

**2011  
JSOU and  
NDIA SO/LIC Division  
Essays**



**Joint Special Operations University  
7701 Tampa Point Boulevard  
MacDill AFB FL 33621**

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JSOU Report 11-4

2011 JSOU and NDIA SO/LIC Division Essays



JSOU Report 11-4  
July 2011



## Joint Special Operations University and the Strategic Studies Department

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) provides its publications to contribute toward expanding the body of knowledge about joint special operations. JSOU publications advance the insights and recommendations of national security professionals and the Special Operations Forces (SOF) students and leaders for consideration by the SOF community and defense leadership.

JSOU is the educational component of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. The JSOU mission is to educate SOF executive, senior, and intermediate leaders and selected other national and international security decision makers, both military and civilian, through teaching, outreach, and research in the science and art of joint special operations. JSOU provides education to the men and women of SOF and to those who enable the SOF mission in a joint and interagency environment.

JSOU conducts research through its Strategic Studies Department where effort centers upon the USSOCOM and United States SOF missions:

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**On the cover.** A U.S. Special Forces team leader greets an Afghan village elder in Uruzgan province, Afghanistan, 28 April 2011. Elders from the surrounding area met with U.S. Special Forces personnel to discuss security and development in their area. Photo by Private 1st Class Matthew Minkema.





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*The JSOU Press*  
*MacDill Air Force Base, Florida*  
2011



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# Foreword

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) partnered with the Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) Chapter of the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) in sponsoring the annual chapter essay contest. The first-place winner is recognized each year at the NDIA SO/LIC Symposium in mid-February and awarded a \$1,000 cash prize. The runner-up receives \$500.

The competition is open to resident and nonresident students attending Professional Military Education (PME) institutions and has produced outstanding works on special operations issues. These essays provide current insights on what our PME students see as priority national security issues affecting special operations.

Essay contestants can choose any topic related to special operations. Submissions include hard-hitting and relevant recommendations that many Special Operations Forces commanders throughout United States Special Operations Command find very useful. Some entries submitted are a synopsis of the larger research project required for graduation or an advanced degree, while others are written specifically for the essay contest. Regardless of approach, these essays add value to the individuals' professional development, provide an outlet for expressing new ideas and points of view, and contribute to the special operations community as a whole.

JSOU is pleased to offer this selection of essays from the 2011 contest. The JSOU intent is that this compendium will benefit the reader professionally and encourage future PME students to enter the contest. Feedback is welcome, and your suggestions will be incorporated into future JSOU reports.

Kenneth H. Poole, Ed.D.  
Director, JSOU Strategic Studies Department



JSOU President Dr. Brian Maher awards first place to Captain Carrick Longley, U.S. Marine Corps, for the 2011 National Defense Industrial Association's Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict Chapter (NDIA SO/LIC) Essay Contest. Photo courtesy NDIA.

# Redefining Intelligence Support in a Resource Constrained Environment

*Carrick Longley*

*The intelligence community must embrace technology and an organizational restructuring to provide more accurate, effective, and efficient intelligence while reducing its resource footprint. With the establishment of permanent intelligence fusion centers stateside, reporters, analysts, linguists, and watch officers can focus their energy on training a more professional, capable force while providing increasingly complex and sophisticated analysis to support operators on the ground.*

## Introduction

**T**he intelligence community (IC) must embrace technology and an organizational restructuring to provide more accurate, effective, and efficient intelligence while reducing its resource footprint. The Department of Defense (DoD) faces drastic reductions in equipment and manning in the wake of an increasingly unstable global economic downturn and must reduce spending by nearly \$178 billion over the next five years alone.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the recent report on intelligence in Afghanistan by Major General Flynn<sup>2</sup> is a stark reminder the IC isn't doing enough to provide the right kind of intelligence to the warfighter. In order to achieve both a reduction in cost and a refocus on providing the right kind of intelligence support, the IC must adopt radical new changes to become more effective and efficient while consuming fewer resources. These changes include the establishment of consolidated intelligence fusion centers; a reduction in the number of intelligence professionals

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*Captain Carrick Longley is a U.S. Marine Corps Intelligence Officer. He submitted this paper while attending the Naval Postgraduate School for a Master of Science in Information Warfare Systems Engineering and working toward completing his Joint Professional Military Education Phase I at the Naval War College Distance Education Program. He is currently assigned to the Naval Postgraduate School where he is pursuing a Doctorate in Information Sciences.*

deployed to combat zones; and a leveraging of information systems to manage intelligence collection, processing, reporting, and analysis. By adopting a reachback model wherein consolidated intelligence fusion centers provide the majority of intelligence support to forward elements, the IC can improve intelligence capability, reduce costs, and accomplish more with less than the current model.

### **The Intelligence Fusion Center of yesterday and tomorrow**

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Marine Corps introduced the concept of the Tactical Fusion Center (TFC)<sup>3</sup> that brought together intelligence professionals in a variety of disciplines under a single roof to provide the Marine Expeditionary Force with all-source intelligence support. While the capabilities of the TFC were far reaching, the logistics support required to maintain this large footprint was not a small undertaking. Both the Marine Radio and Intelligence battalions deployed with hundreds of individuals required to support their efforts — many of whom were not intelligence professionals themselves. Electronic maintenance, communications, logistics, administration, and motor transportation were among the many supporting elements required to support the needs of the TFC to function overseas. A majority of these individuals consumed information and material resources to support their efforts as well. Resource constraints and bandwidth limitations in forward outposts are often severely strained due to the large amount of nonessential and routine traffic pushed over the networks. Reducing the number of individuals using these networks in bandwidth-constrained environments and transferring this demand to continental United States (CONUS) networks can significantly reduce the information bottlenecks that occur today. Additionally, a reduction in numbers of individuals deployed will also lead to a reduction in costs. Once these forces are reduced at the forward presence, they can continue to provide support while operating in combined intelligence fusion centers. Rather than deploy linguists, analysts, report writers, and watch officers, with the logistics burden that accompanies them, to a large outpost in a forward environment, these same individuals will now work in permanent intelligence fusion centers providing the same level of intelligence processing, analysis, and dissemination stateside.

Intelligence units require a high amount of connectivity and access to network resources to accomplish their mission. Information is often collected

and transmitted using various networks and the reporting processes; tracking and sharing are all done using these same networks. With the capabilities of these information systems, physical proximity means less now than it has before. An interconnected network of networks has replaced the limitations once posed by line-of-site communication systems. Relying on a constellation of satellite and terrestrial communications systems, analysts located in the United States can watch real-time video of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms and receive field reports as they are collected. This information can in turn be processed, analyzed, and disseminated to operators in the field in a matter of minutes. With this ability to transfer information quickly from the point of capture to an analyst and back, the need to deploy thousands of individuals to a combat zone occupying large outposts is unnecessary.

