

President Vladimir Putin's decisive action there. While these are familiar criticisms, Kilcullen provides enough detail to lend them additional weight. His analysis of Russian policy is by turns admiring and condemnatory. He posits three options for American policy in responding to Russia's expanded role in Syria: leave the problem to them; compete with Moscow for influence; or cooperate. Kilcullen recommends the third option, a view which the Obama administration seems to have adopted as well.

He advocates a middle path between the advise, assist, and aerial bombardment strategy of the Obama administration and the overrun, occupy, and govern approach adopted by the Bush administration in Iraq. Specifically, he recommends a reduced reliance on drone strikes, which Kilcullen has long warned may create more terrorists than they kill, combined with the commitment of "a moderately larger number of ground troops" in a campaign to drive ISIL out of its territorial base in Iraq and Syria. He also argues for greater Western pressure on its Middle Eastern partners for reform and democratization.

Though Kilcullen opposes an open-ended commitment to occupation and reconstruction, he does not offer a view as to how the areas liberated from ISIL would be governed. He recognizes that taking Mosul and Raqqa will not end the threat from ISIL—or an even worse successor—unless this territory can be held. One can imagine some equilibrium being achieved between Sunnis, Shias, and Kurds in Iraq within the framework of the existing Iraqi constitution, but it is hard to believe that peace can be consolidated in Syria without some sort of stabilization force.

Kilcullen labels his preferred strategy "active containment." This seems something

of a misnomer, as he clearly advocates a military campaign to close down the ISIL caliphate in Syria and Iraq. However, he also envisages "a multigenerational struggle against an implacable enemy," warning that the level of violence we are seeing in the Middle East is "the new normal," not some transitory aberration. Kilcullen can certainly not be charged with undue optimism. His diagnosis is dire, but his prescriptions are comparatively restrained and might well appeal to the next U.S. administration.

### Team of Teams: New Rules Of Engagement for a Complex World

By Stanley A. McChrystal, Tatum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell  
Portfolio  
290 pp.  
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#### REVIEWED BY CHRISTOPHER J. LAMB

General Stanley McChrystal (Ret.) and his team have written what is arguably the most important book on national security in the past decade, but it is not likely to be recognized as such in Washington, D.C. Before explaining the book's import and why many in the nation's capital

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will underestimate its significance, we first need a summary of the book and its contents.

The book, *Team of Teams: New Rules Of Engagement for A Complex World*, is a great read and like McChrystal's previous best seller, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir*, takes readers on an interesting journey. In *My Share of the Task*, McChrystal catalogued his time as a former Commander of the Joint Special Operations Command, and then later, as Commander of the International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces Afghanistan. In it McChrystal shares his experience and reasoning as he struggles to understand not only the strengths and weaknesses of our adversaries but also those of our own war machine and national security decisionmaking process. One of the many things that make that book compelling is McChrystal's candor about his learning process, which he explains in detail. In short and simple terms, what General McChrystal and his forces did was revolutionize counterterrorism operations with unprecedented levels of cross-organizational—including interagency—collaboration that permitted a real-time fusing of intelligence and operations.

*Team of Teams* is a similar journey of discovery, but one that puts McChrystal's extensive military experience in a much broader context. McChrystal says he and his team wanted to know whether the organizational transformation they forged by trial and error in the heat of battle to defeat elusive enemies using age-old unconventional tactics and 21<sup>st</sup> century technology "was a one-off occurrence that emerged from the unique factors of post-2003 Iraq, or whether it was a microcosm of a broader changed environment that impacts almost every organization in today's world." The authors conclude the latter and wrote the book to explain why.

The book is highly readable; erudite without being impenetrable, and full of illustrative examples. The overall structure of the book is logical. It begins by arguing the environment has changed due to social and technological factors; then explains the significance of these changes for organizations and the resultant changes required for successful performance in such an environment; and concludes with leadership lessons for how to make transformed organizations function well. Chapters typically begin with military examples that illustrate a concept, then broaden to include interesting and often fascinating examples from other fields of endeavor and organizational experiences. Each chapter ends with a "recap" shadow box that offers a set of bullets reviewing main points.

Most of the military examples in *Team of Teams* relate how the U.S. Special Operations Command had to dramatically change its organization and culture to achieve the agility necessary to keep pace with the terrorists and insurgent networks in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries. Although *Team of Teams* is sprinkled with examples from military operations, anyone hoping for a historical account of the U.S. military's fight against terrorists and insurgents should read *My Share of the Task*. Indeed, reading *My Share of the Task* before *Team of Teams* will help readers who want to more fully appreciate the difficulty of the task General McChrystal took on and the tremendous impact he had before his career ended in Afghanistan for what this reviewer believes were poorly thought through political reasons.

