

COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE



SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY 1984 - 2009

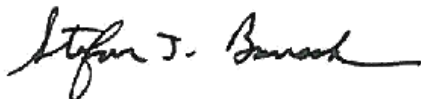


BY COL (R) KEVIN BENSON
10TH DIRECTOR OF SAMS

FOREWORD

The School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) has played a key role in the education of our leaders for the past twenty five years. The School has produced 1,747 graduates many of whom have gone on to perform key roles as battalion and brigade commanders, and as principal staff officers in division and corps headquarters and other high level operational commands. The demographics of SAMS' graduates transcend the U.S. Army and indeed extend to all of the joint forces in the U.S. military as well as our Coalition and Inter-Agency partners. As this chronicle notes, the SAMS history is replete with examples of continuous growth and evolution in response to the changing needs of the military and the nation as the school prepared leaders for the Cold War, numerous combat contingency operations, and the current campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Many things have changed during the past quarter century but the original purpose of the SAMS program has remained constant which is to provide a broad and deep graduate level education in the science and art of war at the tactical and operational levels that goes beyond the Command and General Staff Officers Course. The SAMS motto: *MENS EST CLAVIS VICTORIAE*—"The mind is the key to victory"—remains the focal point for the school and will continue to guide decisions that will ensure the school remains relevant and provides the quality education our leaders will need for the next twenty-five years. SAMS will endeavor to seed the Army with officers annually who will produce a leavening influence on the Army by their competence and impact on other officers. Our collective goal is to create a multiplier effect in all areas of the U.S Army through the work of our graduates and to produce agile and adaptive leaders who think critically and are able to help solve complex ambiguous problems for our country and our Allies in an era of persistent conflict.



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SAMS . . . The First 25 Years

A Historical Overview

by

Kevin Benson, Colonel, US Army (Retired)

The first “official” reference to the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) graduates as Jedi Knights was on 12 May 1992 during a meeting of the Committee on Armed Services Military Education Panel in Washington, DC. The panel met, pursuant to call, at 9:05 a.m. in room 2216, Rayburn House Office Building. In his opening statement, the Honorable Ike Skelton (chairman of the panel) said:

The panel is quite pleased by the Advanced Military Studies Program concept and I commend the Army Command and General Staff College for its vision in initially establishing the school of advanced military studies at Fort Leavenworth. Of course, we all know that the real stamp of approval came when General Schwarzkopf requested SAMS graduates, sometimes referred to as “Jedi Knights,” be sent to his headquarters in Riyadh to assist in developing the campaign plan.¹

The purpose of this condensed 25-year history is to bring to light the significant effort that went into truly building SAMS and to reinforce the challenges of the earlier years of SAMS. The people involved in these efforts should not be forgotten in the press of more recent events. I spent more time on the early years because there was much I did not know about how the School came to be, thus the extent of documentation covers those facts. There is no intent to slight those who continued the process of refinement and development, but I found that these events would be easily brought to mind by concentrating on fewer but significant events of the second half of the history of our School.

I humbly dedicate this work to the memory of Colonel Tom Felts, my friend and the first SAMS graduate to fall in battle. Tom gave the last full measure of devotion. He was a brave man.

¹House Committee on Armed Services, *Advanced Military Studies Programs at the Command and Staff Colleges*, Hearings on H.A.S.C. No. 102-80, 102d Cong., 2d sess., 1993, 5.

The Initial Idea . . . An Elite of Capability

On 28 December 1982 General Glen Otis, Commanding General of the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), made the decision to approve a 1-year extension of the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) course for specially selected officers. The first course, a pilot program, began in June 1983.² The efforts leading to the founding of the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) were based on the visions of many men, but principally came about due to the persistent energy of one particular officer, Colonel Huba Wass de Czege.

Instead of attending the Army War College, Wass de Czege was assigned to the Army War College as a War College Research Fellow and detailed to Fort Leavenworth. Wass de Czege wrote a study of the Army Staff College, and his findings were published in the US Army War College colloquium on war and, at least unofficially, distributed to selected senior officers. Wass de Czege's report, "Army Staff College Level Training Study," released in final form in 1983, was influential in establishing what eventually would be named the US Army School of Advanced Military Studies.

The report focused on the changing complexity of warfare and the need to understand the theory of warfare. In the study, Wass de Czege outlined the changes in warfare from World War II to the present time and noted that the pace of change was growing rapidly. He juxtaposed this increasing complexity with the amount of time other "first rate" armies took to educate their general staff officers. At the time of the report, the US Army suffered in comparison. Wass de Czege reported that the Israelis sent officers selected for staff college education to school for 46 weeks. The Canadians sent all officers to school

²Dr. John W. Partin, Combined Arms Center Historian, ed., *A Brief History of Fort Leavenworth, 1827–1983* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1983). <http://cgsc.leavenworth.army.mil/carl>

for 20 weeks, and then specially selected a smaller number for an additional 45 weeks. The British and Germans sent their officers to school for “about 100 weeks . . .” and the Russians “put their potential general staff officers through an astonishing 150 weeks of intensive education.” The US Army sent officers to staff college level schooling for 42 weeks. Wass de Czege wrote, “The Army with the toughest missions in the world possesses the most austere school system of all first-rate armies.”³ This had not always been the case.

Wass de Czege reminded the senior leaders of the Army that three times in the history of general staff schooling the course had been 2 years in length. The course of instruction at Fort Leavenworth was 2 years long from 1904 to the United States entry in World War I; from 1919 to 1922; and from 1928 to 1936, just prior to the great expansion of the US Army for World War II. Wass de Czege highlighted the graduates of the 2-year Leavenworth course that made a difference in staff and command positions in the US Army, ranging from J. Lawton Collins and Ernest Harmon (Class of 1933) to Matthew Ridgway and Maxwell Taylor (Class of 1936). Wass de Czege concluded this short section of his report by noting that at some point in World War II every division (90) and corps (24) were commanded by “2 year Leavenworth men.”⁴ He proposed that a second year of study for selected officers provide a “broad, deep military education in the science and art of war” that went beyond that provided by the existing CGSC course. This new course would serve the Army by developing a group of officers better prepared for the demands of general staff work at division, corps, and higher levels of command

³Huba Wass de Czege, “Army Staff College Level Training Study,” Final Report, 13 June 1983, F-1/2. Hereafter cited as WdC Report.

⁴WdC Report, F-3.

and “. . . seed the Army with a number of officers annually who will provide a leavening influence on the Army by their competence. . . .”⁵ Wass de Czege’s report went directly to key senior leaders in the Army.

Wass de Czege, and other senior leaders, concluded that the pace of change in the conduct of warfare was so rapid that the Army needed to invest more time in educating its officers to deal with the complexity of modern warfare. This was at odds with a study done in 1978 titled the Review of Education and Training of Officers (RETO).⁶ This study, while establishing a short staff officer course for captains had also taken a survey of officers in the Army ranging from lieutenants to colonels. The survey showed that most colonels and lieutenant colonels did not believe more time in school was necessary, that the Army needed more doers not thinkers.

There were many officers in the Army thinking though about the growing complexity of war. Wass de Czege said his idea began even before he was named a Research Fellow, the first glimmer began “. . . back on a hill in Vietnam wondering why all the field grade officers above me hadn’t a clue about what they were sending me out to do.” He was appointed to a study group established by then Lieutenant General William R Richardson on combat decisionmaking and judgment. Wass de Czege described this next point toward the idea of SAMS as “. . . the ‘how to teach judgment’ working group Lieutenant General Richardson established at CGSC, of whom I was the most junior member, and none of the ‘old’ colonels thought there was a problem.”⁷ Finally, in June 1981 Wass de Czege accompanied

Richardson on a trip to the People’s Republic of China. Wass de

⁵WdC Report, F-4.

⁶US Department of the Army. General Staff, Officer Training and Education Review Group, *Review of Education and Training for Officers (RETO)*, vol. 1–6, with appendixes (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 30 June 1978). Hereafter cited as RETO.

⁷Brigadier General (Retired) Huba Wass de Czege, e-mail to author, 18 October 2006.

Czege described a conversation he had with Richardson on the fantail of a river boat, “Then the moment in China on the Yangtze River with LTG Richardson when SAMS became the beginnings of its future reality. There may be other theories of how SAMS got started, but before that moment in China, SAMS was in no one else’s mind that I know of, at least no one I knew would even support my idea before I took it to LTG Richardson that day.”⁸ Wass de Czege’s vision for this school was not to create a “privileged elite” or educate officers to do select key jobs better, but rather “to create a multiplier effect in all areas of Army competence as these officers would teach others.”⁹ Articulating the notion that a strategy to manage uncertainty in future wars must be developed, Wass de Czege urged the Army to develop officers “. . . able to apply sound military judgment across the entire spectrum of *present* and *future* US Army missions during the preparation for and conduct of war.”¹⁰ Wass de Czege believed the Army required officers educated in the practice of the operational art, the level of war at which tactical successes were connected to strategy in the attainment of policy objectives.

⁸Wass de Czege, e- mail, 18 October 2006. WdC Report, F-4.

¹⁰WdC Report, F-5. Emphasis in original text.



Brig. Gen. Huba Wass de Czege
First SAMS Director
U.S. Army Photo

Junior Henry Kissingers vs. “Super-doooper” Tacticians

Lieutenant Colonel Hal Winton, one of the officers assigned to assist Wass de Czege establish the School, described one encounter between the Commandant, Lieutenant General Jack N. Merritt, and the Deputy Commandant, Major General Crosbie Saint Jr. Winton recalled that Merritt “was a White House Fellow,” and “. . . wanted sort of a junior Henry Kissinger kind of course,” whereas Saint preferred “a super dooper tacticians course.”¹¹ Merritt’s articulation of the requirements for a strategic planner was somewhat at odds with the guidance that Winton recalled receiving from Saint, the “super-doooper tactician’s course.”

Based on Saint’s guidance and what he heard from Merritt, Winton developed “a super duper tactics course plus an operational art course appended onto what I called a preparation for war course . . . built with the broad issues army leaders have to think about before they design an army to go over and fight.”¹² Winton followed the outlined proposed by Wass de Czege in his study, but fleshed out the concepts based on the

¹¹US Army Military History Institute, Senior Officer Oral History Program, LTC Harold R. Winton, USA, retired. Conducted by LTC Richard Mustion, 5 April 2001, at Carlisle Barracks, PA, 7. Hereafter cited as Winton, interview. Actually, Merritt was a finalist for a White House Fellowship, but was not selected; see the Merritt oral history transcript, 75.