Many problems such as occupational proficiency, strained family life, and lack of training affect intelligence support. Nearly every one of these problems can be attributed to the high deployment rates for soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen. While the majority of the operating forces experience much higher deployment to home station ratios, the intelligence occupational fields (at least in the Marine Corps) often experience ratios close to 1:1.<sup>4</sup> In other words, personnel are deployed as often as they are home, causing enormous strain on family life for these individuals. In addition to strained personal lives, units have difficulty providing their individuals with adequate training given the limited number of days spent in CONUS. Linguists whose language proficiency is other than those spoken in target area of operations (AOR) have experienced difficulties with promotion due to their inability to work on their target languages given the deployment cycle. Basic intelligence analysts are often not well prepared to conduct meaningful analysis and often resort to the sports, news, and weather presentations that merely discuss events and offer opinions as to why these events occurred with little empirical support for their arguments. If we can reduce the number of these individuals that must deploy, it is logical to presume that our ability to train these individuals and retain the quality needed to solve complex problems will improve. Our intelligence professionals can focus on their target environments in the course of their daily work, and occupational proficiency will increase. The removal of the predeployment training process will reduce the number of hours devoted to non-intelligence-focused activities. In other words, our

intelligence professionals will spend more time doing intelligence work and less time focusing on nonessential work.

### **Analytic support from Monterey to Kandahar**

In order to demonstrate that this model is not merely theoretical, the following section will discuss the implementation of an information collection tool used by Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) teams in Afghanistan during the fall of 2010 and the support provided by the Common Operational Research Environment (CORE) lab at NPS in Monterey, California. By using an inexpensive, unclassified, open-source information system developed at the NPS, the lab demonstrated the ability to support complex, tactical operations in remote villages thousands of miles away to include sociocultural analysis support to forward operators using free and open-source technology.

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*... the lab demonstrated the ability to support complex, tactical operations in remote villages thousands of miles away ...*

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From August to November 2010, the Field Information Support Tool (FIST) was employed in Afghanistan in support of the Village Stability Platform. FIST was used as a means to expose operators to a more comprehensive analytic methodology for analyzing the complex, sociocultural environment in Afghanistan and demonstrate the capabilities of technology developed at the NPS. During this prototype employment of FIST, the Village Stability Operations (VSO) teams collected hundreds of unique reports, conducted analysis on a variety of metrics, and produced a number of analytical products focused on the sociocultural landscape in southern Afghanistan. In addition to their own organic collection and analysis, the teams used a web-based information repository to share their data. The combined dataset included over 421 unique collection reports containing several hundred individuals, organizations, locations, and relational ties embedded therein. These reports were obtained using a framework specifically developed and tailored for the VSO mission in which the collection of relational information on business, kinship, organizational, personal, and tribal affiliations — in addition to obtaining standard demographic data — formed the preponderance of data collection.

Once the VSO data was collected, the CORE lab analyzed the dataset using geospatial, temporal, and social network analysis in order to provide

a coherent, logical, and useful analytic product based on empirical data while working in a laboratory in California. This analysis yielded results that confirmed the understanding of the operational environment forward, but also provided unique insights not previously discovered by the units on the ground. The following section details how this analysis was conducted to demonstrate the ability to conduct reachback analysis and build products to support even small, tactical level units.

The analysis of the Khakrez district begins by taking a look at the district geospatially (see Figure 1) and then focusing on some of the high level observations that can be made about the data collected in the area. During the collection, interviewers recorded the location of the interview and asked about the location of each individual’s home and place of work. By recording these locations geospatially, we can use tools such as Google Fusion Tables to quickly display the resident’s location on satellite imagery in Khakrez.

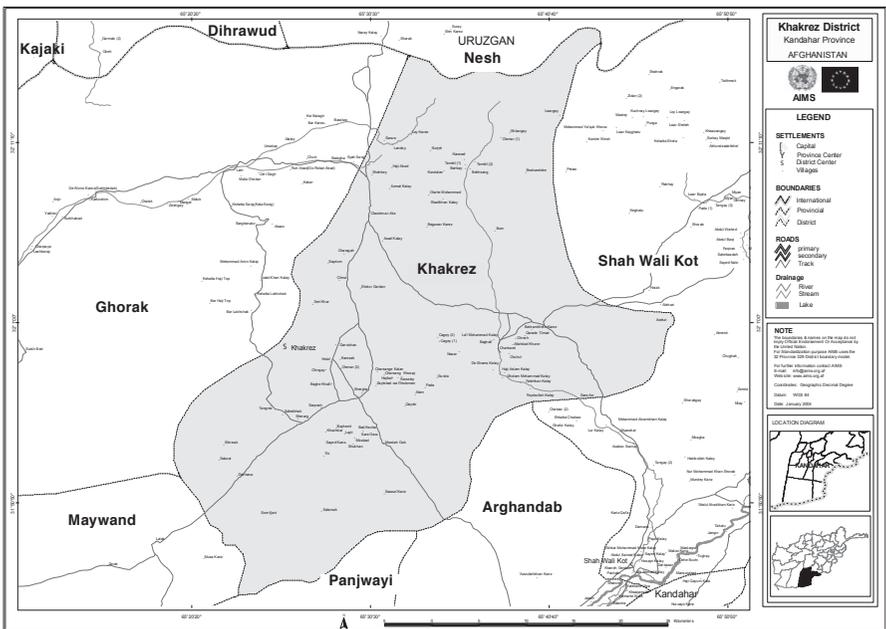


Figure 1. The Khakrez District of Kandahar province, Afghanistan. Source: Afghanistan Information Management Services.

After becoming oriented geospatially with the location of the district and the individuals interviewed (Figure 2), we continue to focus on general demographics in the area. Figure 3 shows the breakdown of the occupations of the individuals in the district as a percentage of the total interviews. This pie chart was built using the occupation data field collected from the VSO teams.

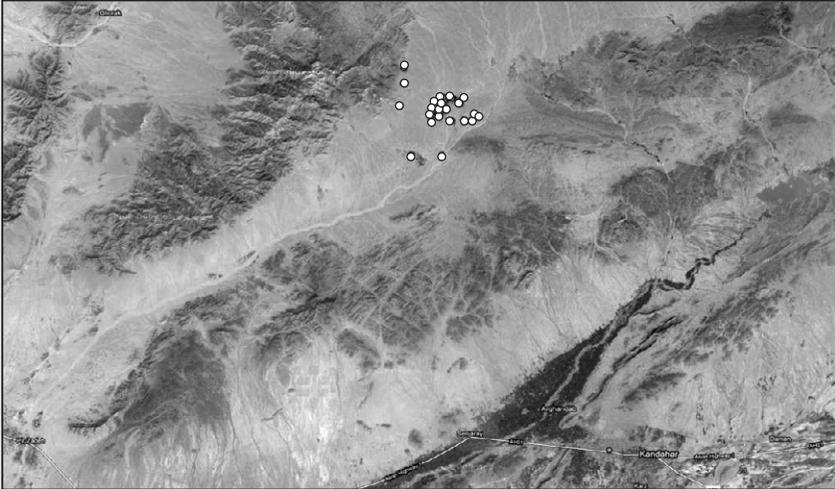


Figure 2. Map showing the location of residents interviewed in the Khakrez District

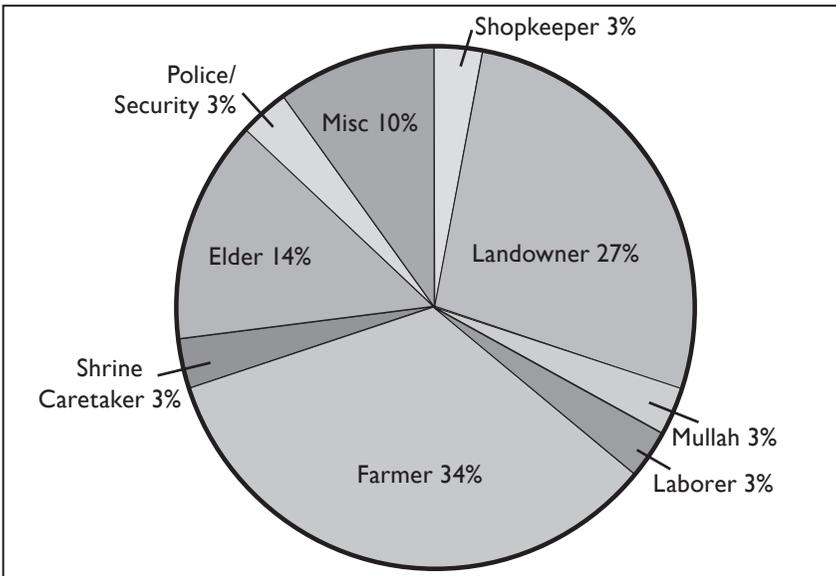


Figure 3. Occupation breakdown of Khakrez District





Now that we have looked at the Khakrez dataset with broad-brush strokes, we focus more specifically on the common linkages between the two dominant tribes: the Popolzai and Alikozai.

