indeed would do nothing. Gnu? Lion? Who cares?

F. Matser – On Goose and Gander

What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. The Royal Netherlands Airforce recently introduced a new recruitment-slogan: you see more, you witness more, and you earn more. I have no problem with seeing and witnessing. But does a soldier really earn more there than in comparable functions elsewhere in the Armed Forces? The navy again has its own pay-scales and more leave. The army pays some soldiers as sergeants, where the navy pays for comparable tasks as corporals. Formerly nobody has noted those differences. Nowadays they strike, as thousands work together in a *joint* and 'purple' environment. Can one adjust overnight all what grew crooked in a hundred years?