McChrystal was able to retain the traditional strengths of the U.S. Special Operations Command, which include vast resources and superbly trained and equipped forces, while augmenting those capabilities with assets from

across the national security architecture. Special operations forces essentially opened up their small teams to personnel from across the Department of Defense and numerous other departments and agencies, mostly but not exclusively from the diverse intelligence community. In the process he essentially created cross-organizational teams at multiple levels of the national security enterprise. Then he delegated authority to those teams, empowering them to take initiative and move fast enough to outpace the enemy networks of informers and operations.

Reading a bit between the lines, it is evident that McChrystal broke a lot of rules, formal and informal along the way. Most of those rules were informal. For example, he deployed some of his best operators to serve as “liaison officers” to other organizations. He did so to build trust and ensure a common sense of purpose. Most commanders would never think of devoting such scarce talent to facilitate collaboration. McChrystal acknowledged the costs of so many liaisons but said it was necessary in order to develop the “shared consciousness” he believed was essential to success. He wanted to develop a national security force that was a network animated by a shared consciousness and purpose. This goal required teamwork at an unprecedented level, a network of small cross-functional teams sharing data, insights, and values but empowered to make immediate decisions in pursuit of the mission as they thought their immediate circumstances warranted. Hence the title: “team of teams.”

McChrystal’s approach was effective, and convinced him that the concepts pioneered in the U.S. Special Operations Command are applicable to many of the challenging problems government and businesses confront

today. In a complex, rapidly changing environment it is essential to break down barriers to integration and collaboration, especially in organizations that are divided into functional silos (e.g., separate divisions for research, engineering, manufacturing, marketing, finance, personnel, etc.). It is also necessary to push decision making down to lower levels where the teams can keep pace with the fast-evolving problems they confront. Some organizations are already using these principles to good effect, as McChrystal and his co-authors illustrate throughout the book.

One of the major take-aways from *Team of Teams* is that organizational change of this nature will be resisted by many people whose only experience is in large, hierarchical organizations divided into functional fiefdoms. Thus McChrystal’s “team-of-teams” approach also requires leadership change—starting at the top. First, the senior leader must take the mission on as a personal matter, and think of his or her job as more akin to gardener than chess master. McChrystal says “constantly pruning and shaping our network” was necessary, and the role of the leader was to ensure “the delicate balance of information and empowerment that sustained our operations” did not atrophy. This task could not be delegated: “I found that only the senior leader could drive the operating rhythm, transparency, and cross-functional cooperation we needed.” On the other hand, the lower echelons had to be empowered to take initiative. This means “middle managers” had to adopt different leadership styles; less hierarchical and more collaborative, and if they will not change, then they must be replaced.

McChrystal, called “one of America’s greatest warriors” by former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, is widely admired for

his leadership. Wired Magazine, for example, notes that “to hear McChrystal talk about leadership is like hearing Steve Jobs talk about innovation or Henry Ford talk about productivity.” Team of Teams has earned equally glowing plaudits from almost all reviewers. Even more startling, there are news reports that the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency are currently undergoing organizational reforms based on the model McChrystal pioneered. Indeed, as this review is being written, the Senate has draft legislation in place that would mandate McChrystal-like changes to the Department of Defense.

Hopefully all these efforts will be pursued to successful conclusion and bear fruit, but there is reason to doubt it. Washington is singularly focused on personalities and secondarily, policies. The hard, no-nonsense work of actually making government organizations perform well is not given a high priority. In fact, many seem to have given up on the idea that government can perform well and should be held accountable for doing so. And even when the right leaders arise, their tenures are often cut short by politics before they can effect permanent, productive change. Thus, unfortunately, there is reason to doubt *Team of Teams* will have the impact it should. That does not detract, however, from the powerful message of McChrystal and his co-authors, which is well-worth reading.

## How Armies Respond to Revolutions and Why

By Zoltan Barany  
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### REVIEWED BY LAWRENCE GARBER

The July 2016 coup attempt in Turkey reminded us how difficult it is to predict the occurrence of such events or their likely outcomes. For several hours, many observers feared that Turkey’s history of periodic coups leading to military government was being replayed. But through a combination of inept coup planning and quickly mobilized popular support for the democratically elected government, the coup failed. The massive crackdown that has followed highlights the profound political implications of this type of episode for Turkey and for the broader international community. And within the policy and intelligence communities of Turkey’s allies and adversaries, reviews are undoubtedly underway to determine whether signs of unrest within the military and of the popular support of the Erdogan government were missed or properly anticipated.

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