The four individuals highlighted in Figure 7 (made anonymous for purposes of this discussion) could prove useful, as they represent the ties common between both tribes in the area (from the data collected). These individuals serve as bridges between the two tribes that could serve as a means of improving communication or cooperation between the groups. Conversely, focusing on the same persons and reducing or eliminating their individual ties with each group could completely sever ties between the groups. As the purpose of the VSO is to improve the security and livelihood in the area, the former is practice of interest.

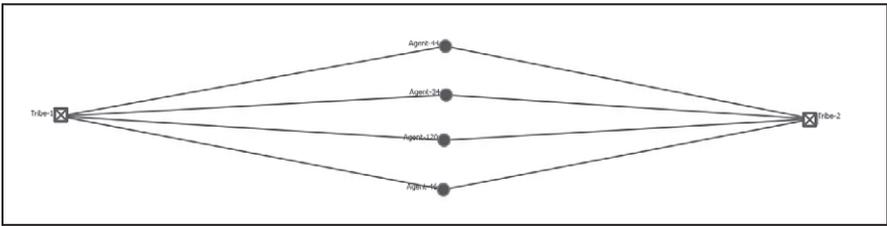


Figure 7. Common Linkages between Tribes

After focusing on the organizational level data, we turned our attention to the individual level networks and analyzed a combination of personal, kinship, and business ties. For this network, isolates and pendant nodes were recursively hidden that yielded the sociogram seen in Figure 8.

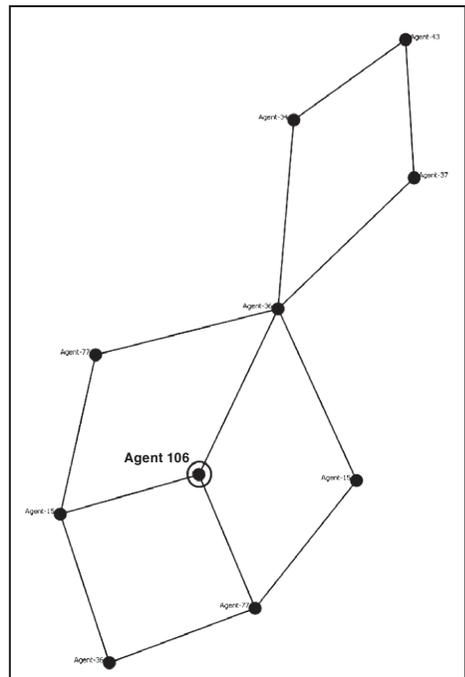


Figure 8. Individual Level Network Analysis

Interestingly, the procedures performed during the analysis brought to light the same network of Agent 106 and his role in the Khakrez District. The VSO team identified and focused their analysis on Agent 106 based on the identification from the detachment commander in Khakrez. In the analysis, the VSO team identified the same individual based on his unique position between two Mullahs and position in the network. Being able to identify key individuals like Agent 106 without prior knowledge of the village is critical in understanding and developing various strategies and lines of operation.

The above analysis demonstrates that it is not only feasible to conduct reach back analytic support, but it also demonstrates that insights normally thought to only be available at the forward edge can be observed from thousands of miles away with no prior knowledge of the operating environment.

### Conclusion

Technology that can aid in transforming how we provide intelligence support from the strategic to the tactical level is readily available; in fact, a large amount of it is free to use. The ability to transfer large amounts of information throughout the operating environment enables the IC to adopt a new construct wherein support is provided remotely with greater consistency at a reduction in cost. By standing up permanent intelligence fusion centers stateside, the ability to conduct long-term intelligence support will not be jeopardized by a decreasing budget and reduction of force structure. Soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen can spend more time at home, improve occupational proficiency, and continue to provide the support needed for the long war ahead. Rather than exhaust our limited supply of highly specialized individuals over the next decade, we should instead focus on how we can maximize the output and quality of support while minimizing risk.

### Endnotes

1. Gopal Ratnam, "Gates Proposes Troop Cuts, \$78 Billion Budget Decrease" *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Jan. 6, 2011 (<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2011-01-06/gates-proposes-troop-cuts-78-billion-budget-decrease.html>).
2. Major General Michael T. Flynn, Captain Matt Pottinger, Paul D. Batchelor, Fixing Intel: A blueprint for making intelligence relevant in Afghanistan. ([http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/AfghanIntel\\_Flynn\\_Jan2010\\_code507\\_voices.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/AfghanIntel_Flynn_Jan2010_code507_voices.pdf)).

3. Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Oliver, "A Blueprint for Success." *Marine Corps Gazette* (<http://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/article/marine-corps-intelligence-operations-anbar>).
4. Hope Hodge, "Marines look to improve deployment-to-dwell ratios." *Jdnews*, Apr. 30, 2010 (<http://www.jdnews.com/articles/ratios-77803-increase-amid.html>).



# Foundations and Adaptation: Transforming Policy into Operational Capability for Army Special Operations Forces

*Ben Taylor*

*Current and future security environments will require the U.S. to have versatile forces able to operate throughout the spectrum of conflict. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) were created to provide this versatility. In order to have the strategic impact for which ARSOF was created, these forces must be remissioned from the tactical tasks that currently consume their availability, returned to their core competencies, and their bureaucratic structure adapted to maximize their strategic potential. This change will occur in a time of limited budgets and within the constant struggle of parochialism within and among the services. Through the Phase 0 operations for which ARSOF was tailored, they will provide the capability to maintain the U.S. as a global power.*

A rapidly changing world deals ruthlessly with organizations that do not change and USSOCOM is no exception. Guided by a comprehensive enduring vision and supporting goals, we must constantly reshape ourselves to remain relevant and useful members of the joint team.

