MISSION COMMAND in the

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Command and Mission Command

e dictionary de nition of "command" presents variations on the theme of "authority," however, the idea of "command" is much more complex. According to the dictionary, command can only exist when other people carry out the instructions issued by a commander. Indeed, command involves not only authority but also action.

Military command generally focuses on a mission with clearly de ned objectives that must be achieved through coordinated activities. Because the commander is responsible for achieving these goals, command also involves responsibility.

Command (both authority and responsibility) has been demonstrat-

Shaping the I.D.F.'s Battle Doctrine

When an army prepares its o cers, a signi cant gap occurs between slogans and methods and reality. In some areas, this gap is objective—a result of lack of knowledge, uncertainty, or the inability to know the enemy su ciently. In others, it is subjective and due to the army personnel themselves.

In most regular armies, the accepted procedure is that the battle doctrine is written by experienced o cers in the army's headquarters and distributed by the general sta to units for their application. is doctrine is updated periodically or as the result of an exceptional occurrence, such as during the impact of the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Armies are constructed hierarchically. Large organizations, like armies, who engage in such complex activities as warfare cannot function properly without a hierarchical structure and discipline. is is true of the I.D.F., but we are also a growing army lacking a historical tradition.

is has its advantages and disadvantages. Despite being constructed to run along normative lines, the I.D.F. is unique, as will be elaborated on in this collection. For now, we will state that "uno cially, the I.D.F. promote[s] decentralized command, also called 'mission command" (Finkel, 2014).

is approach is based on multiple assumptions. e battle eld is fraught with uncertainty, and o en the best solution is to a ord maximum independence to junior o cers. is thought is then furthered by the premise that these o cers have the best knowledge of the mission and therefore will do whatever is necessary to complete it successfully (Finkel, 2011). In 2013, the I.D.F. o cially proclaimed mission command to be its preferred command style.

Over the years, the I.D.F. has fought in six conventional wars (in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, and 2006) with the participation of large formations such as brigades and divisions. Between those wars, the I.D.F. has continually confronted terrorist organizations and faced escalating tensions along Israel's borders. ese activities were generally on a

low tactical level of limited operations nature, including operations in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip (during 2002, 2008, 2010, and 2014). e I.D.F. refers to these operations as "campaigns between wars" and considers them ongoing threats that must dealt with in a manner that is a total departure from conventional warfare.

ere is a fundamental di erence between commanding an army unit during a war and the required preparation, training, and other activities "between the wars," when there is no meaningful enemy present. During "between the wars" training, the e ort invested in supervision, management, and accompanying tasks is greater than that devoted to big formation operations.

e commander's responsibilities in periods of preparation are more restricted than in wartime. During preparations, they are surrounded by countless supervisors, managers, sta o cers, and advisors and are required to explain their activities almost as much as does the objectives they want to achieve. In battle, the commander is measured almost exclusively by their achievements and is rarely called upon to o er explanations about the ways they operate—except a er failed operations. us, we o en encounter a gap between a commander's behavior at routine times versus on the battle eld. Every army faces the problem of narrowing this gap and successfully training commanders in peacetime to function in wartime.

In calm periods, the hierarchical, bureaucratic military system functions in full force. In wartime, the situation is di erent. e transition from routine to war constitutes a major di culty, one that requires time to overcome as e ciently as possible. Commander and forces training intend to ease the process; without that, it will be di cult to apply mission command on the battle eld. ere might be isolated cases of exceptional commanders who successfully manage to make such application, but the command and control system will not be capable of sustaining it over time if not prepared in advance. us, despite long periods of routine and limited operations, the I.D.F. attempts to inculcate mission command principles, even if it does not always apply them.

e Israel Defense Forces came into being as a people's army "in motion." It had its beginnings in the midst of a war (1948) based on concepts of underground armies, partisans and Special Forces. e functional abilities of its o cers in battle were (and are) beyond anything else due to the training and performance throughout their careers. Traditionally, I.D.F.'s battle doctrine has been determined on the eld. A maneuver or idea that succeeded in the eld was subsequently presented

positions beforehand; a battalion commander must rst have commanded a company. Every promotion and every additional training course will depend on proof of ability, unrelated to family background, social class, education or ethnic roots. Everybody begins at the bottom.

From the beginning, the I.D.F. adopted mission command as its preferred approach. It taught mission command in all command-training courses and emphasized it in every drill, even if it's not always applicable in practice. Commanders are expected to act according to this principle, but in low intensive operations or those operations subject to public opinion—and most military activities between wars t those categories—the higher echelons might limit it. In the commanders' reports presented below, such tensions frequently occur.

