

A New Special Operations World: A Look at Western Options in the African Context

*The Strategic Framework, the Shape of Future Conflict on the
Continent, and the Options.*

By Gregory R. Copley,ⁱ

President



The International Strategic Studies Association

At USSPECOPS Global Scout Forum, Tampa, Florida, April 18-21, 2011

Preamble:

My approach to the topic today begins with a grand strategic overview — a global as well as historical approach — to provide a perspective for some of the conclusions which will bear on operational issues for US and Western Special Forces in Africa over the coming decade.

US and other Western Special Forces teams have for many years been doing profoundly important work in helping to train military units in many African states. Indeed, the most significant aspect of this work may not be in the training of the African troops, but in the understanding which the US and its allies are gaining from their discreet military diplomacy in the region. From the US standpoint, this activity represents the most significant on-the-ground understanding which the US Government as a whole has of many African communities, bearing in mind the remoteness of formal diplomacy from much of the real world of security in Africa's diverse societies.

*Even so, Africa has not been a main priority for US defense or strategic thinkers at any time, and the lack of understanding, direction, and goal-setting by the US Government for the recent US military operations with NATO and the United Nations over the military intervention against Libya — Operation **Odyssey Dawn** — was starkly apparent. Equally, the lack of US understanding of issues in such areas as Côte d'Ivoire has led Washington to embark on diplomatic actions which have*

military consequences, and possible outcomes which are less than satisfactory to US interests. We now see profound threats to US and Western interests in the instability which is evident on both sides of the Red Sea, but, again, no truly coherent plan to address this situation, or even a significant understanding of the strategic framework.

Several factors underpin my remarks today:

- 1. **The global strategic balance is changing**, and this is influencing Africa at a time when US, Western, and Asian dependence on African resources is growing, and US and European abilities to influence events in Africa are declining;*
- 2. **The nature of conflict globally is changing**, and many of these changes are now becoming evident in Africa, with informal conflict becoming more violent and the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), for example, more prevalent; and*
- 3. **There is a profound lack of intelligence in the US (in particular) about Africa, and how Africa fits with global trends.** Within this framework, other external states are likely to soon turn to Africa for resource — particularly energy — requirements, adding still further to the competition which is now being fueled by the PRC and India, and, to an extent, Russia.*

Global society at its very foundation has changed dramatically in the post World War II era. The migration of human populations to an *urban-centric world* may have been an inevitable evolution in some respects, but it was accelerated and defined particularly as a result of World War II, which began a new phase in technology. That war froze — as a result of its outcome — certain concepts of the Westphalian nation-state (the modern nation-state) into a rigidity which was positive for the increasingly urban-dominated societies as long as wealth growth continued. The end-state of World War II was to create one of the longest periods of almost-uninterrupted linear economic growth in human history. This in turn triggered one of the most rapid — and certainly the most numerically significant — periods of human population growth in history.

That era — in which the United States rose to strategic prominence as a result of actions begun in the late 19th Century, particularly by the global maritime vision of Teddy Roosevelt — is now ending.

No-one has prepared for the change. As always, populations think that linear extrapolations of their immediate past will continue unabated. This is particularly the case when history is forgotten, and the lessons of human society are no longer taught. Military leaderships, steeped in the ways of their own personal experience, plan for a future which is also an extrapolation of that immediate past and — in the case of societies which have been victorious — almost always build their armed forces as an extrapolation of the past, with some minor variations.

Those old soldiers always prepare to fight yesterday's wars. Those who embrace, or turn to, ingenuity are those who still wince from the ignominy of defeat.

Now, the global balance has been irreversibly changed. The rigid, “final” draft of the Westphalian state is calcified and is breaking under the strains imposed by the wealth which that same system created. The brief *tsunami* of globalization which this wealth engendered, washing over the world, when the end of World War II finally led to the end of the Cold War, is also over.

Natural nationalism is returning, in which human societies build hierarchies and borders around self-protective views of identity and geography. As the wealth surge also declines, then, we see that the structures we created in the 20th Century will in large part change. We will see population levels — which surged from 2.5-billion in 1950 to almost seven-billion today — begin to decline within the coming decades, and as population levels decline, so economic patterns will be distorted, in some cases positively; in some cases destructively. Population levels are already peaking and in some areas declining in Africa. We will see, as we saw in the 20th Century, a resultant change in the list of nations: we will see cratocide (the murder of nations); cratogenesis (the birth of nations); and we will see cratometamorphosis (the reorganization and the re-invention of nations).¹

¹ These terms were coined by the author and his colleague, Prof. Marios Evriviades, for the study, *The Art of Victory* (by Gregory Copley), published in 2006 by Simon & Schuster, New York.