— General Peter J. Schoomaker, U.S. Army<sup>1</sup>

**H**istory informs our present and provides insight to our future, and the future appears bright for U.S. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF). Throughout ARSOF's history, the roles and missions of Civil Affairs (CA), Military Information Support Operations (MISO), and Special Forces (SF)

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*Major Ben Taylor is a U.S. Army Special Forces officer. He submitted this paper while attending the Naval Postgraduate School, where he is currently studying to earn his Master of Science in Defense Analysis. He would like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Michael Richardson, Military Faculty, NPS, for his help in editing the paper.*

have expanded and contracted dependent upon the political climate and the security environment. This paper proposes that these ARSOF units should return to their core competencies in order to meet the present threat, while the future security environment will demand these same capabilities under a different organizational structure. A growing body of literature from the military and academia suggests future U.S. conflicts will trend toward irregular and unconventional threats, so the capabilities of Army Special Operations Forces seem destined for prominence in the Department of Defense. However, as General Schoomaker suggests in the quote above, ARSOF is not immune to the need to transform to remain relevant. ARSOF leaders must quickly translate current policy into tangible operational capability, while simultaneously keeping an eye on the future. This innovation must take place over the next two decades, in a time of continuing conflict, budgetary restrictions, and a globalizing international system. If transformed properly, ARSOF will provide national leaders with a unique range of capabilities in defense, diplomacy, and development which are suited to the threats of the future. This paper uses the term ARSOF to refer specifically to Army Civil Affairs, Military Information Support Operations, and Special Forces for the sake of brevity, realizing that Army Special Operations Forces also include other units such as Army Rangers and Special Operations Aviation.<sup>2</sup>

### **ARSOF Beginnings**

The current units that comprise the U.S. Army Special Operations Forces originated in World War II. Civil Affairs units were first established early in the war to bridge the military-political gap found when governing occupied countries.<sup>3</sup> The larger Army was uncomfortable with this idea, as governance was not perceived as a military function. Immediately following V-E Day, President Truman announced that civil administration of occupied territories would transfer from the War Department to the State Department. There was a consensus that this was the right course of action, but the State Department lacked the resources to effectively administer the areas. So, despite concurrence on the ideal situation, the War Department continued to conduct civilian administration.<sup>4</sup> This case proved to be a harbinger of things to come.

Psychological Operations had an equally rocky beginning in World War II, with psychological warfare capabilities shuffled from the Army to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and back again. Psychological activities were seen by military leadership as dishonorable and inherently “unmilitary.”<sup>5</sup> Although

used extensively in World War II, military leadership was quick to disband psychological warfare capabilities following the war's conclusion. Fortunately, then-President Eisenhower recognized the value of psychological operations from his experience as the Allied Commander and sponsored its reestablishment as an effective tool in the fight against Communism.<sup>6</sup>

As with psychological operations, the confluence of the existential threat of Communism and the power of an influential sponsor, explains the establishment of Special Forces. A former OSS member, Aaron Bank, saw the need for a military unit that could, “develop, support; organize, train, or exploit indigenous guerilla”<sup>7</sup> forces within enemy territory. Originally, created within the Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Special Forces units were staffed by former OSS members and European émigrés.<sup>8</sup>

In the years since the creation of Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations (now MISO), and Special Forces, these specialized units have seen a constant cycle of growth and contraction in size, missions, and acceptance within the Army. The number of personnel and level of prominence within the military seem to be indirectly proportional to the number of missions ARSOF claims to be able to conduct at any period of time. During the conflict in Vietnam, when Special Forces was at the zenith of its personnel strength, SF units conducted indirect *by, with, and through* operations and clandestine strikes, while their General Purpose Force (GPF) counterparts conducted extensive advisory missions with the South Vietnamese Army. In the years after Vietnam, ARSOF was drawn down in size and argued for a broader range of missions, until the operations in Somalia. During the late 1990s, another era of grasping for a concrete role, ARSOF again expanded its mission set, until it was called to complete the purpose for which it was created in Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup> Throughout its history, ARSOF is in a continuing struggle for acceptance in the Army. At other times, ARSOF is its own worst enemy, as it deviates from its core competencies in search of tasks to remain relevant.

The last nine years of conflict have seen ARSOF reduced to tactical support of GPF in contrast to having the strategic impact for which it was organized, trained, and equipped. For example, Army Special

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*The last nine years of conflict have seen ARSOF reduced to tactical support of GPF ...*

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Forces, after leading the classic unconventional warfare overthrow of the Taliban regime, transitioned to a direct-action tactical method in support of GPF. Civil Affairs units working either with Provincial Reconstruction

Teams, or independently, are finding themselves — as they did in post-WWII Europe — trying to hand over governance and stability operations to U.S. government agencies that do not have the capacity to conduct them. Military Information Support Operators are enmeshed in supporting the GPF population-centric counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign. While there are key supporting roles that ARSOF should fill in Iraq and Afghanistan — training of Afghan commandos and Iraqi counterterrorist forces, as well as MISO in support of COIN — there is an opportunity cost associated with the large amount of ARSOF personnel that these missions currently occupy. That cost is felt in places where ARSOF should, and would traditionally, be conducting the operations for which they were formed. The following analysis uses the above history, coupled with the scope provided by ARSOF capstone documents and national security policy statements, to propose a roadmap for immediate and long-term change.

### **The Near Future (5–10 Years)**

In its recent history of expanding and contracting core missions and roles, ARSOF has done itself a disservice in not firmly establishing its roles and limitations. However, the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan may provide an excellent backdrop for the reestablishment of these standards. The last seven years of both conflicts have shown the utility of ARSOF support to GPF operations. With the GPF-supporting role of ARSOF displayed, now is the time to reestablish ARSOF's independent role in achieving strategic goals — the unconventional warfare and influence missions for which ARSOF was created. What makes ARSOF uniquely suited to conduct these missions is the training and organization of the personnel that includes regional specialization and language ability. Ironically though, there currently exists a contradiction between the renewed ARSOF focus on language capability and its deployment of forces. For instance, 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Forces Group retains the primary responsibility for operations in Afghanistan, and the accompanying Theater Security Cooperation Plan training missions in the former soviet republics. Yet, the personnel assigned to 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Forces Group are trained in French and Arabic languages, for use in Africa. Meanwhile, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, with its core of Russian language-trained soldiers, is headquartered near U.S. Africa Command, and therefore is conducting training missions in Africa. Although ARSOF purports to be refocusing on language capability, it is deploying French and Arabic-trained operators to

Russian-speaking countries, and Russian-trained operators to Africa. An immediate realignment of forces to their traditional AORs would truly place priority on language and regional specialty. In addition, forces gained by the drawdown dividend — ARSOF personnel that are able to be repurposed from the current conflicts and applied towards more strategic goals — must refocus training and mindsets to the long-term view inherent in strategic operations in support of national policy. This refocus must take place in the context of national and military political realities: current national security policy and military infighting over roles and functions, and future budgetary constraints.

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) helps define the U.S. defense strategy for the near-term future. The QDR lists strategic priorities in the following order: prevail in today's wars, prevent and deter conflict, prepare to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies, and preserve and enhance the all-volunteer force.<sup>10</sup> ARSOF units have a role in all of these priorities, but particularly in the *prevent and deter conflict* role. As the *prevail in today's wars* priority begins to decline, one can assume a comparable decline in ARSOF requirements. The ARSOF units freed from this priority can reassume their intended roles in Phase 0 operations — namely, preventing the next decisive engagement by building the capacity of our allies and disrupting, defeating, and deterring current and future enemies. These operations will take place in regions of political and social unrest that affect the interests of the U.S. and our allies. This renewed focus on Phase 0 operations will take the form of increased bilateral military exchanges in support of the Theater Security Cooperation Plans as well as MISO and CA support to country teams' long-range development plans.