¹²Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 7.

guidance from the generals. Saint pondered the questions of how to prepare officers for these missions as well as what officers perform these types of tasks at higher levels of command. Saint decided that SAMS was a necessary part of this process.

Saint intended that SAMS should be designed “. . . to give people the basic underpinnings so they can become strategic planners in addition to operational planners.” Saint recognized that following schooling there had to be an assignment mechanism in place to ensure graduates of the school gained experience in operating at division and corps as well as in a joint and interagency environment. The development of strategic planners and leaders required career choices on the part of the officers involved in the process. As Saint put it, “That’s how you get them, whether we have enough of them or not it has to be a conscious process on who’s going to be one of these guys.”¹³ The decision on the process and the curriculum came down to one briefing given by Winton to Saint and Merritt.

In a January 1983 presentation to Generals Merritt and Saint, Winton presented a curriculum overview that attempted to find the balance between Merritt’s desire for “junior Henry Kissingers” and Saint’s “super duper tacticians.” The presentation outlined a course that balanced division and corps tactics with operational art. Winton recalled that “Merritt was a little bit displeased,” but Saint stepped in and said, “This is the kind of course that I said I wanted. So if you have a problem, it’s not with the briefer, it’s with me.” The end result of the presentation was an outline of a broad-based curriculum that began with military theory and ended with courses on preparing for war—a logical

¹³Major General Crosbie B. Saint, interview 239.

progression through the complexities of warfare. Winton said, “This was the rationale that satisfied both General Merritt and General Saint.”¹⁴

Looking back, Winton described his role in the development of SAMS in modest terms, “I referred to myself and Lieutenant Colonel Doug Johnson as curriculum carpenters. We were not the visionaries.”¹⁵ Winton named Wass de Czege as one of the visionaries who developed and sold the idea of the School. Wass de Czege was not assigned to Fort Leavenworth though, he worked for General Richardson. Richardson appointed Wass de Czege as an Army War College Fellow to develop the school. Wass de Czege did not “belong” to Saint due to this assignment, but Winton did. Winton said, “. . . General Saint wanted somebody who belonged to him to do the spade work, if you will, to translate this [vision of SAMS] into reality.” Winton’s road to the job as a curriculum carpenter was, as he called it, “an accident of history.”¹⁶

Winton believed that this assignment was the result of two accidents of history. The first was that he and Wass de Czege were West Point classmates. The second was that Wass de Czege knew Winton held a PhD in History and was a former instructor at West Point. Winton said that he believed Wass de Czege “. . . whispered in General Saint’s ear, ‘If you want someone who belongs to you to start doing the curriculum carpentry, that’s the guy you ought to get. So I was duly invited and I duly accepted.’”¹⁷

Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Johnson graduated from West Point in 1963. He served two tours of duty in Vietnam, earned a Master’s Degree in History from the University of

¹⁴Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 9.

¹⁵Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 2.

¹⁶Winton interview, 5 April 2001.

¹⁷Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 5. Parenthetical added for emphasis.

Michigan, and taught in the history department at West Point from 1974 to 1977.¹⁸

Johnson was assigned to Fort Leavenworth after a tour of duty in Germany. He arrived in 1981 and was assigned to the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Resource Management. Johnson was busy, but not doing anything that really taxed him or drew on his experiences as a history professor at the United States Military Academy. Johnson was also an avid equestrian and this hobby brought Johnson into contact with Wass de Czege.

Johnson was coordinating the construction of buildings all over Fort Leavenworth—from the prison to the new bachelor officers' quarters. He was also a member of the Leavenworth Hunt Club. Asked what brought him to SAMS, Johnson wrote, "What got me involved was the HUNT! I was riding about one day with Huba and he asked me where I had my Master's and on what." Johnson gave Wass de Czege his master's thesis and then events took a faster pace. Winton also knew Johnson and believed his assignment on the installation staff was "... an incredible waste of talent." Winton also played a role in securing Johnson's role in the development of SAMS. Winton reviewed the requirements established by TRADOC regarding the establishment of a curriculum. He determined that he would need 44 people to get the work done in the time available, 5 months. He also knew he really wanted Johnson as a part of the SAMS team. Winton went to brief Saint on the process to develop the curriculum concept into reality. Winton told Saint, "... there's good news and bad news." Saint said to give him the bad news first. Winton said "If we get 44 people starting the first of February, we can have it all

¹⁸Hamm, Candi, Register of Graduates, 1985-2007.

done by June.” To that, Saint said, “Disapproved. What’s the good news?” Winton said “The good news is we can get it done with two if we get the right guy.” Saint asked who the right guy was, and Winton said Johnson.¹⁹ Johnson was a member of the team as of that moment.

Johnson recalled, “The next thing I knew, Hal Winton called me and told about the budding idea of SAMS and asked if I would be interested in joining as he and Huba felt they needed a third who was an experienced instructor, etc. . . . [then] we three are standing before ‘Butch’ Saint . . . I was a known quantity to Saint. When the three of us walked into his office he threw up his hands and asked if it was the three Wise Men or the Three Stooges? . . . and that is how I joined this mob.” Joining the “mob” was just one step on the path to developing and executing the curriculum of a School that did not have a classroom. Referring to the School Johnson wrote, “Hal Winton and I had talked about that idea for some years, but Huba [Wass de Czege] was the guy who had done the work to establish that as a defensible proposition.”²⁰

Johnson and Winton taught together in the History Department of the Military Academy. They realized that Wass de Czege prepared the ground for the development of the School with his study, as well as garnering key general officer support for the idea of the School. Turning the idea into a reality required the hard work of developing a curriculum that would educate officers in the theory of warfare. The first decision made in the development of the curriculum was to start at the division level of command and staff. Johnson described the efforts, “We [Johnson and Winton] then took up what tools we had and established the ‘Curriculum Carpentry Corporation.’ We decided to work

¹⁹Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 11–12.

²⁰Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Johnson, e-mail.

from the ground up—the fundamental theory of ground combat as far upward as time would allow, but focusing ultimately on the operational level—at that time very badly understood and not on the tips of the tongues of more than a very few people. That meant we were going to develop planners at the division level and/or above.”²¹ The Curriculum Carpentry Corporation now had an objective and a methodology. The hard work of building the School remained.

Johnson joined Winton near the end of February 1983. The two started the process of hiring an administrative noncommissioned officer, a secretary, ordering books, and writing the curriculum. The two had 4 months, from March to June, to complete this work. Winton did a short study of the exact requirements for this effort, the requirements established by TRADOC. After this study of the development of tasks, conditions, standards, course goals, and learning objectives, Winton decided to “deliberately divorce . . .” themselves from the established process. His rationale, “First, because we didn’t have the time. . . . The second thing we said was that there’s some Auftragstaktik involved here. You hired us to do this job. You trust us to do this job.” This was another important moment in the development of SAMS. Winton and Johnson established an element of trust in the School among the senior commanders at Fort Leavenworth. They decided to establish a goal of developing character traits and knowledge areas for the School and its students. The next step in the unique process that defined SAMS, as Winton said, was to trust the “genius, if you will, the savoir faire of the seminar leader to adjudicate that interaction between the students and the material.” Winton and Johnson

²¹Johnson, e-mail.

also put a burden on the SAMS' student. "We're going to leave it to the enthusiasm and vigor of the students to dig into this material and learn stuff out of it that they think is important." This decision was the proximate cause of the streak of independence in SAMS that continues to the present time. Winton and Johnson resisted the military's tendency toward rigid bureaucratic control. Winton said, "We didn't insist that every single lesson begin with an exact articulation of how these 20 pages connect to this particular objective."²²

Curriculum development consumed Winton and Johnson from February through June 1983. Once they decided to start conceptually from the division level of command and staff work and then move up to corps and army level, the development of curriculum moved into refinement as the two had defined a path forward. Johnson noted, "We knew, intuitively, that we needed to get some travel into the program . . ." to avoid too much classroom time.²³ An integral part of the education of general staff officers and commanders, the two decided, included observing not only the Regular Army in training but also the National Guard. Johnson recalled, "We had done something of a survey and found that almost none of the CGSC students had any real contact with the ANG (Army National Guard). We ended up sending the entire class out to visit two divisions in training—it was an eye-opening experience for them." The travel also included trips to visit US-based senior level headquarters with a focus on contact with officers in the Plans sections of the headquarters. Finally, Winton and Johnson decided that SAMS should also go to Europe to "get the guys involved in some kind of a real Army exercise." The trip to Europe included an Ardennes Battlefield Staff Ride as part of the NATO exercise

²²Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 14.

²³Johnson, e-mail.

trip.²⁴

Trips were a necessary part of the curriculum and were directly related to the broad guidance Wass de Czege received when told to establish the School. Winton and Johnson clearly understood that Wass de Czege's mission as the first director was to develop a program that would produce "broadly educated, tactical and operational planners and thinkers."²⁵ Wass de Czege's vision on how to accomplish this mission was influenced by another officer with whom he had worked on a previous project, the development of the Army's capstone doctrinal manual, Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*. The officer was Lieutenant Colonel L. Don Holder. Winton, Johnson, and Holder had taught together in the History Department at West Point. Holder's collaboration on FM 100-5 convinced Wass de Czege of the utility of using military history along with military theory, doctrine, and hands-on experience in some form as the best mixture of subjects for a broad-based military education.²⁶ Hands-on experience, absent some form of large-scale maneuvers, required a form of simulation.

Winton and Johnson knew that many of the officers in the Army at that time had never been a part of exercises larger than battalion-size unless they'd been stationed in Germany. They knew some means was needed to show the scope of division-level maneuvers. The means that Winton and Johnson tested ranged from very new and untried computer war games to tabletop war games—the Dunn-Kempf war game to sand tables.

²⁴Johnson, e-mail.

²⁵Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 18.

²⁶Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 18–19; Johnson, e-mail. Holder was a SAMS Fellow and then served as the third Director of SAMS. He ultimately retired as a lieutenant general. Holder was the highest ranking SAMS graduate until 2006 when Charles C. "Hondo" Campbell was selected for promotion to General.

