

From the Editor

After an intense period of internal reorganization, *Parameters* opens its long-awaited Winter 2018–2019 issue with a Special Commentary, “Civil-Military Relations and Today’s Policy Environment” by Thomas Garner. Garner suggests US civil-military relations may have come to a crossroads where the rift between American citizens and their military has grown too great to be ignored any longer.

Our first forum, *Coercion: New Means & Methods*, features two articles that discuss underexplored ways of achieving strategic coercion. The first contribution, “Social Media Warriors: Leveraging a New Battlespace” by Buddhika Jayamaha and Jahara Matisek, explains how certain hostile parties have created a new battlespace consisting of the internet, social media, and other means of communication to foment social and political discontent within Western-style democracies. No less novel, David Katz’s contribution, “Multidimensionality: Rethinking Power Projection for the 21st Century,” explains how American military strategists might incorporate multidimensional power projection into their planning processes to counter gray-zone adversaries.

The second forum, *Technological Innovation: Problems & Prospects*, addresses the double-edged nature of technology. The first article, “High-Energy Laser Weapons: Overpromising Readiness” by Ash Rossiter, discusses some of the facts and fictions associated with modern laser weapons within the context of today’s great-power competition. An essential point in this discussion is how the excessive promises of those responsible for developing (and selling) high-tech weapons can severely undermine military readiness. In quite a different vein, the forum’s second article, “Innovation Tradecraft: Sustaining Technological Advantage in the Future Army” by Adam Jay Harrison, Bharat Rao, and Bala Mulloth, identifies the components needed to build an innovation ecosystem. This ecosystem would include organizational culture, awareness of emerging technologies, a capacity for leveraging resources, and a strategy for absorbing external information. Ideally, such an ecosystem would help channel technological innovation in positive directions while reducing bureaucratic inertia.

Our third forum, *Technological Change & War’s Nature*, consists of a contribution by a historical figure of some renown. The article entitled “Profession at the Crossroads” written by Donn A. Starry while he was still a lieutenant colonel. Among other things, Starry reveals how he and his contemporaries understood the relationship between technological change and the nature of war. His views provide an interesting contrast with those of today. This contribution is separated by nearly 50 years; yet it deals with a timeless and, for the military professional, a fundamentally inescapable question. ~AJE