An additional factor affecting the need for ARSOF to adapt is the shrinking of the capability gap between SOF units and GPF units who are becoming more SOF-like. Many transformations in GPF have allowed them to take on missions usually considered the exclusive domain of ARSOF, and ARSOF must redefine its capabilities to remain relevant.<sup>11</sup> GPF units are currently involved in the training of both Iraqi and Afghan Army units — the type of foreign internal defense (FID) operation that once was the exclusive domain of Army SF. In addition, as GPF commanders have realized the power of information operations, the use of tactics to influence popular perceptions have become a component of all military operations — no longer the sole purview of psychological operations specialists. Instead of trying to protect ARSOF's role as the *primary capability* in FID and influence operations, leaders should define the

strategic and politically-sensitive operations which ARSOF is uniquely suited to conduct and use the GPF capabilities to compliment them at the tactical and operational levels. The GPF have a history of advisory and stabilization experience — from post-World War II, through Korea, to Vietnam — and the future security environment will provide enough work in developing nations to occupy the full range of U.S. military capabilities.

Military innovation and adaptation does not occur in a vacuum, and the current fiscal situation in the U.S. means that ARSOF decision makers must argue every recommendation in budgetary terms. President Dwight Eisenhower once said, “the patriot today is the fellow who can do the job with less money.”<sup>12</sup> ARSOF leaders must be these patriots. Fortunately, budgetary constraints are an area where ARSOF has a strong argument for prominence and growth. Personnel costs are the largest portion of the

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DoD budget,<sup>13</sup> and SOF units are inherently smaller organizations than GPF. Although the development and sustainment costs for an individual ARSOF soldier is higher than for a GPF soldier, the comparative personnel numbers of ARSOF units are lower. Also, training and equipping is only a small portion of personnel cost; the largest portion is in healthcare and retirement — areas where there is no distinction between ARSOF and GPF individuals. In addition, the ARSOF focus on exceptionally enabled individuals and units, which places priority on training the human platform over purchasing expensive technological platforms,<sup>14</sup> will yield a greater return on investment than equipment that has a finite life cycle. Finally, in the personnel vein, ARSOF has seen rapid growth in the last four years, especially in the indirect action forces of SF, CA, and MISO. These personnel increases are already allocated and paid for, so the cost associated with their repurposing is minimal compared to having to create military structure. The argument for force structure in the future becomes one of capabilities as compared to cost, as Defense Secretary Gates notes, “an effective, affordable, and sustainable U.S. defense posture requires a broad portfolio of military capabilities.”<sup>15</sup> Therefore, in a future defined by maintaining the maximum capability at the lowest cost, ARSOF presents decision makers with a great return on their investment — high-capacity forces with low personnel numbers that are, by design, capable of strategic impact.

## The Distant Future (15+ Years)

Although it is difficult to forecast the future security environment, some effort at prediction is necessary in order to prevent any major bureaucracy from becoming irrelevant. Using the military axiom that intelligence drives operations, this paper uses the *Global Trends 2025* document, produced by the National Intelligence Council and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, as a “crystal ball.” Several of the predictions made in the *Global Trends* report have significant impact on the military, and specifically ARSOF. China and India will continue to rise in power, along with non-state actors such as businesses, religious organizations, and super-powered individuals, resulting in a redefined international system. Additionally, the increasing diffusion of technology will make terrorists groups and rogue states more dangerous as they potentially acquire and use weapons of mass destruction.<sup>16</sup> The overall tone of the *Global Trends* report, as well as the writings of other military and diplomatic strategists, suggests that a confrontation with the rising powers of China or India is unlikely, but that the U.S. will remain engaged in regional conflicts in developing parts of the world, and under threat from terrorist organizations.<sup>17</sup> These strategic predictions place priority on forces that are able to operate independently in developing nations, with indigenous counterparts, in order to build their capacity to handle their own problems. This is the very mission set for which ARSOF was created.

The future security environment will be rife with continuing regional conflicts as traditional societies in the developing world collide with the effects of globalization. When the U.S. is no longer the dominant global power, the nation will no longer have the latitude to conduct unilateral conventional military operations in regional conflicts. Military intervention will either take the form of coalition operations with regional and/or other global powers, or will require small-scale operations. As language and culturally trained and attuned soldiers, operating in small autonomous units, ARSOF is uniquely suited for both coalition and small-scale operations in developing nations. In addition, the diffusing technologies associated with weapons of mass destruction will place preeminence on not only surgical, counterproliferation direct action capabilities, but also on a global human intelligence network that can stop these technologies from getting into the wrong hands. The threats of the future validate the need for capabilities ARSOF currently possesses. However, most of these threats call for an architecture that places priority on indirect

operations — operating by, with, and through local security forces — over the direct action missions, which currently occupy a majority of SOF structure and budget. Therefore, this paper proposes the following top-down changes to meet this future threat.

The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) should be divided into two directorates; the indirect action and direct action directorates. In the foreseeable future, Army SF, CA, and MISO, could feasibly join with the forces of Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC), to form the core of the USSOCOM indirect action (IA) directorate.<sup>18</sup> This

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*The United States Special Operations Command should be divided into ... indirect action and direct action directorates.*

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directorate would be separate from the direct action capabilities, such as Army Rangers, Navy SEALs, and special mission direct action units. The transformation to joint doctrine and training in the IA directorate would shift this organization toward the global scouts program. This program would place SOF operators — often individuals or small teams — in key developing countries where there are U.S. interests. Personnel would retain their functional specialty and become experts in the area to which they are assigned. IA teams would assist the country team and the intelligence community by providing ground-level human intelligence. This capability is not currently the focus of either Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or defense attaché personnel assigned to embassies. Furthermore, the IA directorate should strengthen ties with both the CIA and Department of State to nest its operations in the country plans of State and the requirements of the intelligence community. Additionally, the IA directorate would need an innovative personnel management system, mirroring the specialization of Foreign Service Officers and CIA Case Officers. In this way, IA personnel truly become the global scouts that they claim; providing not only ground-level human intelligence, but also strategic reconnaissance for future unconventional warfare (UW) and FID operations.

In conjunction with the creation of the IA directorate, Army Special Forces should remove direct action from its core tasks. Direct action operations are performed to a higher capability by other SOF units and to an acceptable capacity by most U.S. military ground forces — they are not what make Special Forces *special*. Instead, the ability to conduct unconventional warfare — the guerilla warfare, sabotage, and subversion involved in supporting an insurgency against an enemy government — is what makes Special Forces unique.

While FID is often considered “the other side of UW,” it should remain a secondary task for Army SF. Marine Special Operations are uniquely suited, and have a culture better attuned to conducting FID. This should remain the primary mission of MARSOC. Army Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations should continue to do their core missions, but with a radical shift in timing — from *picking up the pieces* in the aftermath of large conventional campaigns to conducting operations in support of Phase 0, long before conflict occurs.

Some will argue that the separation of USSOCOM into direct and indirect directorates will further stovepipe an already divided organization. While there is merit to the argument that both direct and indirect actions should be intertwined, the functional stovepipes already exist within the current organizational structure. Formalization of this de facto split has more advantages than disadvantages. This split will refocus ARSOF on its core tasks, and prevents the trend of SF focusing too heavily on direct action missions, and CA and MISO focusing at the tactical level of operations only. Finally, the formation of directorates creates the synergistic effect of grouping units with similar focus, so that doctrine and training can be aligned to truly move toward joint operations — whether direct or indirect in nature. In this proposal, USSOCOM facilitates the interagency cooperation so integral to both direct and indirect operations.