Johnson, Winton, and Wass de Czege tested each kind of war game they could find to see which type could be readily adapted into the SAMS curriculum. As Johnson wrote, “We just kept coming up with ideas and, not having much in the way of adult supervision, we went out and tried one thing after another.”²⁷

Trying one thing after another, along with strong support from General Saint, enabled the SAMS team to have a fairly well-developed curriculum by the time the first class reported in late June 1983. Winton, though, recalled two incidents that highlighted the enormity of the task the three faced. SAMS did not have a dedicated building or even classrooms in the 1983–84 academic year. The teaching team, Winton, Johnson, and Wass de Czege, had to coordinate for classrooms on a daily basis. Johnson and Winton taught the bulk of the military history and theory courses. The curriculum concepts were “pretty well developed,” but there were times in that first year of SAMS that “the students would come out of class and be handed a sheet of paper and a book, and told ‘read this for tomorrow.’” Winton recalled that while this did not happen too often, it did happen and that the “students were very patient.”²⁸ This type of circumstance also applied to Wass de Czege and his teaching of tactics.

Winton and Johnson depended on Wass de Czege for the development of the tactical courses and exercises for the students in SAMS. Wass de Czege’s work on tactical dynamics made this a natural fit and played to everyone’s strengths, something absolutely required in that first year of SAMS. Wass de Czege was also involved, as Winton recalled, “. . . in a lot of politics and a whole lot of other things . . .” necessary for the

²⁷ Johnson, e-mail.

²⁸ Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 16.

continued survival of the School.²⁹ This need to divide his time had an occasional affect on the conduct of tactical exercises. On one memorable occasion, as Winton and Johnson recalled, Wass de Czege met the students one morning with an armful of maps and directed them to follow him into the basement of Bell Hall (the main academic building of the CGSC) to find an empty corridor. Wass de Czege split the students into two group: Red Forces and Blue Forces. The directive was to put the maps together and then, “Red plan a defense and Blue plan an attack and I’ll be back in 2 hours and see how you are doing.”³⁰ The students were also reminded that if a forklift was seen coming by to make sure the maps were rolled up and secured so they could be used by future classes. As Winton put it, “It was a little bit on the fly and everybody put up with that and understood it.”³¹

A SAMS Memory

I remember that our Seminar 4 quickly developed into good, trusting friendships and very deep discussions on our daily topics. Over the course of the year, we would build on each other’s ideas and theories to the point that we found ourselves almost speaking a different language—making references to prior discussions/ideas, etc. At one point, when we were told we would have a “visitor” at our seminar, we privately expressed our annoyance, because the visit of an outsider would force us to discuss things at a more superficial level.

I suggested to the seminar that our situation was analogous to us being the crew of a nuclear submarine exploring the ocean depths. Occasionally, we were compelled to “surface the boat” to take on visitors, which we viewed as extremely inconvenient! The seminar liked that analogy, so our Seminar 4 motto (proudly inscribed on our t- shirts) was “Surface the Boat!” A strictly inside joke that we couldn’t share with outsiders.³²

²⁹Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 16.

³⁰Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 17.

³¹Winton Interview, 17.

³²Bob Leonhard, AMSP student, 1994

SAMS 1983–89

The creative tension caused by the introduction of a radically different doctrine—the 1982 version of FM 100-5, the struggle of raising the nuclear threshold, and the defense-offense conundrum in Europe set conditions for the recognition that the Army needed officers who could lead large formations and plan for comprehensive campaigns.

The time of reflection that was a part of the post-Vietnam years in the US Army put in motion a great renaissance of thinking about war—from operational level of war doctrine to tactics, from weapons systems development and acquisition to the role of nuclear weapons on the battlefield. The Army had to ask itself how to fight. The pursuit of finding answers to this range of questions led Army doctrine writers to look at how to fight the armies of the Warsaw Pact in the central region of Europe. The practical, political, strategic, and tactical considerations of the use of tactical nuclear weapons; integration of new major weapons systems into Army formations; and the demonstration of the lethality of the modern battlefield shown during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War influenced the move toward the introduction of the operational level of war to US Army doctrine. The ashes of the defeat in Vietnam created an atmosphere conducive to the reconsideration of the role of the Army in strategy and operational art. Linked to this renaissance in military thinking was the need for a school to educate the practitioners of this art of war. As General Saint said, “What is the purpose of the institution? Train war fighters . . . that’s where the SAMS course came from.”³³

Colonel Huba Wass de Czege envisioned the School providing specially selected and educated majors to Army divisions and corps. These majors would accomplish two

³³Saint, interview, 108.

things: they would raise the general level of understanding of the increasing complexity of warfare and improve the quality of planning and executing operations across the Army. To educate the specially selected majors, Wass de Czege proposed that the Army staff the School with highly qualified Active Duty lieutenant colonels or colonels. Wass de Czege realized that he and the other initial faculty members could not remain at the School permanently; they would be allowed to get the School up and running before receiving orders for a new assignment. Wass de Czege determined the three prerequisites needed for a quality faculty: at least a master's degree from a "good" school, previous teaching experience, and a demonstrated ability to command.³⁴ Wass de Czege demanded that the Army provide faculty members who met these criteria. The minimum tour of duty at the School for these specially selected officers had to be 3 years. The first year would be in an understudy role to learn about the curriculum and to team-teach a seminar of 12 to 14 majors with a seasoned instructor. The officers would lead seminars during the final 2 years of the tour of duty and act as mentors for new faculty members. Even though he had support from very senior general officers, he could not persuade the Army Personnel Management Division to sustain a 3-year tour of duty for very high quality officers whose only task was teaching majors. The Army, in the view of the personnel managers, could make better use of such high-quality officers on the Army and Joint staffs in Washington.

³⁴Winton, interview, 5 April 2001, 36. The original faculty members, Winton, Wass de Czege, and Johnson, all had advanced degrees from Stanford [Winton, PhD in history], Harvard [Wass de Czege, MA in public administration], and Michigan [Johnson, MA in history], respectively. All three men served in combat in Vietnam and taught at West Point. Wass de Czege and Winton commanded infantry battalions and Johnson had extensive service in field artillery units and general staffs. A "good" school meant a school of similar caliber as these three officers attended.

Because he expected resistance from the Army personnel department, Wass de Czege had a Plan B. He proposed establishing an additional program within SAMS that would be a 2-year long War College course called the Advanced Operational Studies Fellowship (AOSF).³⁵ The program started in 1985. In the first year officers assigned to the Fellowship would study the same curriculum as the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP), the majors' course. This focused study would serve as instructor preparation because in the second year of the program the Fellows served as the principal instructors of the majors. The Fellows' curriculum also exposed them to the policymaking process and how the major commands in the Defense Department executed strategy. Therefore, the Fellows also traveled to the global combatant commands of the Department of Defense as a part of the education program. Plan B introduced an element of turbulence into the School as the principal instructors for the majors would constantly turn over. Assignment to the Fellowship program was dependent on those who volunteered. Teaching the Fellows also required an expansion of the civilian faculty.

The first two civilians hired to teach in the newly organized SAMS were Robert Epstein and James Schneider.³⁶ Epstein had never served in the military, but had a PhD in history. Schneider, who was not a PhD at the time he was hired, had served in the Army in Vietnam. Epstein recalled the formation of the Fellowship as a challenge. The challenge to define what was needed in the Fellows' curriculum took time to overcome. Epstein recalled that at first the Fellows took trips. Later, in subsequent refinements of

³⁵The program is now called the Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship (AOASF); the change in the name took place in 1995.

³⁶Robert Epstein earned his PhD in history at Temple University where he studied under Russell Weigley. Epstein was hired on a 1-year contract with the Combat Studies Institute, the CGSC history department in 1982. In 1984 he joined SAMS. James Schneider also joined the faculty of SAMS in 1984. Schneider earned his PhD in history from the University of Kansas in 1993. Schneider turned down a full doctoral studies grant from Rice University to remain at Leavenworth and teach in SAMS.

the program, the Fellows were required to take Epstein's *Military Classics Colloquium*. In the late 1980s, military theory and strategy courses were added to the curriculum and were taught by either Epstein or Schneider.³⁷ Schneider, whose educational background was a mix of history, science, mathematics, and military and scientific theory, was hired as the military theorist for SAMS in 1984. He too would instruct the Fellows. After Wass de Czege, Winton, and Johnson left the School, Schneider and Epstein wrote the SAMS curriculum and led the instruction of that curriculum for the Fellowship.

Schneider's recollection of the time in 1984 was that "the seminar leaders had to gain something professionally for spending 2 years as instructors . . .," and that the Fellowship was always an integral part of the original concept for SAMS. Schneider knew that the Fellowship was a key element in successfully teaching the majors as it "provided educated (by the course authors) and experienced former battalion commanders" as the principal teachers of the majors in SAMS.³⁸ At the time, SAMS' faculty members realized that the success of the School depended on the Fellows as much as the performance of the majors.

Wass de Czege's initial focus was on providing the Army specially educated majors, led and taught by highly qualified lieutenant colonels and colonels. The introduction of another program, designated a War College-level school, caused two second-order effects. The first was how to craft a curriculum that met the standards of a War College level program while preparing these officers to teach the majors. The second was how to consider the lieutenant colonels and colonels for assignments following the 2-year

³⁷Robert Epstein, e-mail to author, 5 October 2006. Hereafter cited as Epstein note, 5 October 2006.

³⁸James Schneider, e-mail to author, 25 October 2006. Hereafter cited as Schneider, e-mail, 25 October 2006.

Fellowship. Were they assigned into selected positions as SAMS graduates just like the majors? Majors were specially assigned to Army divisions and corps headquarters. Although this appears to be an obvious question, the Fellows had no such special assignment status. This remained so until the late 1990s. Plan B also introduced other elements of uncertainty, most importantly the changing level and type of experience of the Fellows.

The decision to establish SAMS and its purpose, at least initially, was “to raise the bar of tactical understanding throughout the Army.”³⁹ The internal tensions that the early directors of SAMS contended with ranged from just what type of officer the School would produce to how fast the School would expand and even if the School would be an individual School underneath the CGSC. Then Major General Saint, the deputy commandant, believed as late as January 1983 that there would be no new School rather an extended course of study for selected officers. This extended course of study would be run by the directors of the departments of the College. Saint’s idea did not come to pass. As previously discussed, General Richardson decided that SAMS should be a new School.⁴⁰ The US Army in the late 1970s and early 1980s was contending with the introduction of new weapons systems, new training concepts and locations—the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California, and a new doctrine—AirLand Battle, as well as dealing with questions on how to employ these new weapons systems in accord with this doctrine. The doctrine itself needed to be promulgated throughout the Army,

³⁹ Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege, interview by the author, 14 January 2009, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS. The transcript is available through the Special Collections Section, Combined Arms Research Library. Hereafter cited as Wass de Czege, interview, 14 January 2009.