Among its many other facets, we will see in this vast reorganization of human society a new scramble for Africa, as dramatic as the surge of exploration and colonialism which peaked with the Berlin Conference in 1884-85. We will see this, to a large degree, because Africa has much of what the modern world needs in terms of energy resources and the minerals which urban societies must have to feed their dependence on an absolutely unbroken delivery of an energy/food/water diet. If that diet chain is broken, urban societies perish.² This critical energy dependence is becoming, because of urbanization, very different from the type of energy dependence we knew in the 20th Century, and this will transform the strategic opportunities and vulnerabilities of the great urban societies.

What is significant as all of this plays out is that the US has determined, by its recent actions, that it is by no means the driver or main player in this new “scramble for Africa”, despite the fact that the US derives about a quarter of its imported fossil fuels from just the Gulf of Guinea region of West Africa. The creation by the United States of its African Command — USAFRICOM — was the last glimmering of a US understanding that Africa was about to become strategically critical in the changing world. And AFRICOM may be Washington’s main physical tool with regard to Africa, embracing as it does both military and civil diplomacy and dynamic elements, in rebuilding a US stake or influence in Africa.

At the same time, Western political and social activities have begun inhibiting the historical Western corporate successes in dominating access to Africa’s resources. The People’s Republic of China (PRC), India, the Russian Federation, and Iran have been building their own bridgeheads into Africa with speed, flexibility, and resourcefulness. Others will soon join the “scramble for Africa”. Australia’s rapidly declining domestic oil production will force it soon to begin negotiating for a share of the Gulf of Guinea’s oil resources.

So, if we look at the world’s changing geopolitical shape and the driving forces behind power and wealth redistribution, it is clear that we need to revisit what leads to victory. And by victory, I mean the delivery of sustained and defensible

² See, for example, Copley, Gregory R.: “The Future of Warfare, For What It’s Worth”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 1-2/2011.

independence for a society over a protracted period, of the type which the US was able to grasp with the end of World War II.

In viewing history, it is clear that *strategic and tactical situational or contextual factors* are the greatest arbiters of victory, along with morale, and — behind those factors of context and morale — technology. Here, I refer to “context” in the sense that it is what is happening in the world at large (both historically and currently) and the physical character and location of geographic features, which determine opportunities and obstacles. By “morale”, I mean it in the same sense as Napoleon Bonaparte and Sun-tzu in referring to the psychological condition of the society, or the military, including its training and conditioning.³ And by “technology”, I mean the tools which societies employ physically and intellectually to prosecute their drive for survival.⁴

Therefore, in a drive for military and strategic victory, an understanding of the operational context and long-term situational awareness — including human and geographic awareness — can only occur by building and revering comprehensive contextual intelligence and deep understanding. We are focusing here on how the US approaches the “scramble for Africa”. In this instance, then, we must acknowledge that there is no true depth in the US strategic or tactical base of contextual intelligence or understanding on Africa.

How, then, can the US build a strategic approach to achieving its goals in Africa? Indeed, has the US Government even defined its goals in Africa? If Africa has already developed as a critical source of the energy which the US needs for its survival, quite apart from Africa’s delivery of a range of other resource and geopolitical assets, why then has the US not given Africa the strategic priority it demands? Why is almost all US strategic and military thinking with regard to Africa based on outdated and almost entirely specious stereotypes? Even during the Cold War, the Soviet intelligence and understanding of African societies greatly exceeded that of the US.

³ Napoleon noted that “the moral is to the physical as two is to one”, meaning that psychological factors are twice as important as physical factors in determining military outcomes.

⁴ See, particularly, Possony, Stefan T.; and Pournelle, J. E.: *The Strategy of Technology: Winning the Decisive War*. Cambridge, Mass., 1970: Dunellen, University Press of Cambridge, Mass.

But let us suppose that the total transformation of the global geopolitical framework has created a new set of opportunities; a chaos from which a new framework can be defined. How would, for example, the US and the West then proceed in Africa (or, indeed, anywhere in the world)?

The time has surely come in the US and the West to evaluate the military and strategic lessons of recent conflict in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya in light of the transformed global strategic realignments.

The nature and shape of the world has changed, therefore the nature and shape of conflict has changed, and is changing.