Army Special Operations Forces are at a unique point in their history. They currently occupy a position of distinction within the military that they have not previously enjoyed. While some may argue that this is a period to just enjoy the new-found acceptance of ARSOF, this would be a missed opportunity. In a future security environment defined by a globalizing international system, diffusion of dangerous technologies, constrained budgets, and general purpose forces closing the capability gap with ARSOF, this is precisely the time to develop a long-range plan for ARSOF transformation. Change begins with the drawdown of ARSOF in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the repurposing of these forces to their traditional roles — conducting Phase 0 operations worldwide. However, the future security environment demands more than a *return to the basics* — it will demand ARSOF units that are adaptable, flexible, and always on the cutting edge of technological and doctrinal changes. In order to fully maximize their capability and facilitate the strategic impact for which ARSOF was created, the bureaucratic structure above ARSOF units must be drastically reshaped. If this return to core competencies and

adaptation of organizational structure is done properly, ARSOF will prove that successful prosecution of indirect action can prevent the need for direct action and large-scale conflicts.

## Endnotes

1. Peter Schoomaker, found in U.S. Naval War College, Joint Maritime Operations Syllabus and Study Guide, Academic Year 2010-2011, 3-50.
2. As discussed later in the paper, the direct action roles of other ARSOF elements distinguish them from the warrior-diplomat skills of the three branches above. There is an argument to be made for new terminology to describe the type of skills in the three focus branches, as they are more closely aligned with other SOF units (such as MARSOC) than with the DA skills of fellow Army SOF units.
3. David Tucker and Christopher J. Lamb, *United States Special Operations Forces*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 75.
4. *Ibid.*, 77.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, 81.
7. Department of the Army, FM 31-20, *U.S. Army Special Forces Group*, (1955), 7.
8. Tucker and Lamb, *USSOF*, 87.
9. Table 5.3 from Tucker and Lamb's, *United States Special Operations Forces*, 166, shows the 'mission creep' that takes place when SOF elements are not engaged in combat operations (1993-2003) and how the number of primary missions consolidate during combat operations (Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan). This reflects both the tendency of SOF to 'do it all' in times of relative peace and the 'return to basics' mission contraction during times of conflict. This paper posits that, as a subset of total all Special Operations Forces, the same is true for Army SOF units, and the 'return to basics' is required throughout the conflict spectrum.
10. Robert Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review 2010* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2010), v-vi.
11. Tucker and Lamb, *USSOF*, 234.
12. Dwight Eisenhower, as quoted by Robert Gates, in a Speech at the Eisenhower Library on Defense Spending, Abilene, KS, May 08, 2010.
13. Robert Gates, Speech at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, September 29, 2010.
14. Thomas Csrnko and Michael Repass, "Special Forces 2025," White Paper (Fort Bragg, NC, June 2010), 8.
15. Robert Gates, Speech to International Institute for Strategic Studies, Singapore, June 05, 2010.
16. Director of National Intelligence, *Global Trends 2025*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008), iv.

17. Thomas Barnett, Secretary of the Navy Guest Lecture Series: Speech to Naval Postgraduate School, October 26, 2010, Monterey, CA; and CAPT Wayne Porter, Cebrowski Institute Speech to NPS Faculty and Students, Naval Postgraduate School, November 30, 2010, Monterey, CA.
18. This concept is derived from ideas in Tucker and Lamb's, United States Special Operations Forces. However, Tucker and Lamb, do not include MARSOC in the indirect action component, nor do they assign priority for tasks to specific units. They also suggest the establishment of a new command, which this paper argues is unnecessary.



# Putting the Fighter Pilot Back in the Air Commandos: Why AFSOC Needs a new Skyraider

*Dave Jesurun and Grant Sharpe*

*Air Force Special Operations Command's Air Commando history includes the adaptation of a variety of aircraft, a great many of which were fixed-wing, forward-firing attack aircraft such as the A-1E Skyraider. AFSOC no longer employs fighter-type aircraft like the A-1, relying instead upon a rapidly aging fleet of AC-130s to provide close air support (CAS) to ground SOF units. Unfortunately, this "one size fits all" approach cedes the responsibility for daytime SOF CAS to the conventional Air Force. This need not be the case. AFSOC could handle both night and daytime SOF CAS requirements if it diversified its fleet and included a single-engine, propeller-driven observation/attack aircraft such as the Embraer A-29 Super Tucano.*

**I**n World War II, Air Commando units in the Pacific (forefathers of today's Air Force Special Operations Command) included three types of attack aircraft: P-47s, P-51s, and B-25s. In Vietnam, Air Commando units operated nine types of observation and attack aircraft, including the O-1, O-2, OV-10, A-26, A-37, AC-47, AC-119, AC-130 and the A-1E Skyraider. Today, AFSOC has only one attack aircraft: the AC-130. The AC-130 is a superb weapon

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*This essay was derived from a chapter in the thesis entitled, "The New Skyraider: How light attack aircraft can optimize the Air Force's irregular warfare capability." Majors Jesurun and Sharpe co-authored that work as well.*

system, but it is not perfect and it cannot be everywhere, all the time, doing everything. The combined effects of age and two wars are taking their toll and are wearing out the fleet. However, it is the conventional Air Force's Air Combat Command (ACC) — not AFSOC — that in 2008 proposed a forward-firing, light attack aircraft (OA-X) as a low-cost solution to the challenges of the irregular warfare CAS problem.<sup>1</sup> Unlike ACC's other new acquisition programs such as the F-22 and F-35, these aircraft would not be "high tech" fifth generation fighters using stealth, speed, or overwhelming firepower to defeat peer or near-peer competitors. Instead, the OA-X would be a slower, fit-for-purpose aircraft — like the A-1 Skyraider — designed specifically for the rigorous ground attack and recce demands of irregular warfare (IW). As any visit to the Hurlburt Field airpark will readily demonstrate, AFSOC's Air Commando heritage includes the innovative use of a wide variety of light attack aircraft just like this. Embracing this heritage by standing up its own OA-X squadrons will not only redress current gunship deficiencies but also ensure AFSOC meets its future CAS obligations to Special Operations Forces (SOF) ground units.

### **Air Commando light attack history: From Burma to Vietnam**

The history of light attack aircraft in support of SOF dates back to WWII and the genesis of special operations aviation itself. Faced with the daunting task of attacking a numerically far superior Japanese force in the jungles of Burma, British Army Colonel Orde C. Wingate conceived of a classic special operations raiding campaign using "hit-and-run tactics, carried out by Long-Range Penetration (LRP) groups deep behind enemy lines."<sup>2</sup> Author Philip Chinnery explains how Wingate's circumstances in 1942 necessitated the birth of the Air Commandos.