⁴⁰ Taken from an Annual Historical Report, SG: CAC/FLVN 84, MH-010/001, VF CGSC-departments-SAMS, 1982–84 held in the Special Collections section of the Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 177. No author is listed. The section is titled, “The Operational level of War and the School of Advanced Military Studies.” Hereafter cited as AHR 1982-84.

indeed some would say proselytized. SAMS, as another new idea, came into its own during this time and subject to all these tensions.

Colonel Richard Hart Sinnreich served as the second director of SAMS from 1985 to 1987. Sinnreich was also involved in the writing of FM 100-5, both the 1982 and 1986 versions. Sinnreich wrote an end of tour report, after his tenure as director, in which he highlighted several of the internal and external tensions he believed faced SAMS and especially the AMSP as the School continued to mature. He wrote that he'd told Chief of Staff of the Army General Carl E. Vuono "Virtually all the dangers facing SAMS are associated with its success, not its failure."⁴¹

The Army as a whole and the College in particular came to view SAMS as a useful experiment. Sinnreich recognized this in his end of tour report. He commended the College and the senior leaders of the Army for not interfering in the development and continuing refinement of the SAMS' curriculum. This was an effort on his part to shortstop any future outside interference as the School continued to evolve. By and large Sinnreich was successful in this effort.

There was pressure on Sinnreich and following directors to expand the size of the AMSP within SAMS due mainly to the successes of the graduates. In support of Sinnreich's position against expansion was a general officer who told Sinnreich that there would always be "... guys who never do anything much more than jump out of airplanes, go anywhere, expose themselves to death and are capable of inspiring and

⁴¹Colonel Richard Hart Sinnreich, School of Advanced Military Studies, Memorandum for Commandant, US Army Command and General Staff College, 10 June 1987, Subject: End of Tour Report, 2. Held in the Special Collections section, Combined Arms Research Library, 3d floor. Hereafter cited as Sinnreich, End of Tour Report.

leading young soldiers.”⁴² This general officer declared that there is a place for these officers in the Army, but the purpose of SAMS is to educate officers with a broader vision, and produce officers who could lead corps and armies. This placed another burden on the program since the introduction of more instruction on the operational level of war would supplant instruction on the tactics associated with the maneuver of corps and divisions.

Sinnreich approached the introduction of more operational art in the AMSP and Fellows’ programs in unique ways. Sinnreich envisioned extending the AMSP into the second semester of the course of instruction in the CGSC. At that time, the second semester of CGSC focused on tactics. This extension of AMSP would ensure tactics was fully covered in the second semester of CGSC and the first semester of AMSP, thus allowing more campaign studies in the AMSP. The Fellowship of SAMS would also focus on the operational art over tactics as the Fellows were experienced former battalion commanders and would build on their familiarity with higher level tactics and use this perspective to gain a deeper appreciation of the operational level of war. Sinnreich also wanted to formalize the War College program in SAMS, the AOSF, to include follow-on internship assignments to directed corps and higher-level staffs, much like the majors assignments were directed following AMSP.⁴³

Under Sinnreich’s direction, the curriculum retained its focus on military history and theory. Sinnreich also continued the program of trips to various commands and especially

⁴²Colonel Richard Hart Sinnreich, Director of the School of Advanced Military Studies at CGSC, interview by Dr. Michael Pearlman, 8 April and 26 June 1986, 18. US Army Combined Arms Center Collection, Group Combat Development SG 1986, SSG SAMS-012/013. Held in the Combined Arms Center historical files, 3d floor, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 18, SAMS-012. Hereafter cited as Sinnreich, interview and SAMS-012 or 013.

⁴³Sinnreich, End of Tour Report, 6.

an extended trip to Europe. The trip to Europe combined seconding AMSP students to division staffs during an exercise, to expose the students to the challenges of division level execution and tactics with a series of staff rides to European battlefields, mostly battlefields over which American forces fought in World War II. The students and faculty would walk the ground on which American forces had fought to experience the relationship of terrain to time and distance, as well as the effect of weather on the pace of operations. Though costly, the combination of staff experience and staff rides reinforced the lessons of the classroom. These experiences came back to the classroom as students and faculty related the on-the-ground experiences to the doctrinal concepts being discussed.

Sinnreich stated that the discourse on the development of the 1982 version of FM 100-5 did not so much inform the development of the curriculum and the overall SAMS program as the classroom discourse informed the development of the 1986 version of FM 100-5. Sinnreich believed that the classroom discussions were the most dynamic he'd experienced in his military career. The focus during Sinnreich's tenure was not to produce practitioners of FM 100-5, but to inform thinkers schooled in the theory and practice of war at higher levels of tactics and operational art. The students were exposed to the basic theories of war and drew their own conclusions on the practice of war, taking the theory as the basis for informed action rather than rote application of doctrine.⁴⁴

Sinnreich stated that the fundamental difference between the approach of the CGSC

⁴⁴Colonel Richard Hart Sinnreich, interview by author, 6 January 2009. Hereafter cited as Sinnreich, interview, 6 January 2009.

to the teaching of tactics and the approach SAMS took in exploring the theory of tactics was in the philosophers of war, Jomini and Clausewitz. Sinnreich's appreciation of the CGSC approach was that the College took a Jominian approach, in his words, ". . . you could reduce the complexity of war to principles that the average man could apply. That school [CGSC] is dedicated to that proposition." On the other hand, Sinnreich and other early directors of SAMS followed the Clausewitzian approach that "rules were the death of sound soldiership. This school [SAMS] is dedicated to that proposition."⁴⁵

Sinnreich continued the iconoclastic spirit he inherited from Wass de Czege by deciding to change the name of the program from the Department of Advanced Military Studies, the name of the initial experiment of a second year program, to the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). Sinnreich did this without seeking approval from the leadership of the College. In this act he established SAMS as a School under the College rather than a department within the College. It was a significant decision and one that ensured a large degree of freedom for future directors. The next director also followed this path while putting his own mark on the School.

Colonel Don Holder followed Sinnreich as the third director of SAMS. Holder participated in the writing of the 1982 and 1986 versions of FM 100-5 while serving as one of the first SAMS Fellows. The fifth and sixth years of the development of SAMS were marked with the decision to put on hold the Wass de Czege vision to expand the AMSP to 96 officers, the development of a separate curriculum for the SAMS Fellows, and the continued dialogue in both programs on the nuances beneath the AirLand Battle doctrine.

⁴⁵Sinnreich, interview and SAMS-012, side 3, 1.

Holder viewed the state of SAMS when he arrived as basically sound. There were 48 majors in the AMSP and 6 lieutenant colonels in the Fellowship program. This early in the development of SAMS, attending the School was still regarded as “a slightly chancy thing to sign up for. . . .” Holder did feel, though, that the “iconoclast spirit” of the early days was still evident. Infrequent reports from field commanders and his experience as the operations officer for the 2d Armored Division indicated that acceptance of graduates was generally good for majors. At this time in the history of the School, there were fewer than 100 AMSP graduates, but they were making a difference in the divisions and corps to which they were assigned. Holder also felt that the Fellows were not clearly differentiated from other War College graduates in the minds of most field commanders.⁴⁶

The plan to expand to 96 AMSP students was on hold based on a decision made between Holder and Sinnreich and in consultation with Wass de Czege. The question of expansion was juxtaposed with arguments about keeping the high quality of majors selected for the program as well as retaining the favorable student-to-teacher ratio: 2 instructors to 12 officer students. Holder “decided very early . . . to keep enrollment at 48 majors.” All four AMSP seminars had US Air Force (USAF) officers at the time. The size of the seminar remained at 12 though. The decision to include USAF officers came at the cost of reducing the number of US Army officers, again to retain the high level of quality within the AMSP seminars. The program was growing in popularity and other Services were becoming interested in having officers attend the AMSP. The discussion

⁴⁶ Lieutenant General L. Don Holder, e-mail to author, 26 March 2008. Hereafter cited as Holder, e-mail, 26 March 2008.

on expanding the program and including officers from other Services was heated. In addition to the issue of selecting “quality” US Army officers was how the officers from other Services would be selected. Additionally, the size of the seminar was also a question as Sinnreich and then Holder thought that the optimal size of a seminar was 12. Adding other Service officers could not increase the overall size of the seminar and the student-to-teacher ratio.

Holder wrote a memo for the deputy commandant of the CGSC, Major General Gordon Sullivan, informally called the “No Free Lunch” memo wherein he made the case that the quality and the selection process were the key ingredients in ensuring the Army received the best possible officers for the AMSP.⁴⁷ Holder also decided to not have foreign officers considered for inclusion in the AMSP for fear of losing control of the admissions process.⁴⁸

Holder did not change the admissions process for the AMSP, indeed he fought to ensure selection remained under the control of the Director, SAMS, and not go to Washington and the Army Personnel Center. The compromise between SAMS and the Personnel Center was in sending the final list of selected officers to the Personnel Center for a “quality” scrub that would ensure none of the selected officers were at risk for promotion. The Leavenworth-based selection process called for first year students in CGSC to apply for admission, take an entry exam, which assessed their grasp of basic tactical knowledge, and write opinions on doctrinal issues. Holder, the director, and other

⁴⁷US Army, Personal For Message from Major General Gordon Sullivan, deputy commandant, USACGSC, and Major General Glynn Mallory, Deputy Chief of Staff-Training, US Army Training and Doctrine Command. In the so -called “No Free Lunch” message, it states that the inclusion of USAF and USMC officers into an Army program, in the name of “jointness,” would come at the cost of seats for US Army officers in a US Army school. Held in the SAMS historical files, Room 271, Eisenhower Hall, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

⁴⁸Holder, e-mail, 26 March 2008.

key staff members selected by Holder conducted interviews for everyone who showed promise and selected the class based on the recommendations of interviewers, CGSC performance, and test performance. At the time, SAMS had around 100 applicants for the 48 available seats.

Admission was slightly tougher for combat arms officers, because more combat arms officers applied for the program and because Holder and his faculty felt they needed one Military Intelligence (MI) officer and one logistician per seminar. While there were many applications from combat arms officers, the applications from the MI and logistics branches were not as numerous. Controlling admissions allowed the faculty to choose some uniquely qualified students. During Holder's tenure as director, he admitted an Adjutant General Corps officer because he was also a Russian Foreign Area Officer and was an especially bright applicant. The net result of the admissions process, started by Wass de Czege and carried on by Sinnreich and Holder, was a very select, bright group of officers who were eager for the SAMS experience.⁴⁹

Part of this experience was an exploration of the basis of the new Army doctrine, theory, and military history. Officers selected to attend the AMSP had to take a course in military history as one of their CGSC electives. Dr. Robert Epstein of the SAMS faculty taught this course in the final CGSC semester. Holder, who taught military history at West Point, strongly believed that learning the history of warfare was essential in developing critical thinking in officers.