At some stage in all anticipated conflicts of the coming decade or two, forces will be reduced to fighting the war which the host geography and society imposes on it. Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya should have taught Western governments and militaries that rule. We saw how, for example, the geography of Papua New Guinea determined how the Kokoda campaign of World War II would be fought, regardless of the supposed logic of Generals Douglas MacArthur and Thomas Blamey. Terrain inaccessibility, climate, and therefore resultant health issues, were major determinants of outcomes in the Kokoda campaign, as well as strategic pressures which occurred away from the conflict, just as they were for so many military campaigns through history, including Napoleon's ill-fated quest into Russia.

Geography — and therefore climate — represents the great equalizer in much of conflict. Moreover, at times of economic constraint, technology is less able to overcome the dictates of geography. The wealth of societies which enables technological advantage for a military force also acts as its great restraint, because wealthy societies distance themselves from conflict, and are angered by even the smallest social inconvenience which conflict brings, particularly in the way of casualties. I remarked in an earlier study: All steps forward are based on vision; all steps backward are based on budget.⁵

So AFRICOM has been placed in a position whereby it must make positive strategic gains for the United States in Africa at a time when the US defense budget is de-

⁵ Copley, Gregory R.: *Energy Security 2.0: How Energy is Central to the Changing Global Balance in the New Age of Geography*. P.15. Alexandria, Virginia, 2011: The International Strategic Studies Association.

clining; when US will to engage in warfare as a means of achieving strategic success is evaporating; and at a time when operational terrain and context determine that wealth and technology are absolutely not the arbiters of the outcome.

Given these realities within the broader reality of a changing global system, the US can only make strategic progress in Africa — and, in reality, we cannot generalize about such a diverse region as “Africa” in which many separate theaters exist — through a mix of soft power capabilities and very, very careful and (in a sense) humbly-projected and highly-skilled military feints. By “soft power” we must include, of course, diplomacy and aid and economic policies of the US Government, but also the incentivizing and inventiveness of private sector enthusiasm. In “soft power”, too, we can consider the prestige and deterrent facets of strategic military power projection forces. But in this regard we must also bear in mind the reality that these strategic military capabilities are not the same as real warfighting capabilities on the ground; that same ground where geography imposes the way in which outcomes must be achieved. As well, both strategic and tactical forces, as well as other tools, have psychological components which may transcend the physical. In that regard, Napoleon’s maxim that psychological factors are twice as important as physical factors applies even more strenuously off the battlefield than on it.

US strategic authority has been vastly weakened by the perceptions — as well as the reality — that the weapons which great wealth has given its armies have been either impotent or less than decisive in achieving meaningful victory in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya.

Where this is leading, obviously, is to the clarity that military force, where it is to be used, must be selective, subtle, indirect, and highly conscious of context and psychological or psychopolitical outcomes. In other words, a climate of strategic prestige, authority, and invincibility should ideally prevail as a backdrop. But the work to achieve success — the real physical triggers — will almost certainly be conducted by special operations forces, operating carefully and discreetly. The West has convinced itself that it must fight “asymmetric” wars, and military thinkers in the PRC and India began planning, after the US military strikes against Ser-

bia in the 1990s, how technologically inferior forces could successfully wage “asymmetric warfare” against the US.

The reality is that in the new wave of warfare, symmetry is being imposed by terrain, context, and host societies. In other words, the US and Western powers must, in fact, fight *symmetrical* wars in which they abandon reliance on strategic weapons and many of the trappings of net-centric warfare, and face their adversaries without vast logistical trains.

This does not negate the critical aspect of strategic economic and geographic depth, or even technology, as keys to success in protracted war. But there is a need to move away from the concepts of “asymmetrical warfare” in which wealth and technology determine the outcome in such operating environments as the extremely varied terrains of Africa, or Afghanistan. Indeed, if anything, the lessons of recent conflicts should have been that by insisting on waging asymmetric warfare as the superior force, the West has consistently failed to win decisive and lasting military victories, and has certainly — because of the protracted nature of the conflicts waged on high-tech, high-budget terms — been forced into strategic defeat. The new warfare will be, then, symmetrical in that the host will determine how forces are arrayed. Net-centric warfare capabilities of the visiting forces must give way to something new and innovative: “*net-eccentric* warfare”, in which technologies can be adapted to localized conditions to provide micro-technological advantage. This will force greater reliance on commanders in the field at very local, small unit levels, and must, perforce mean a more hands-off approach from national commanders. This approach worked well for Britain in its global campaigns of the 18th and 19th centuries, and these are lessons which need to be studied.

