

The generals took steps to bring their troops under control. They let it be known that crude public behavior would not be tolerated. On the sex front, the army in 1946 let soldiers bring their wives to Germany to live as dependents. Also, the relatively few GIs in serious relationships with German women were allowed to marry. The strong dose of domestic bliss helped

to settle things down. Still, many young, unmarried soldiers remained, with no shortage of impoverished *Fräulein* willing to accommodate them. But the German economy noticeably improved in 1948, and the next year, the relatively independent Federal Republic of Germany emerged. The sex threat to German democracy was over.

A High-Tech Boomerang

“The ‘Velvet’ Revolution in Military Affairs” by John Arquilla, in *World Policy Journal* (Winter 1997–98), World Policy Institute, New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Ave., Ste. 413, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Among defense specialists there is much talk of an information age “revolution in military affairs,” and many of them urge the United States to rush to accelerate it. Arquilla, a professor of defense analysis at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, argues that a little caution is in order.

The revolution is marrying long-range precision weapons to advanced targeting and information management technology. Detailed information from satellites, ground sensors, and other devices will guide “smart” weapons such as ballistic missiles that drop dozens of guided submunitions, or “bomblets,” on the soldiers and tanks below. Sounds easy, but Arquilla warns that the new reality might well prove *less* advantageous to the United States.

Other governments, as well as terrorists, he points out, are likely to be able to replicate whatever innovations the United States devises. Many of the new advanced-information technologies can be purchased off the shelf. If each side has equal information about the other, the edge goes to “the side that can stay put and hide,” Arquilla says, rather than the one that “must try to seize territory or insert forces upon some distant shore.” Adversaries who can’t match U.S. war-fighting technologies can simply avoid conventional warfare

and instead opt for guerrilla fighting or tactical nuclear weapons.

The U.S. military today is in much the same position as the British Royal Navy was during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Arquilla contends. “It was clear that naval affairs were being revolutionized by the shift from sail to steam, from shot to shell, and from wood to steel. Yet the faster Britain moved ahead in naval technology, the faster its maritime mastery was eroded.” The new fleets of the industrial age required large, complex logistical support facilities, which hindered far-flung operations. Regional powers, such as Japan, were correspondingly strengthened. But by carefully timing “the introduction of innovations,” Arquilla says, the British were able to extend the useful life of their existing ships and weapons, and thus slow the inexorable decline of British sea power.

The United States today, with no obvious challengers, and with unmatched military power, should not be “so hell-bent on the immediate pursuit of revolutionary change,” Arquilla concludes. While technological advances seem inevitable, the British example shows that “there is often benefit in timing their introduction strategically.”

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