Holder did, however, adjust the curriculum of the AMSP. During his tenure, the

⁴⁹ Lieutenant General (Retired) L. Don Holder, interview by author, 12 January 2009. Hereafter cited as Holder, interview, 12 January 2009.

AMSP was organized into over 20 subcourses. Holder felt that the courses were far too short so he consolidated the subcourses into eight courses. Holder also began with a substantial block of tactics instruction, based on the continuing assessment that the tactics instruction in CGSC was weak and focused on the lowest common experience in a CGSC seminar. Holder kept the terrain model exercises, designed to make students aware of weapons characteristics and the effects of ground. He also added emphasis to tactical movements and maneuver through bigger unit micro armor lay-downs and actual movement planning. Holder felt this needed to be added to the tactics instruction based on his year of service as the G3, operations officer, of the 2d Armored Division.⁵⁰

The other basic block of the AMSP curriculum as revised by Holder was Dr. Schneider's theory course. The theory course followed tactics and set the foundation for the remainder of the AMSP year of study. Holder, Sinnreich, and Wass de Czege all believed that linking the theory of war with military history would best prepare AMSP graduates for the rigor needed to analyze warfare in the late 20th century and empower them to adapt the concepts of AirLand Battle into executable form in war exercises and in war. Theory ranged from Clausewitz and Jomini to Sun Tzu and Mao as well as Russian theorists such as Tuchachevskii, one of the practitioner theorists of the operational level of war.

During Holder's tenure, after the theory courses students alternated topical seminars covering division, corps, and army-level doctrine. Each echelon-oriented seminar concluded with an exercise at that particular echelon of command. Lieutenant Colonel David McConnell, the SAMS exercise director for Holder, set up a series of manual and

⁵⁰Holder, interview, 12 January 2009.

computer-assisted exercises that required students to plan and then conduct tactical and operational level actions. In the largest of these exercises, corps and army level, SAMS had several planning groups prepare operations plans. Holder made it a practice to receive staff briefings from the student planning groups and then selected the boldest of the proposed plans for implementation.

The program of instruction began by Wass de Czege continued under Holder, essentially the schedule of four seminars sessions per week—Wednesday generally being a study day—with exercises running 5 days a week. The trips for AMSP students ran about a week in length. The year Holder arrived at SAMS as the director, the Army cut European travel from the program as it was too costly. AMSP students did continue to travel to the East Coast for visits to US Central Command (CENTCOM), US Special Operations Command, US Atlantic Command, and the Pentagon. Trips to the NTC to view tactical training also continued. AMSP conducted a number of local terrain exercises as a part of the exercise program, which was part of the tactics subcourse. As the reputation of the School grew, the guest speakers coming to the School increased in number and stature. SAMS, as Holder recalled, “. . . had wonderful speakers including Luttwak, Lind, and many senior retired people like Emerson, McCaffrey, Starry, and Cushman.”⁵¹ The speakers challenged conventional wisdom and reinforced the lessons on critical thinking.

Under Holder, SAMS shifted from requiring the students to write one master’s thesis to writing two monographs. The thought behind this shift was that two monographs

⁵¹Holder, e-mail, 26 March 2008.

would allow for focus on both the tactical and operational domains. The first monograph was due at the end of the first semester of SAMS and would be focused on a tactical topic. The second monograph, due at the end of the second semester but before the oral final examinations, was focused on an operational level topic. Both monographs went through an acceptance process from the monograph director through the director of SAMS to the CGSC Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Phil Brooks. Dr. Brooks was deeply involved in assuring that SAMS met the College standards for earning a Master of Military Arts and Sciences (MMAS).⁵²

The major change that Holder made to the overall School regarded the handling of the officers in the SAMS Fellowship, or Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship (AOASF). Holder recalled, “When I became Director, the Fellows attended AMSP seminars and were allowed to choose 1 day per week to skip seminar and do as they pleased.” Holder changed that method of operation and directed that the Fellows form a separate seminar of their own with a suitable (operational level) curriculum. Holder thought that “one of my best contributions to SAMS was regularizing the Fellowship by making it a separate seminar.”⁵³ Holder recalled that he “intended to separate the Fellows from the AMSP students and to focus them on theater warfare.” Holder assigned the Fellows a seminar room of their own and selected one of the previous year’s Fellows to serve as their seminar leader. Holder, Epstein, and Schneider were the principal teachers of the Fellows.⁵⁴

The major problem with the Fellowship had to do with the perception of it among

⁵²Dr. Phil Brooks was an institution at CGSC. He served as the Director of Graduate Studies for many years and also advised on the selection process for AMSP. Dr. Brooks died in 2005.

⁵³Holder, e-mail, 26 March 2008; Holder, interview, 12 January 2009.

⁵⁴Holder, e-mail, 26 March 2008; Holder, interview, 12 January 2009.

eligible Army lieutenant colonels and colonels. While Wass de Czege had initially thought this group should be hand selected officers from good schools, many eligible officers were not willing to volunteer to come to Leavenworth, at least not in the early years of SAMS. If the AMSP was a dicey option for majors, 2 years at Leavenworth away from the mainstream Army was seen as a major risk among the officers selected to attend the War College. As Holder recalled, “Most of the Fellows came to the School unwillingly.” A very few officers volunteered to come to SAMS going so far as to contact the School to ensure the director knew of their preference. In a concession to the School, the Army Personnel Center accepted input with by-name preferences as soon as the selection list for War College level schooling was announced. However, in the early to mid-1980s when the reputation of the School was not so well established, most officers coming to the Fellowship were sent by the Army without much preparation. Holder determined that it was a 90-day process to bring the Fellows “out of their collective sulk . . .” and make them active participants of the School.

While there was reluctance on the part of the early directors to allow international officers into AMSP, Holder was the first director to have an international officer on the faculty as a Fellow and seminar leader. British Colonel Gage Williams was assigned to Fort Leavenworth to study SAMS and then to return to put together the British Army’s Higher Command and Staff School. Williams was a talented officer so Holder put him to work on a staff ride to Vicksburg for the Fellows. The focus of the trip was to study the operational and strategic aspects of Grant’s 1863 campaign. Williams’ effort paid off and the Fellows commented so strongly on the benefits of the trip that this staff ride remained

a part of the Fellows curriculum in the following year. The Fellows' travel program also included overseas travel to regional combatant commands: Southern Command, Pacific Command, and European Command. The focus of the travel was to reinforce lessons on theater-level warfare and the interaction of policy, strategy, and the operational level of war. This year of study and travel reinforced the preparation of the Fellows to teach the majors in the AMSP.

Holder continued to refine Wass de Czege's "Plan B" as all seminar leaders were second year Fellows. In Holder's first year as director, 1987, one of the seminar leaders was selected for brigade command, and due to circumstances beyond the School's control, this officer had to depart to take command immediately. A second Fellow was activated from the alternate brigade command list as well. This unforeseen circumstance led to assigning one seminar to Colonel Williams, the visiting British officer. As Holder recalled, Williams was "a brilliant seminar leader."⁵⁵

The curriculums of the AMSP and the AOSF did not exclusively center on the Army doctrine in FM 100-5, 1982 or 1986. However, Holder intended that SAMS graduates would return to the operational Army as "advocates for and experts in AirLand Battle . . ." especially in the School's first years, which coincided with the release of this new doctrine. Both programs of SAMS educated these selected officers beyond the basics of the doctrine so that these officers could explain and properly implement the doctrine in Army divisions, corps, and higher echelon headquarters. This was Holder's aim as director of the School until 1989 when he departed for command of the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment. Holder's goal was to establish doctrinal understanding for the

⁵⁵Holder, e-mail, 26 March 2008.

graduates' next assignment and, as importantly, to give graduates enough understanding of theory to allow them to change doctrine as their careers advanced. SAMS graduates would understand the doctrine, implement the doctrine throughout the Army, and when it came time to revise the doctrine be able explain the need for change and participate in the writing and development process.

Under the first three directors and continuing into the future, SAMS started a process of student surveys as a class neared graduation and a continuing contact effort between the graduates and the School to ensure SAMS retained awareness of how graduates performed their duties and for feedback on what was helpful to the graduates. A review of the comment sheets from graduating officers from the AMSP class of 1984–85 revealed telling comments on the effectiveness of the curriculum and its focus on division and corps level tactics as well as operational art. One officer wrote that based on his education in AMSP, he finally learned that “war is much more than a tactical battle of attrition. . . .”⁵⁶

Wass de Czege, Sinnreich, and Holder all expected that the graduates of SAMS would return to the Army and raise the level of understanding of Army doctrine to new levels through more competent execution of operations. The new doctrine clearly pointed out that the political purpose of the war be established before strategic and tactical objectives could be developed. A deeper understanding of the nuances of the development of strategy, gained by a study of military theory and history, would provide the basis for this improvement in execution. This notion reflected the unstated but clear

⁵⁶End of Course Survey Student Narrative Comments, AY 1984–85, undated, 11. Hereafter cited as AY 84–85 Student Comments.

influence of *On War* where Clausewitz wrote that war is an extension of policy by other means.

The first years of SAMS existence was marked by a tension of expectations. Internally, there was the tension of establishing the independence of the School and the retention of the iconoclast spirit that led the first classes to believe they were a part of “a cabal plotting major changes in the way the Army operated.”⁵⁷ The period was marked by establishing the method of student selection for the AMSP, the refinement of the Fellows’ curriculum and how the Fellows would be received by the Army, and when and how to integrate officers from other Services into the AMSP. The highlight, though not viewed so at the time, was the change in the name of the program from department to School. Sinnreich, the second director, wrote in his end of tour report that the cost of SAMS was less than the cost of one M1 tank, but the return on the investment was great and the Army benefited from the education and ability the graduates brought with them to the field Army.⁵⁸ The first test of the graduates and the source of the external tension was the expectation of greatly improved performance of divisions and corps when SAMS’ graduates arrived on those staffs.

External tensions came in the form of where to place the graduates of the School on division and corps staffs, how to overcome the Army’s disposition against perceived and real “elites,” and, most importantly, how retaining officers for a second year of schooling when the Army felt it needed more doers than thinkers would fare as these officers joined the staffs of divisions and corps. The senior leader advocates of the concept of SAMS had very high expectations of the graduates. The dictum of Moltke the Elder to “be more than

⁵⁷ Colonel (Retired) Greg Fontenot, member of the second class in the AMSP and the sixth director of SAMS, conversation with author, 14 January 2009.