These new operations, however, can only be successful if they are subordinated and married indissolubly to strategic and tactical intelligence of an historical as well as current nature, including intelligence which relates how global strategic trends become the winds which sweep the savannahs and bushlands of tactical interest.

We said that geography, and host populations, and host climates impose the way in which conflicts must be fought under the anticipated scenarios of the coming decades. This does not mean the abandonment of technological advantage, but the

need to look at technology in a new light. It does not mean that training, discipline, and morale become less important. They are actually more important, but must be tailored to the new realities. Not only has the global strategic change determined a new nature of warfare, it has highlighted that in certain conditions — such as in much of Africa — there is a great need to look at the leveling effect of geography and climate, particularly on forces not accustomed to operating on the Continent. Most African peacekeeping forces have understood that, and the Nigerian success in the Liberian and Sierra Leone peacekeeping operations of the 1990s was profound evidence of that. The Liberian civil war was a messy, grinding, punishing conflict, and when the United Nations thought it could do better, it was the UN peacekeeping forces which were humbled, and Nigeria had to be brought back in to achieve meaningful success.

We have reached the point, then, when not only are special operations forces the *desired* military unit for the attainment of strategic objectives of the US and the West in such areas as Africa in the future, but we have possibly reached the point where they are the *only* viable forces which can be used when military solutions are subtly and carefully called-for, almost always in conjunction with host governments.

These are brief, and very general observations on how conflicts will be fought in the future, particularly in Africa. What, in specific terms, must be considered by external forces when engaging in military operations in Africa in the coming decades?

1. Africa is exceptionally diverse in terms of geographic conditions, climate, social formations and historical patterns of behavior, and there can be absolutely no Africa-wide generic approaches to how conflicts can be engaged on the Continent. Even African militaries, engaged in peacekeeping operations at long distances from their home base, have found great difficulty in adapting to conditions in other African regions. Within this framework, we need also to note that we are possibly entering a period in which we will see the old colonial borders of Africa becoming vulnerable. We will see, particularly given the increasing impotence and weakness of the African Union (AU) thanks to the efforts over the past decades by Libya's Mu'ammar al-

Qadhafi, the possible break-up of some African states and the creation of new states. As a result, external views of Africa cannot be based around understandings solely of “states” as we know them today, or the United Nations definition of statehood. Africa is becoming fluid, and finding its own levels. Historical values are coming to the fore, once again, based on pre-colonial and other factors. Moroccans in the Western Sahara have insisted, for example, in returning to their old and comfortable allegiance with the Moroccan Kingdom, after the exit of Spanish colonial forces. Libyans, regardless of the differences between their 140 or so tribes, took the first opportunity to reverse 41 years of military dictatorship and called for the restoration of a system which — as it occurred until 1969 — meant that no one tribe would dominate another. We will continue to see some direct, state-to-state military engagements on the Continent: between Ethiopia and Eritrea; in civil war situations such as Libya; and so on.

2. Detailed social, geographic, political, military, and other intelligence is critical on each separate region of Africa, bearing in mind that some social (linguistic, religious, cultural) and ethnic patterns transcend modern boundaries. At present, most Western intelligence services are seriously deficient in the gathering of this intelligence on Africa, and the US is possibly the least well-equipped with meaningful intelligence — and, more importantly, understanding — of the various African societies and regions. No meaningful and durable strategic success, or even enduring tactical military success, can be expected by the US under this present regime of poor intelligence.
3. If the US is to rely on partnerships with host African governments to undertake military operations on the Continent, then it must — based on a sound understanding of, and intelligence on those governments and their own strategic context — be willing to offer meaningful support to those governments. This is not merely in attempting to dominate the military supply relationship, and providing systems which the US wishes to sell or give, but in ensuring that the military supply and training relationships are based on the contextual realities, and are sustained. The US, for example, failed to understand why Nigeria had to resort to French airlift support to get its peacekeeping forces into the Darfur region of Sudan. The Nigerian Air Force had been

begging the US to sell it spares for its Lockheed C-130H *Hercules* transport aircraft, but the US had consistently stalled on this, forcing Nigeria to turn to France for airlift, which then angered Washington.