In wartime, the transition to mission command is natural and continuous. Very few I.D.F. commanders will wait for instructions from above when faced with a battle situation. A striking example of this may found in the memoirs of Yoram Yair, the commander of the 35th Battalion during the First Lebanon War in 1982 (Yair, 1990).

(mainly in periods between wars) until it is well known and accepted as the norm. Every commander strives to realize this goal if only they are allowed to do so; if they are not hindered on the way, it is the natural path they will choose. An accepted starting-o point among junior I.D.F. commanders is that, in their kitbags, there is a general's baton and, given the chance, they will prove the appropriateness of this gear. Until then, they will follow orders and do their best to successfully complete missions as ordered by their immediate superiors.

is educational principle states that the commanding o cer will determine their intention and dictate the mission, together with the limitations and contingencies imposed on them by the higher ranks. If not instructed otherwise, the junior commander will act according to mission

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intensive commander training must take place before mounting operational missions. Many prior conditions are necessary to produce good commanders, including familiarity with battle doctrine, command and control theory, and military jargon. Commanders must be well-acquainted with and trust the subordinates and soldiers under their command. ev must demonstrate patience with juniors and a willingness to absorb their mistakes. e Israel Defense Forces have been grappling with these issues since its establishment. It was founded in an unconventional manner, and its spirit persists to the present day.

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Since I.D.F. commanders rise through the ranks in a prolonged track based on operational performances, they have already acquired considerable insights and experience when they arrive at the higher command levels. Mission command accompanies them the entire way, and their expectations from subordinates and their behavior in any framework is in uenced by this approach. In addition, when circumstance causes them to act independently, mission command is always present in their deliberations.

As long as a tradition continues of shaping battle doctrine during operations and a erwards by the designated sta centers, the spirit of mission command will continue to prevail. Like any army, the I.D.F. demands routine activity, including planning that takes place according to xed rules, but, when deemed necessary, the establishment will support iunior o cers acting according to mission command.

In the I.D.F. mission command is a well-rooted cultural tradition. It is di cult to apply in peacetime, but it is still in everyone's consciousness and supported by the chain of command. When it is relevant to circumstances, it is the natural, accepted solution.

The Present Volume

is book presents mission command in the I.D.F. from variety of standpoints during various periods, including commanders' deliberations

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Appendix A

close support— e action of the supporting force against targets or objectives that are su ciently near the supported force as to require detailed integration or coordination of the supporting action.
combat information—unevaluated data, gathered by or provided directly to the tactical commander, which, due to its highly perishable nature or the criticality of the situation, cannot be processed into tactical intelligence in time to satisfy the user's tactical intelligence requirements.

combat power— e total means of destructive and/or disruptive force which a military unit/formation can apply against the opponent at a given time. command and control system— e facilities, equipment,

communications, procedures, and personnel essential to a commander for planning, directing, and controlling operations of assigned and attached forces pursuant to the missions assigned.

- command and control (C2)— e exercise of authorityy and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of command and control systems.
- commander's intent—A concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired end state. It may include the commander's assessment of the adversary commander's intent and an assessment of where and how much risk is acceptable during the operation.

mission command— e preferable command method is mission command. It assumes that every commander is best suitable to perform the mission at their level, in their sector, and with their forces. e higher-level commander dictates the mission goal and what it envelopes (resources and restrictions). e subordinate commander needs to decide and act to achieve their part of the mission. In certain conditions, mission command is replaced by detailed command in which the higher echelon dictates the methods on carrying the mission as well. (Ground Forces Command, Tactical leadership at the Ground Forces, 2012, p.22)

- mission statement—A short sentence or paragraph that describes the organizations essential task (or tasks) and purpose. A clear statement of the action to be taken and the reason for doing so. e mission statement contains the elements of who, what, when, where, and why, but seldom speci es how.
- mission type order—(1) An order issued to a lower unit that includes the accomplishment of the total mission assign to the higher headquarters. (2) An order to a unit to perform a mission without specifying how it is to be accomplished.

mutual support— at support which units render each other against an enemy, because of their assigned tasks, their position relative to each other and to the enemy, and their inherent capabilities. graphic order—Operation order in which major parts appears in

graphic format rather than in words. (I.D.F. Lexicon, 1998, p. 510) standard operating procedure (SOP)—A set of instructions applicable to those features of operations that lend themselves to a de nite or standardized procedure without loss of e ectiveness.