⁵⁸ Sinnreich, End of Tour Report, 1.

you appear to be” was a guiding principle for the first graduates of SAMS, as well as Wass de Czege’s more practically focused advice to “max the PT test and get your hands dirty in the motor pool. You will succeed if you do those things *and* heed the motto of the German general staff to ‘be more than you appear to be’ . . .” The good news for the Army was, in Wass de Czege’s words, “The new manual was followed almost immediately by the disciples and translators of the manual. . . .”⁵⁹

The unofficial SAMS’ policy of earning one’s spurs on the staff or going through “prop blast” was practical in an Army that was measuring success at the tactical level through performance at the NTC. Even though a small portion of the Army had been tested in combat in Grenada, SAMS’ graduates had not yet demonstrated their worth and the worth of a second year of advanced military education in facing the real purpose of the Army—to win the Nation’s wars. This first test of battle came in the winter of 1989 in the tiny nation of Panama during an operation called “JUST CAUSE.”

The SAMS curriculums prior to the start of focused planning for Operation JUST CAUSE remained basically the same as outlined from the beginning of the School. The extant doctrinal center piece was FM 100-5, 1986. The development of this field manual was very much a result of the discourse within SAMS during the tenure of Colonel Sinnreich, the second director. As previously discussed, Sinnreich recalled that he and then Lieutenant Colonel Holder were not so much influencing SAMS with the doctrine, but taking advantage of the discussions about the theory and history of war that took place during the conduct of the AMSP seminar to refine concepts that then went into the

⁵⁹Wass de Czege, interview, 14 January 2009.

field manual. The scope of the discourse within the seminars reflected the focus of the program.⁶⁰ SAMS was definitely teaching doctrine and more. As Lieutenant General Holder recalled, “In fact, the school had the charter, which we the early Directors all agreed upon, of teaching the theory, history, and the thinking behind doctrine.”⁶¹ The students in the School discussed the tenets of AirLand Battle doctrine and how these tenets were developed. Each subcourse in AMSP concluded with an exercise that would reinforce the doctrinal tenets as the majors developed plans and orders for the exercise and then actually played out the war game, either on a terrain board with micro armor or in computer-assisted simulations. The graduates of the School carried these lessons to their units.

The principal US Army units involved with the development of the plans and execution of Operation JUST CAUSE were the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters, the 82d Airborne Division, and the 7th Infantry Division (Light). The corps headquarters formed the nucleus of the Joint Task Force (JTF) *South* headquarters working for General Maxwell Thurman, the commander of US Southern Command. The planners for the Corps/JTF were Lieutenant Colonel Tim McMahon (Director), Lieutenant Colonel Charles Bergdorf, Major James Delony, Major David Huntoon, Major David M. Rodriquez, Major Lloyd Sherfey, and Captain (P) Edward J. Dillenschneider. The lead planner for the 82d Airborne Division was Major William Caldwell, who currently serves as the Commandant of CGSC and CG CAC.⁶² These graduates crafted a well rehearsed and well executed plan that simultaneously struck some roughly 50 objectives in a single coordinated blow. The plan was flexible enough to accommodate the friction of icing in

⁶⁰ Sinnreich, interview, 6 January 2009.

⁶¹ Holder, interview, 5 December 2008.

North Carolina and the fog of battle in Panama City. The XVIII Airborne Corps/JTF *South* conducted a synchronized assault at night, over multiple objectives, and overwhelmed the enemy forces in the theater of operations. While the lessons learned effort was going on in the United States, the Army in Europe was planning on a reduction in force as Congress and the American people expected a “Peace Dividend” from the end of the Cold War. The great Soviet armies were withdrawing to Russian soil. The Germans were asking why so many Americans were needed in their country now that the Berlin Wall was down and the entire German nation was reestablished. It was an interesting time.

The last of the storied Return of Forces to Germany Exercises (REFORGER) was conducted in Germany in January 1990. These maneuvers were a thing of the past as the thrust of planning was how to return forces to the United States. A great number of American Army units in Europe were preparing to fold their units’ colors and return their tanks, armored vehicles, and trucks to the United States. SAMS continued to educate selected Army officers in the theoretical concepts behind the doctrine.

SAMS was not static at this time. It did not indulge in self-congratulation. The staff grew with the addition of Ms. Candi Hamm in 1988, who became the mainstay for running the School from day to day and she continues to serve to this date. The faculty and students began to read the after action reports and think through the Implications of these reports to the curriculums of SAMS. In an end of course survey done by the AMSP class of 1988–89, containing some of the officers who planned Operation JUST CAUSE, and containing faculty thoughts on the results in light of the operation in Panama, student

officers and faculty felt that “LIC [low intensity conflict] needed more emphasis,” and that the course needed “more joint participation.” The survey, published in July 1990, reflected similar concerns of previous classes over the perception of elitism and intellectual superiority others would harbor toward SAMS’ graduates, but tellingly pondered about the meaning of the full spectrum of warfare. The faculty noted that while the XVIII Airborne Corps and 82d Airborne Division departed Panama rather quickly after the end of hostilities, the 7th Infantry Division and US Army South were left to execute plans for the recovery, to a limited extent, of Panama.⁶²

The Army and SAMS faced a test of battle and the new group of highly-educated planners appeared to have passed the test with flying colors. The Army turned back to preparing for war and the routine of the peacetime Army. Training schedules were revised and field exercises and tank gunnery exercises were scheduled. On the other side of the world, an American officer went to sleep in the Sheraton Hotel in Kuwait City. While he slept his world and the focus of the Army changed. He wrote, “I awoke to gunfire at about 4:15 on the morning of 2 August 1990. . . . That sounds like shooting. . . . I wonder who could be shooting at this time of the morn-Shooting!!”⁶³ The next test of SAMS and the Army would take place in the deserts of the Persian Gulf.

⁶²School of Advanced Military Studies, End of Course Survey AY 88–89, 27 July 1990, written by LTC Harold R. Winton, PhD, Deputy Director. This survey, with five enclosures, contained an executive summary of findings, statistical analysis, and officer student handwritten comments. Margin notes, author(s) unknown, indicated faculty consideration of lessons learned from Panama and informal reports from recent graduates who participated in the operation. The report was not paginated. It is held in the SAMS files.

⁶³Martin Stanton, *Road to Baghdad Behind Enemy Lines: The Adventures of an American Soldier in the Gulf War* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 2003), 47.

SAMS 1990–95

SAMS Firsts

The first United States Marine Corps (USMC) officers joined the AMSP in 1989 and they were Major Richard Macak and Major Joseph Noble.

The first female officer/student in the AMSP was Major Linda Linden, MI, AMSP class of 1989–90; the second was Major Vickie Saimons, USAF, AMSP class of 1991–92.

The first female officer in the AOASF was Lieutenant Colonel Ann K. (Kris) Drach, QM, AOASF class of 1995–97.

The first United States Navy (USN) officer in the AMSP was Lieutenant Commander Jonathon James, class 1990–91; the second was Lieutenant Commander John G.R. Wilson, class 1991–92.

A SAMS Memory

When I first arrived in 1AD, I went directly to the field as we were doing a run-up to the old REFORGER exercises. I remember the first person I met was Major Russ Goehring, who had graduated from the previous year's SAMS course. He was in a tactical expando van when I came in, and he had about 20 people—of all ranks, from master sergeants to colonels—gathered around and he was giving directions to all of them. I just watched, and he acted like he didn't know who I was (I later found out he did, when he saw my name tag, and he realized I was his SAMS replacement). When all the people had dribbled out and it was just him and me in the van, he said “Welcome, Mark, you just got your first lesson as a SAMS grad. You're the traffic cop of the division, because everyone thinks since you're a SAMS graduate that you have all the answers for any of their problems . . . which, of course, you do.” I don't think I was ever more surprised. Coming out of SAMS I had an impression that we would be enclosed in quiet little planning rooms, working on equivalents of the Schlieffen Plan. It was when I met Russ that I realized that the SAMS guy in the Division HQ was the go-to person for everyone . . . we were the proverbial traffic cops, not only for the CG in his planning efforts, but for all the staff as they stumbled through the planning process.⁶⁴

Any hope for a return to what passed for “normality” at the end of the Cold War and

⁶⁴Mark Hertling, AMSP, 1988.

of Operation JUST CAUSE was shattered in late July 1990. The Iraqi regular Army and Republican Guard invaded the Emirate of Kuwait in a lightning attack. The president of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, declared that Kuwait was now an eternal part of Iraq, the 19th province. There was little time to consider the lessons learned from Operation JUST CAUSE as the immediacy of the invasion captured the focus of the Department of Defense and the Army. This would prove to be a much larger war and provide a stern test for both the US Army in general and graduates of SAMS in particular. This war would find graduates of SAMS at all levels from the strategic, CENTCOM, through the tactical, both Army corps (XVIII Airborne and VII) and all Army divisions.⁶⁵

Officers and civilians serving on the Joint Staff, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and even in the White House would claim credit for the so-called “Left Hook” of the CENTCOM campaign plan. The senior policymakers and military leaders, from Scowcroft to Cheney, Powell to Schwarzkopf, were intrigued by the notion of moving the Army heavy forces to the west to attack around the Iraqi defenses, but the concept needed the underpinnings of the science of war to make it feasible. However, “it was not until the Jedi Knights in Riyadh began working with Schwarzkopf’s regular planning staff and trading ideas with General Kelly’s planners on the Joint Staff that a true war plan began to emerge.”⁶⁶ The leadership of the Army combed the divisions and corps that were not deploying and sent SAMS graduates to the theater until there were 82 “Jedi” serving in all the Army divisions and corps.

General Schwarzkopf’s headquarters received a small team of SAMS educated

⁶⁵The US Army divisions involved in Operation DESERT STORM were 1st Infantry, 24th Infantry, 82d Airborne, 101st Airborne (air assault), 1st Armored, 1st Cavalry, and 3d Armored. The 1st and 24th Infantry Divisions were mechanized formations. The 1st Cavalry Division was an armored division.

⁶⁶U.S. News & World Report, *Triumph without Victory: The Unreported History of the Persian Gulf War* (New York, NY: Random House Books, 1992), 169. Hereafter cited as *Triumph without Victory*.

officers in late August 1990. The task they received from Schwarzkopf was highly classified and access to these men, as well as access to other sources of information available to these men, was tightly controlled. Posing as a team from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, studying desert warfare, these men developed the initial plans to eject the Iraqi Army from Kuwait. The team consisted of Colonel Joe Purvis, Major Greg Eckert, Major Bill Pennypacker, and Major Dan Roh. Purvis and Eckert were Armor officers, Pennypacker an infantryman, and Roh a logistician.