4. US Special Forces operating in Africa must undergo different conditioning and training, including far better language skills than have presently been in place. This will mean developing regional specialists within USSOCOM intelligence and SpecOps who are not only fluent in French and Portuguese, but also in some of the regional languages and dialects, along with a knowledge of various customs. To say that issues of African intelligence, cultural, linguistic, and political understanding have been lacking in the US military is a profound understatement. The US intelligence, military, and foreign policy cultures have always placed maximum priority on “the main target”, and this has variously meant the USSR, the PRC, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and so on. To specialize, in the US military and policy arenas, in areas of the world which are not “main targets” has been a ticket to career obscurity. This short-termism is now costing the US massively.
5. Military operations, and particularly special military operations, in remote areas of Africa demand particular attention to healthcare issues. This not only means maximum attention to inoculation against diseases prevalent in certain areas, it means being aware of the shortcomings of some of the medical solutions, such as the side-effects of some malaria drugs, for example. Tainted, or unsafe, blood supplies are a critical element in deterring most Western military operations in Africa. But most importantly, successful and sustained military operations in most areas of Africa are likely to be constrained by poor access to potable water.
6. Water is the key around which most operations must focus. What Iraq and Afghanistan should have taught US (and other) special forces is that success is dependent on the ability to engage the adversary on his own terrain and on a sustained basis. In Iraq and Afghanistan — indeed, in Vietnam, as well — US forces attempted to sustain operations by virtue of a very, very long logistical tail and the ability to re-supply forces in the field. This belief that technology could overcome the difficulties of remote force projection has

now been convincingly disproven by the reality that it was the desire for technological protection (ie: up-armorings of mobile platforms) which actually made US forces vulnerable. And the belief that force projection into combat areas could be brief and rotational based on logistical relief, and long logistical supply lines, proved costly and vulnerable. Now, economic realities are, apart from anything else, going to mean that if US Special Forces project into a region, they must do so without a long logistical tail and heavy equipment. Potable water is one of the most critical elements of sustained and successful deployment, and it is also one of the most logistically expensive and vulnerable.

7. Because most US SpecOps deployments in Africa will be of a discreet nature, they will — for political and practical reasons — mostly be unable to call on rapid air support of any type, let alone close air support of a combat nature. This changes and challenges the nature of small force reliance on the net-centric communications and intelligence capabilities which Western technology affords.
8. To achieve success, light-footprint Special Operations units operating in Africa will need to be able to sustain independence of operations for protracted periods. This will be very different, then, from previous, even recent, operations elsewhere in the world. Moreover, the US engagement in Libya makes it clear that Washington is now more likely to actually consider force projection in achieving goals in Africa than was the case in the past.
9. Operations will need to be self-reliant in terms of water purification and/or desalination. They must be far less reliant on overwhelming firepower than in other recent engagements. They must be self-reliant for long periods in terms of electrical power generation, and this in turn means that they must be substantially independent of supplies of diesel fuel to the greatest extent possible. New lightweight technology is available to ensure that water purification and desalination capabilities, as well as non-diesel electric power generation, can and must be the core of forward operations. There can be no reliance on armor or logistical chains of any predictable or costly nature. Unlike Vietnam, copies of *Playboy* and hot meals will not be coming your way

any time soon. Technology — and particularly the emerging and gradual development of high-capability power storage devices (batteries) — is ensuring that units can and must operate with real independence for longer periods, in adverse climatic conditions. This should be the driver for the development of force multipliers, such as small unit UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), field re-chargeable encrypted tactical comms units, and satellite comms. But without clean water, nothing works. Moreover, in civil relations activities, the ability of SpecOps teams to build relations with local populations is enhanced if it can also help provide potable water to its friends.⁶

10. We are already witnessing a dramatic growth in the use of IEDs in African urban warfare, utilizing mainly technologies of improvisation brought in from the *jihadists*. This, however, follows a long African tradition during the Cold War of using landmines. What we are seeing, however, is that the response to IEDs probably needs to focus on nimbleness of operations, rather than up-arming.
11. SpecOps forces operating remotely in African conditions — whether urban or rural locales — must use knowledge of local language and customs to ensure maximum support from local communities, and to obtain and understand specific local and regional intelligence. It must be an absolute article of faith that unit intelligence capabilities, stemming from a broad strategic understanding to cultural and local knowledge, are more vital than actual combat skills and access to weapons and ordnance. SpecOps forces more than any other military forces must understand Sun-tzu's maxim that supreme excellence — ie: victory — consists of winning without fighting.