... the Japanese communication and supply lines to the interior were vulnerable and susceptible to harassment by highly mobile troops moving through the cover of the jungle. For obvious reason the LRP groups would need to be supplied by air and, as they were lightly armed, they would need to rely on aerial firepower in lieu of artillery.<sup>3</sup>

When American allies joined Wingate's operation in 1943, they brought with them the airpower which Wingate's troops had originally lacked in their earlier efforts. This included C-47s and gliders for transport, but also P-51A Mustangs and eventually even B-25H Mitchell bombers, for "close air

support.”<sup>4</sup> The importance of synchronizing ground and air action in the execution of special operations was obviously not lost on Colonel Wingate. In fact, when his “exploits were reported in the press, and his men were given the name of Chindits,” Wingate thought that this “mythological beast, half lion and half griffin ... symbolized ... the unique cooperation required between ground and air forces.”<sup>5</sup>

This special operations light attack tradition continued decades later in Vietnam. In one of the most daring special operations of the war, a group of Special Forces (SF) raiders successfully assaulted a North Vietnamese prison camp at Son Tay. Because lightly armed helicopters carried the force to and from their objective, five Air Commando A-1E Skyraiders provided escort, protecting them along their route of flight. Extensive joint premission rehearsals in the United States greatly enhanced their ability to do so effectively. Retired Son Tay raider Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Joe Lupyak commented in 2009 that rehearsing with the same aircrews with whom he would later execute his mission, “made all the difference in the world.”<sup>6</sup> This training included “day and night live fire rehearsals [and] close air control of the A-1s.”<sup>7</sup> During the mission and while the raiders were on the objective, A-1 pilots relied on the familiarity gained from joint training and provided suppressive fire along “the approaches to the camp.”<sup>8</sup>

One of the best examples of air-ground coordination between SOF units and light attack aircrew in Vietnam actually comes from Army aviation rather than from Air Commandos. Numerous SF camps operated throughout the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) during the war. According to Mr. John Lewis, USASOC contractor and retired Army O-1 pilot, “in RVN (1968–1969) ... at least 75 SF camps ... had a runway of some sort and all were supported by an O-1 (Birddog) from an Army Aviation Recon Airplane Company. Many camps had one or more O-1s living at the camp and more than 100 Birddogs supported SF and MACVSOG at that time.”<sup>9</sup> The benefit of having aviators live and operate out of the same base as the supported troops was undeniable. Pilots learned local patterns of life and became “integral to support of the unit.”<sup>10</sup> Apparently, the enemy knew this too, growing to fear the artillery or air attack response which an O-1 could coordinate. As a result, troops in contact (TIC) events involving convoys escorted by O-1’s became very rare.<sup>11</sup>

The current that runs through these examples is the concept of organic CAS — airborne fire support that is dedicated to the supported ground force. This is not a new assumption for SOF however. From its inception straight

through to today, SOF has benefited from the primacy of this assumption. For a current social proof, one need look no further than AFSOC. AFSOC has AC-130s which, in current practice, are obligated primarily to SOF and only secondarily to general purpose forces (GPF) if no SOF tasking exists on a given night. The AH-6 Little Birds and MH-60 Defensive Armed Penetrators of the 160<sup>th</sup> SOAR provide USASOC's example of the widespread acceptance of the concept that SOF ought to have the benefit of owning its own fire support assets. Similarly, as former OV-10 pilot Kit Lavell notes in his book *Flying Black Ponies*, the Navy employed the Broncos of VAL-4 to provide dedicated CAS to Navy SEAL and river patrol units operating throughout the Mekong Delta.

### AC-130 deficiencies

Given the common acceptance of the concept of SOF-organic CAS, it is unfortunate then that AFSOC cannot provide enough of it. The problem is that the venerable AC-130 cannot do the job alone. Despite having the right low yield weapons for IW CAS, the AC-130 is too expensive and too vulnerable for more extensive use. The AC-130 is simply not designed to fly in the daytime, where its sheer size and predictable firing orbit make it an easy target for man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS, i.e. SA-7, SA-14, etc) and anti-aircraft artillery.<sup>12</sup>

Its loss would be expensive both in terms of personnel and materiel. An AC-130 performs CAS using a crew of 13 and an aircraft that costs as much as \$190 million.<sup>13</sup> Worst of all, it will not be long before some AC-130s must abandon even the night battles they have come to dominate. The AC-130H is a 1969 vintage airframe, slated to begin retirement in 2012.<sup>14</sup> The AC-130U, a 1989 vintage aircraft, is wearing out its original issue wingboxes. Fleet wide depot-level maintenance to replace them is ongoing. The AC-130J is "programmed"<sup>16</sup> as a replacement for the AC-130H but is not expected to be ready until 2017.<sup>17</sup> AFSOC and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) are pursuing gunship modifications to their MC-130Ws as a "stop-gap" measure until then but these will suffer from some of the same deficiencies as the current fleet. Being C-130s, the Combat Spear aircraft will also be tactically unsuited to providing CAS in the daytime.

### OA-X and its advantages

**Precision firepower.** Fortunately, the OA-X provides a viable alternative. Like an AC-130, which has some of the shortest "danger close" distances

of any CAS aircraft, the OA-X will also be able to accurately engage targets which are in very close proximity to friendlies. Also like the AC-130, the OA-X will have guns. However, if the tactical situation requires greater firepower or stand-off than a .50 caliber machine gun can provide, OA-X crews can employ larger weapons. Despite their bigger “punch” and in contrast to most of the gunship weapons suite, these weapons will be precision-guided and will include the AGM-114 Hellfire II missile and laser-guided bombs up to 500 pounds (GBU-12).<sup>18</sup>

**Survivability.** By contrast, the OA-X would be more survivable primarily because it is smaller and harder for the enemy to visually acquire. The size difference between an AC-130 and even the largest OA-X candidate is significant. At 59 feet, the wingspan of the AT-802U Air Tractor is only slightly larger than that of the A-10 (57 feet, 6 inches). The AC-130 is more than twice as big with a wingspan of more than 132 feet. This difference in size is essential to the OA-X’s daytime advantage over the gunship. Additionally, because the OA-X would be a more conventional, forward-firing platform, it need not orbit a target to engage it, a tactic which makes the gunship predictable — and in the daytime, extremely vulnerable. Also, unlike a gunship, the OA-X would have only one engine and consequently only one potential heat source for IR-guided MANPADS versus the AC-130’s four engines.

**Cost.** The OA-X would also be considerably more efficient than an AC-130. While an AC-130 requires 13 crewmembers to perform its mission, an OA-X can provide CAS with only 2 crewmembers — a pilot and a backseater: a weapon systems officer (WSO), a supported unit’s fire support officer (FSO), or even a foreign national. For more intensive missions, two OA-Xs might be required but 4 crewmembers are still considerably fewer than the ODA-size crew of the gunship. Besides being manpower efficient, the OA-X would also be cost efficient. While a new AC-130J will cost approximately \$200 million,<sup>19</sup> an OA-X aircraft costs only \$10 million.<sup>20</sup> At these prices, the cost of a single AC-130J could finance 20 OA-Xs.

Acquisitions are not the only cost consideration, however. Operating cost is a factor as well, and this comparison also favors the OA-X. For example, in FY2010 an AC-130H cost DoD \$8,906.23 per hour to operate, exclusive of the cost of fuel.<sup>21</sup> High estimates for OA-X operating costs are only \$1500 per hour.<sup>22</sup> Finally, OA-X may have a lower opportunity cost than additional AC-130s. While new AC-130Js are *programmed* to be ready in 2017, there are

models of OA-X aircraft available right now from existing production lines. The Embraer A-29 Super Tucano for example is already in service with the air forces of Brazil and Colombia. Diversifying its CAS portfolio, by adding OA-X aircraft now, reduces the risk that AC-130J production delays will jeopardize AFSOC's planned improvement in overall CAS capability.<sup>23</sup>

### Forward basing and “nomadic” CAS

Unlike the AC-130 which gives up the inherent short/austere field capability of the original C-130 design in order to support the added weight of its guns, sensors, avionics, ammunition, and fuel, OA-X aircraft would retain their ability to operate from short and/or unimproved airfields.<sup>24</sup> The AT-6B for example has already demonstrated dirt-strip capability on the Nevada Test and Training Range during JEFX 10 and could potentially be fitted with modified wheels and landing gear to provide an even more robust rough field capability.<sup>25</sup>

This is not insignificant. In Afghanistan and other irregular war zones, this capability would open up many more forward operating bases (FOBs) as potential hosts. Just as the Reconnaissance Airplane Companies in Vietnam co-located with the ODAs they supported, so too could AFSOC OA-Xs move forward. This arrangement would generate two advantages. First, SOF units could brief and debrief with the same aircrews who supported them, helping build trust and rapport. Second, reaction times to TICs would be reduced since aircraft would not have to travel from distant airbases with large runways.