In VII Corps, Lieutenant General FredErick M. Franks focused the work of his planners on the challenge of hitting the Republican Guard not with a wild cavalry charge across the desert but an “iron fist” of three armor heavy divisions, 1st Armored, 3d Armored, and 1st Infantry, supported by the British 1st Armored Division and the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment. This called for a plan synchronized and sustained at corps level and executed with agility and initiative by Franks’ divisions and cavalry regiment. The main plan developed by Franks’ planners did not have branch plans as described by Army planning doctrine, but rather had what Franks called a range of “audibles” or FRAGPLANS that Franks and VII Corps could execute as Franks and his staff read the battlefield and determined how the Republican Guard would respond to the corps attack.

Major Pat Becker, a SAMS graduate and planner at VII Corps, wrote many of the VII Corps FRAGPLANS. Becker described these as “a situation worth planning for but possibly not a logical extension of the current battle set—so it’s different from a contingency plan.”⁶⁷ These VII Corps FRAGPLANS formed the basis for the agility of

⁶⁷Major Pat Becker, e-mail to author, 20 March 2009.

the VII Corps as the commander and his planners tried to foresee potential enemy actions and a corresponding corps response to each. Developing the situation depended on the corps covering force, the 2d Armored Cavalry commanded by Colonel Holder, and finding and fixing the Iraqi force for the main attack delivered by the armored divisions.

The planning for and conduct of Operation DESERT STORM established SAMS in the minds of the leadership of the Army as a place to turn to for superb planners. The level of planning at all echelons of command was thorough and incorporated the tenets of AirLand Battle. The doctrinal underpinning of the planning and execution was sound as the US Army defeated the fourth largest army in the world in 100 hours of combat. The Army spent the years between Vietnam and August 1990 preparing for a war in the central region of Europe against a similarly equipped Warsaw Pact army and found itself fighting the last great armored war of the 20th century in the deserts of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq. The world watched this war, and studied the outcome. SAMS also studied this war.

Following the successful conclusion of the Gulf War, SAMS went back to the classroom to study the changing conduct of war. If the United States was so dominant in the conventional realm of combat, how would the next threat manifest itself? With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the Soviet Union, how would the Army be used in this new era? The lid had been kept on simmering regional and inter-ethnic struggles, but now that the Red Army was gone and the superpower struggles were over, cracks in the façade of civility were appearing. SAMS graduates would learn how to adapt a warfighting doctrine to the “wars” of the Peace Dividend era. It was during this timeframe that SAMS hired a deputy director, Dr. Robert Berlin.

The fifth director of the school, Colonel James McDonough, came from a European assignment where he served as the military assistant to the Supreme Allied Commander, General John Galvin.⁶⁸ McDonough missed the Gulf War, but was influenced by his assignment in Europe as he saw the beginning of the fragmentation of the continent with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. McDonough wanted to look beyond the war just fought in Kuwait and Iraq.

The successful conclusion of the fighting to eject Iraq from Kuwait demonstrated the dominance of the US military on conventional battlefields. The question that followed this demonstrated dominance was what would be the form of war in the future. McDonough intended to take both programs “. . . into possible scenarios for future wars.”⁶⁹

The School remained at four seminars for AMSP officers. The exercises moved forward to attempt to take advantage of the emerging technology available to Army units, such as unmanned aerial vehicles and a growing network of information sharing communications equipment that increased an ability to share a broad understanding of the situation tactically and operationally. The increased complexity of warfare brought an attempt to increase the depth of the education offered to the Fellows as SAMS began the process to develop a Doctor of Military Art and Sciences, a military PhD.

Colonel McDonough pressed this development and explored an affiliation with the University of Kansas for academic accreditation as well as gaining approval from the

⁶⁸ *Register of Graduates and Former Cadets of the United States Military Academy* (West Point, NY: Association of Graduates, 2002). 4–514.

⁶⁹ Colonel James McDonough, e-mail to author, 6 March 2007.

senior leadership of the Army. The movement toward severing the relationship with AMSP due to needing 2 full years of study to fulfill the requirements of a PhD necessitated working with the Personnel Center for permanent seminar leaders. SAMS hired new faculty to meet the requirements of educating potential PhD candidates. These new faculty members were Dr. William Gregor and Dr. Ernest Evans.

This combination of a change in the Fellows program, new faculty, and permanent seminar leaders would materially change the nature of SAMS, but when Colonel McDonough left for brigade command this experiment ended. It fell under the pressure of the Personnel Center's inability to sustain the level of quality in seminar leaders and reluctance on the part of the Army to accept a need for military PhD's. Complexity would be handled by the graduates of the School taught by Fellows and faculty and then sent out to the field Army that was grappling with a range of new problems: military operations other than war, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement operations.

The first of these new forms of operations was conducted by *JTF-Los Angeles*. This JTF was formed in response to the riots that followed the outcome of the trial of police officers who beat Rodney King. The core of this JTF was formed by the 7th Infantry Division headquarters whose planners had to deal with how to support local authorities, posse comitatus, and communicating with civil authorities. The operations other than war challenges continued in this period as SAMS and SAMS' graduates studied the clans of Somalia, ethnic tensions in Bosnia, and the restoration of order in Haiti. SAMS' graduates planned and executed operations across the globe and in the United States (in Los Angeles and in Miami in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew), all of which were seen as an extension of policy in the truest Clausewitzian sense. Additionally, as SAMS

graduates were applying the familiar, tenets of AirLand Battle and the military decision making process (MDMP), to the unfamiliar, peace-operations and stability and support operations, SAMS' graduates in Europe and Northeast Asia were still applying the familiar to situations where they were facing the armies of North Korea and Iraq. This was a challenging time. It was also challenging in recruiting as majors were confronting an Army going from 18 divisions to 10. The "tyranny of the timeline" was affecting the decision process of majors looking to attend AMSP, but remain in competition for battalion command.

SAMS 1996–2000

The 5 years of this portion of the history of SAMS was, in retrospect, the last years of peace, when graduates could still consider going to war in defense of the Republic as a theoretical possibility. The Army was busy though, and so was SAMS. The faculty and the students who attended SAMS during this period were looking for the balance between the planning for and execution of peace operations and combat operations as the Army continued to refine its definition and understanding of the full spectrum of conflict. The directors during this time, Davis, Colonel Robin Swan, and Greer all wrote guidance to the faculty that sought to reinforce the central portions of the SAMS' curriculums while challenging the officer students to broaden their thinking to include the versatility of Army and joint forces conducting operations in support of attaining policy objectives. The Army was deeply engaged in the Balkans, trying to establish some order in the aftermath of years of bloodshed and in accord with the provisions of the Dayton Treaty. If there was a Peace Dividend, this fact was lost on the Army and SAMS as operations

remained at a high tempo. SAMS' graduates were expected to be agents of change in the Army as they were the ones who studied the changing doctrine, which would embrace the joint construct and be renumbered so that FM 100-5 would become FM 3-0. SAMS' educated officers were expected to go beyond the symbolic and to understand the application of this doctrine in the full range of operations facing the Army.

Colonel Davis expanded the AMSP travel during his tenure as AMSP students participated in a series of exercises under the auspices of US Southern Command. Officer students and selected faculty participated in war games at the Chilean Staff College. This exchange reinforced the learning of both Army doctrine and history, but also an appreciation of the high-level professionalism in the officer corps of non-NATO armies unfamiliar to most US officers.

Colonel Swan implemented two important changes during his tenure as director, ones that would change how SAMS operated into the future. Swan decided to reduce the monograph requirement from two to one. This was in recognition that the second semester of SAMS was remarkably busy and the level of effort put into two monographs suffered in the face of multiple and competing requirements. Thus, AMSP students would write one monograph.

The second major change Swan made was to expand SAMS from four seminars to six. SAMS had moved from the comfortable if quaint confines of Flint Hall into the new Eisenhower Hall in October of 1994. There was room for six seminars and Swan was under some pressure to include more Reserve Component officers in the AMSP mix. He decided to expand to six seminars, bringing SAMS back in line with Wass de Czege's initial vision of ultimately 96 AMSP graduates going out into the Army per year,

although now they would be entering the Total Army, USAF, USMC, occasional US Navy, and international communities.

International officers wishing to attend the AMSP would go through the same selection process as US officers and those ending up above the cut line on the order of merit list would be able to attend. The selection process for AMSP remained firmly in place at Fort Leavenworth. There were international officers attending the first year of the Fellowship with no change to the arrangement that every other year a Marine officer would attend the Fellowship and remain for 2 years, in the second year this officer would be a seminar leader in AMSP.

In 1997 SAMS also added Dr. Peter Schifferle and Dr. Bill Reeder to the faculty. Schifferle succeeded Dr. Rick Swain as the director of the Fellowship and Reeder joined the faculty at large.

SAMS 2001–2005

The significant event in this 5-year period was the change in the reality of the lives of Army officers in general and SAMS graduates in particular. Graduates prior to the AMSP class of 2001 could say that war was a theoretical possibility in their careers. After the events of 11 September 2001, graduates of SAMS were certain they would be going to war. The urgency of this change for SAMS was significant as the Army and SAMS went on a war footing.

A review of the director's guidance for course development during this time reflected this reality. SAMS retained an elective period following the New Year. This elective period allowed AMSP students to pursue individual areas of study and allowed the

faculty to pursue areas of interest and research. The Leavenworth Leadership Chair, made up of newly retired General Pete Schoomaker, late of US Special Operations Command, Brigadier General (Retired) Pat O’Neal, and Colonel (Retired) Mike Shaler joined SAMS as adjunct faculty and assisted in the instruction of the Fellows on operational art and strategy as well as conducting a highly popular elective for AMSP. All in all though, SAMS continued to prepare for war. As Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan commenced during late 2001, SAMS watched and studied.

The class that entered SAMS in June 2002, both AMSP and AOASF, watched the growing tensions with Iraq while war was conducted in Afghanistan. These two classes would participate as a reach planning asset as the director, Colonel Jim Greer, engaged with deployed headquarters which asked for planning support expertise. Colonel Kevin Benson, then the C/J-5 of the Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), specifically asked Colonel Greer to form planning teams to tackle the challenge of how to get to Baghdad in the event of what the combatant commander, General Tommy Franks, called “catastrophic success.” SAMS contributed vital details to the planning of a branch plan that called for an airborne assault on the Saddam International Airport on the outskirts of Baghdad. Greer’s willingness to take on this war planning effort with AMSP and AOASF students put SAMS on the path to continue acting as an important planning asset to the Army at war.