⁶ The International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA) has, since 2004, had a special team devoted to personnel survivability and mission achievement. This spearheaded efforts to deal more effectively with the impact of blast on vehicles and occupants, and resulted in new technologies, seating, and restraint systems being now gradually installed to cope with blast. These technologies also provided a dramatic improvement in the prevention of fatigue and repetitive strain injury, with the objective of delivering troops more combat-ready to the battlefield. In 2011, the ISSA team has been actively engaged in developing a specification for what it calls a High-Mobility Resource Vehicle (HMRV) which can provide a mobile team — from platoon to company to larger formations — the ability to reduce dependence on diesel and water logistics trains, while having the ability to create potable water from poor or saline sources on an ongoing basis, as well as creating and storing electrical power for communications, computers, and other uses, for mobile forces and possibly local civil groups. The key is to reduce logistical tails, increase independence of operation, and enable mission duration to be sustained in order to achieve maximum success.

12. Special Operations teams — whether from the US, Britain, France, or where-ever — will likely continue to form the key to meaningful external diplomacy with African militaries. This has been the case for some time, but will increasingly be so. Western desires to re-shape African militaries in the likeness of Western militaries will continue to fail, just as the US Clinton Administration's desire to forcibly shape the Nigerian Army — and the Nigerian Government — into a mirror image of those US institutions, also failed and did a great disservice to its African allies.

At the end of the day, in Africa, it is likely that Special Operations forces will be the key to US and Western military operations. Indeed, large-scale conventional operations by the US and its allies in Africa — other than air power projection and offshore maritime support — may be *unable* to be utilized for the foreseeable future, because of the terrain and health issues involved. It is therefore down to the Special Operations teams — including those conducting psychological operations — to carry the burden. And it is also down to the intelligence component of the Special Operations forces and the agencies which back them to provide the critical weapon of strategic and tactical situational awareness.

ⁱ Australian Gregory Copley is President of the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA), based in Washington, DC. He is also Editor-in-Chief of *Defense & Foreign Affairs* publications, and the Director of Intelligence at the Global Information System (GIS), the on-line, encrypted-access, global intelligence service which provides strategic current intelligence to governments. He has authored 31 books on strategic, military, aerospace, and other topics. He serves as an adviser on strategic issues to a number of governments and leaders. His latest book (February 2011), *Energy Security 2.0: How Energy is Central to the Changing Global Balance in the New Age of Geography* (co-authored with Andrew Pickford, Yossef Bodansky, and David Archibald), details many of the parameters of the changing global strategic balance. His book, *The Art of Victory*, was published by Simon & Schuster's Threshold Editions in New York in 2006. In December 2010, *On Preferring Life: Human Considerations in a Larger World*, was published in Australia. The 17th edition of his 2,500pp encyclopedia, the *Defense & Foreign Affairs Handbook*, was published in January 2009, and is now being updated daily in an online version, the *Defense & Foreign Affairs Handbook Online*. His *Defense & Foreign Affairs Handbook on Azerbaijan* was published in July 2006, with an expanded second edition in May 2007. He co-authored (with Purvis Hussain) the *Defense & Foreign Affairs Handbook on Pakistan*, which was published in November 2008. He authored the *Defense & Foreign Affairs Handbook on Egypt* in 1995, and a study on Ethiopian symbols and military strategy in 1998; and so on. ISSA has for almost four decades worked on grand strategy issues. Copley is also Chairman of ISSA's Australian think-tank, ISSA Indo-Pacific, in Perth. He was Principal Author of several landmark studies including *Australia 2050: An Examination of Australia's Condition, Outlook, and Options for the First Half of the 21st Century*, which was launched in the Australian Parliament in December 2007. In April 2009, at the Office of the Australian Prime Minister & Cabinet, in Canberra, he launched *Such a Full Sea: Australia's Options in a Changing Indian Ocean Region*. He also authored the study, released in June 2008, entitled *Australia's National Security: Considerations for Planning Defence and Security Capabilities Well Into the 21st Century*. He was principal author of the study, *Australia's Energy Options*, presented at Federal Parliament in August 2005. One of his earliest books was *Australians in the Air*, which is still

the only comprehensive history of Australian aviation. He has received a significant number of orders and decorations from governments, including, in 2007, being made a Member of the Order of Australia for his contributions to the international community in the field of strategic analysis. Copley also has had an extensive career as an industrialist, owning several shipyards and engineering companies in the United Kingdom, a naval architectural firm, and a chemical company in France. He served as Vice-Chairman of the Scottish national airline, Highland Express. He can be reached at email: GRCopley@StrategicStudies.org or GRCopley@aol.com.