The role of SAMS graduates during the Global War on Terror was similar to the role played by its graduates in the First Gulf War, this time SAMS graduates served at all levels of command, from battalion to division as well as principal staff officers. CENTCOM requested support of SAMS graduates and its sister schools, the USAF

School of Advanced Air and Aerospace Studies and the USMC School of Advanced Warfighting. These officers rotated in and out of the CENTCOM J5 as CENTCOM struggled to conduct one war while preparing for another—the invasion of Iraq. CFLCC SAMS' graduates included Major General William "Fuzzy" Webster, Major General James "Spider" Marks, Colonel Kevin Benson, Colonel Steve Rotkoff, Lieutenant Colonel (P) Steve Petersen, Lieutenant Colonel Tom Reilly, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Hendricks, and Major Joe Whitlock. CFLCC requested a reinforcement of SAMS' graduates in January 2003 and the Army responded with Major Brian Sparling, Major Bill Innocenti, and Major Wayne Grieme. These three along with selected others in the CFLCC C5 developed a post-hostility plan for the occupation of Iraq, ECLIPSE II. This plan was not completely executed and discarded after the handover of the role of Combined Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7) from CFLCC to V Corps.

Colonel Greer left SAMS to command a brigade in the summer of 2003, and Colonel Kevin Benson became director of SAMS. Benson continued the practice started by Greer and committed the students of the School to a number of "reach" planning efforts in support of CJTF-7, Multi-National Force–Iraq, Multi-National Corps–Iraq, and the range of headquarters in Afghanistan as well as special and classified projects for Special Operations Command. The projects exposed the officers in AMSP and AOASF to the type of efforts that would be required of them when they joined their commands. As one officer put it, they had a vested interest in doing their best work for the higher tactical and operational headquarters as they would have no one to blame but themselves if, when they arrived at their divisions, they discovered that "higher" was all SNAFU. They would

have been a part of “higher.”

While the urgency of war pressed on SAMS, there were pleasant moments. At the behest of Australian student Major Dave Wainwright, the AMSP and later the AOASF began “Croc nights,” familiar to US officers as an officers’ call. These friendly nights were buoyed by beer and afforded the chance for students to nominate their classmates, faculty members, and even the director for the class award for the most egregious error in judgment, all accompanied by laughter. The retired awards are still displayed in the SAMS front office.

SAMS celebrated the 20th anniversary of the founding of the school in 2004. The featured speakers at the celebration were Brigadier General (Retired) Wass de Czege and Major General W. “Fuzzy” Webster, a member of SAMS’ first class. This low key celebration reminded all of where the School began and the tasks accomplished.

The deputy director, Dr. Berlin, left SAMS in the spring of 2004. The School would be without a civilian deputy until 2006.

In addition to supporting the Army at war, SAMS also provided planning support for the JTF and FEMA headquarters involved in overseeing the recovery efforts from Hurricane Katrina. The director was called forward to conduct a reconnaissance and assessment, which led to the decision to deploy Colonel Mark Inch, SAMS Fellow, and several AMSP students forward to support FEMA and Vice Admiral Thad Allen, United States Coast Guard (USCG), the Principal Federal Officer overseeing the Federal recovery support efforts. Two other seminars at SAMS were reorganized into the reach support cell for the five officers who went forward.

This period was also marked by a successful request to expand the faculty. Dr. Pete

Schifferle refined the curriculum of the Fellowship to align the Fellows with the positions they would hold after graduation, mainly at the strategic level of war. This decision had the effect of further separating the curriculums, and the Fellows found themselves less familiar with the AMSP curriculum that they were expected to teach. Dr. Jim Schneider made the decision to pair Fellows with PhD's dedicated to each seminar. All of this work supported a successful visit by TRADOC manpower analysts who wholeheartedly supported the expansion of the SAMS faculty. As a result of these decisions, in academic year 2005–06, Dr. Alice Butler-Smith, Dr. Michael Mosser, Dr. Dave Burbach, and Dr. Tim Challans joined the faculty.

Finally, due to budget pressures, AMSP conducted the final staff ride to Vicksburg in 2004. The expansion of the AMSP to six seminars made this trip cost prohibitive.

This was not an easy decision to make.

SAMS 2006–2009

SAMS Firsts

The first civilian to attend AMSP was Mr. Matt Williams of Department of Defense (DOD). He was followed by Ms. Christine Watson, also of DOD.

From United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mr. John Riordan attended AMSP in 2007–08 and Dr. Martin Hanraty, attended the AOASF in 2006–07.

Special Agent Danny Day was the first Federal Bureau of Investigation to attend SAMS in the AOASF in 2009.

This 4-year period remained busy for SAMS. As the war in Iraq and Afghanistan continued, there was growing pressure to pull SAMS students out of class and send them to their deploying units. The command groups at the Combined Arms Center and

TRADOC were firm in their support to retain officers in student status for the full year of AMSP, but the pressure was relentless and officers were released early on a case-by-case basis. There was a natural question presented to SAMS based on the fact that the CGSC instituted a “second start,” thus why couldn’t SAMS do likewise with AMSP. Inevitably this became a directed course of action for SAMS, over the protest of Colonel Benson.

SAMS continued to serve the Army at war as a “reach” asset. The level of activity was manageable and continued to serve as a vital extension of the learning process as SAMS students, AMSP and AOASF, planned branches, sequels, and outright new missions for deployed headquarters.

The Army focus on relearning the lessons of counterinsurgency grew in intensity and with the arrival of Lieutenant General David Petraeus as the commanding general of the Combined Arms Center the focus reached new heights. SAMS’ students wrote monographs on various facets of counterinsurgency ranging from Special Forces Operations to the use of information operations in counterinsurgency. AMSP graduates wrote monographs that won prizes for the best new work in this field and were published in *Military Review* and other professional journals.

In 2006, Dr. Jacob Kipp decided to postpone his retirement and accepted the position as deputy director of SAMS. Colonel Benson retired in 2007 and was followed by Colonel Steve Banach. Dr. Jim Schneider made the decision to retire in 2008.

Colonel Banach came from a brigade command and brought a fresh perspective on the needs of the field Army to SAMS. He continued the work of every director, to raise the bar on the understanding of the complexity of warfare, especially critical in the 21st century as the dangers of state warfare appeared to recede and be replaced by wars with

non-state actors using unconventional tactics. Banach moved swiftly to begin the AMSP winter start and provided the Army with 12 well educated AMSP graduates in December 2008. The graduates allowed the Army to reinforce the planning teams in Afghanistan in anticipation of a shift in emphasis as policy decisions were made to reduce force levels in Iraq and increase force levels in Afghanistan.

Colonel Banach continued the expansion of SAMS in response to the needs of the Army. Under his leadership, AMSP will grow to seven seminars in the July to May cycle and two seminars in the January to December cycle. Banach also succeeded in continuing the expansion of the faculty to support the increase in the student body.

Whither SAMS

Brigadier General (Reserve) Shimon Naveh, Israeli Defense Forces, offered an assessment of the success of institutionalizing the concept of operational art into US Army and joint doctrine. He said: “The U.S. Army’s success at institutionalizing the concept of operational art is tied to the success at creating the institution of SAMS. SAMS introduced practitioners of the operational art into the U.S. Army but more importantly ensured that the U.S. Army had a source of critical thinkers.”⁷⁰

SAMS is on the threshold of another 25 years of valuable service to the US Army, USAF, USN, and USMC. SAMS is also educating interagency partners from DIA to

⁷⁰Brigadier General (Reserve) Shimon Naveh, Israeli Defense Forces, conversation with author, 26 October 2007, School of Advanced Military Studies. BG Naveh, a PhD from King’s College, London, is a veteran of the 1956, 1967, and 1973 Arab-Israeli Wars. He is also one of the founders of the Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI), an institute that educates Israeli officers on the operational art. OTRI, and Naveh, developed the concept of Systemic Operational Design, an approach to designing military campaigns that takes into account culture, civilian populations, and other systems, as well as the enemy. Systemic Operational Design is being adapted by major Western Armies and included in their operating doctrine.

USAID and continues to educate selected officers from allied and Coalition nations. The SAMS network is truly global.

SAMS graduates have a shared experience of theory, history, doctrine, political science, and practical experience as reach planning assets to the Army at war and to the Nation in time of need, such as Hurricane Katrina. The experiments in refining the concept of Design as a vital preliminary to the decision making process is being promulgated at SAMS. This contribution will truly assist in the development of situational understanding and dealing with the daunting challenges of the 21st century and the wars and exercises of power that the Nation will call on the Army to conduct and conclude on terms favorable to the Nation and its vital interests.

The breadth of the vision of the founders of SAMS; Richardson, Vuono, Starry, Saint, but also Wass de Czege, Winton, Johnson, Sinnreich, and Holder remains ever more astounding as the School refined and grew. The purpose of SAMS though has for the most part, remained the same—to raise the bar of the general understanding of warfare in the officer corps of the US Army. There can be no doubt that the people who made up the School, from permanent civilian faculty and staff to the transitory Fellows and directors, lived the vision and continued to accomplish the mission of SAMS. The corporate body of SAMS graduates in uniform and now retired also continues to contribute to the defense of the Republic. The next 25 years and beyond will certainly hold more of the same selfless service and ever new accomplishments.

Directors of School of Advanced Military Studies

1. BG (R) Huba Wass De Czege-1983
2. COL (R) Richard Sinnreich-1986
3. LTG (R) Leonard D. Holder-1987
4. COL (R) William Janes-1989
5. COL (R) James McDonough-1990
6. COL (R) Greg Fontenot-1994
7. COL (R) Danny M Davis-1995
8. BG Robin P. Swan-1998
9. COL (R) James K. Greer-2001
10. COL (R) Kevin Benson-2003
11. COL Steve Banach-2007

About the author

Kevin Benson retired from the U.S. Army in July 2007 in the rank of colonel after 30 years of service. His final position prior to retirement from active service was Director, School of Advanced Military Studies. He also served as the Director of Plans, C/J-5, Combined Forces Land Component Command and Third U.S. Army at the opening of hostilities in Iraq, from 2002 to 2003. He works for McNeil Technologies and is currently a seminar leader at the University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies.