Like the original Air Commandos who operated from strips freshly hewn from the Burmese jungle, future OA-X Air Commandos will also be able to operate *anytime, anywhere*. Since OA-X aircraft will be capable of operating from semi-prepared fields such as grass, gravel and dirt, this would allow OA-X aircrews to co-locate even with small, rapidly moving ground parties. Operating from dirt roads or even completely unprepared surfaces, these CAS *nomads*, would be unconstrained by the logistical requirements that currently tether the AFSOC AC-130 fleet to large bases.

The logical extension of this concept would be the acquisition and employment of an aircraft that follows in the rough tracks of the O-1 Birdog. With a single engine, a conventional landing gear configuration (i.e. tail wheel), and oversized bush tires, a light 2-seat aircraft can easily operate from strips less than 500 feet in length. As part of the study from which this essay is derived, the authors explored this concept in detail while completing an Alaskan bush

flying course in August 2010, operating from landing zones. A number of commercially available aircraft observed or discussed on that trip could serve as the starting point for a fully off-airport capable CAS aircraft. These include the Sherpa K-650T and the Cub Crafters Carbon Cub, a highly modified, modern version of the legendary PA-18 Super Cub bush plane. Freed from the burdens of pavement, a modern Birddog would go even further afield than a modern Skyraider and allow nomadic CAS pilots to brief and plan with SOF who may be operating far from any established FOB.

## Escort

Package escort is a mission that would be the exclusive domain of the OA-X since no aircraft in the AFSOC fleet is optimally suited to the task. Author Orr Kelly astutely noted in 1996 that “[a]nother gap is evident on the parking aprons at Hurlburt. There are no fixed-wing escorts to fill the role of the [A-1] Spads of the Vietnam era or the P-51s of the World War II battles in Burma.”<sup>26</sup> That situation has not changed in the intervening 15 years, as the parking ramps at Hurlburt, Mildenhall, Kadena, and Cannon will attest.

The escort potential of an OA-X aircraft could restore substantial capability to a SOF infiltration. Now, an air package, such as the one which delivered the Son Tay raiders, could enjoy the same organic defensive capability that an ODA would have at an FOB equipped with OA-Xs — the same capability the Son Tay raiders had when there were still A-1s in the Air Commando inventory. Furthermore, this organic defensive escort may allow ground SOF units to complete infiltrations with better OPSEC and a lower profile since all of the required air assets would be available in house. There would be no complicated clearance issues reading in members from the conventional Air Force. Also, regional suspicion and/or offense would be kept to a minimum since high-profile fighter aircraft such as F-16s or A-10s could be left at home. This would completely avoid the thorny diplomatic issue of overflight clearances for these combat aircraft. Finally, were deception necessary, an OA-X aircraft could easily be painted to resemble a training aircraft.

Critics of the OA-X as an escort platform might point out that an MC-130 has considerably longer range than a small light attack aircraft. However, all of the OA-X candidate aircraft have sufficient fuel to fly for at least four hours, unrefueled. Furthermore, these light attack aircraft could be modified with a refueling probe, just as the A-37 was. This probe would allow the aircraft to receive fuel from any tanker which uses a drogue-style fuel delivery

system — tankers such as the MC-130H, MC-130P, and MC-130W, all of which are already in AFSOC's inventory.

### **Employing the OA-X like a gunship**

Other critics of light attack aircraft may claim that gunships still possess greater utility than light attack aircraft because of their unique capabilities. However, technology has advanced considerably since the early days of gunship development; and as technology has advanced, what was once technically unique about the gunship is now commonplace in military aviation. With the notable exception of the side-firing guns, many aircraft possess gunship-like capabilities such as advanced avionics, sensors (i.e. advanced targeting pods like SNIPER) and weapons. The OA-X will have a number of capabilities that compare favorably to the gunship: long loiter time, multiple radios, and datalinks.<sup>27</sup> What distinguishes the gunship from other platforms then is its crew and their training. Their relentless dedication to the singular task of night precision CAS sets gunship crews apart. As distinctive as this gunship aircrew culture is, however, like the AC-130 technology that enables it, this too can be replicated.

Recreating the gunship attitude in a new airframe requires adapting gunship techniques to different equipment. To start with, an initial cadre of AFSOC OA-X crews should include gunship crew members. Who better to instill the culture of precision CAS than those who already live it? This cadre would of course include both pilots and combat systems officers (CSOs, i.e. navigators and fire control officers). These future backseaters would enable the essential 2-man crew concept for AFSOC OA-Xs. Because SOF missions tend to be very communications-intensive operations, the extra set of ears would be as indispensable as the extra set of eyes for conventional surface attack. Additionally, having a gunship cadre would allow for the easy importation of gunship tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). The HAVE ACE program, which trains and familiarizes SOF ground personnel with AFSOC aircraft, would be a great venue for showcasing these TTPs. Doing so would serve to build SOF ground unit confidence in the new aircraft the same way that it has helped do so for the gunship.

One of the most important sets of TTPs to be imported would be those related to convoy escort, a task which gunship crews perform exceptionally well.<sup>28</sup> The key to this performance is situational awareness of both the friendly convoy and its immediate surroundings. With its two visual sensors, a single

gunship can continuously track the friendlies while simultaneously scanning ahead and behind for oncoming threats. With this information, the gunship navigator then issues detailed directions to the convoy to guide it through unfamiliar areas. These directions are invaluable to SOF teams on the ground in foreign countries with cities which may not even have street signs.

A two-ship flight of OA-X aircraft could also accomplish this task in a similar manner. Since each OA-X will possess its own EO/IR sensor,<sup>29</sup> a two-ship flight of these aircraft will essentially have the same sensor suite as a gunship.<sup>30</sup> And just as on a gunship, one sensor will remain padlocked on the friendlies, while the other sensor scans the road ahead, behind, and to the side for threats. The CSO tracking the friendlies will issue the turn commands while the CSO on the other aircraft can pass threat warnings. For added situational awareness, the two crews could even view each other's sensor feeds via ROVER.<sup>31</sup>

## Summary

With all of its light attack aircraft long since retired, AFSOC has essentially put all of its eggs in the AC-130 basket. This C-130-only approach to CAS is inconsistent with both AFSOC's Air Commando history and its future. Although fighter pilots are now something of an anomaly in AFSOC, this was not always the case. In fact, the great-grandfathers of AFSOC, the first commanders of the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Commando Group were both fighter pilots. Lt. Col. Philip Cochran flew P-40s in North Africa and Lt. Col. John Alison flew them with the Flying Tigers in China.<sup>32</sup> AFSOC should supplement its AC-130 fleet with a squadron of fighter-type OA-X aircraft for SOF fire support. These modern day Skyraiders would restore the capabilities lost with the retirement of the original, overcome the deficiencies of the AC-130, and substantially enhance AFSOC's ability to meet its fire support obligations to its SOF ground brethren, especially in daylight. Put simply, the OA-X will enable AFSOC to once again provide CAS in accordance with its motto: *anytime, anywhere*.

## Endnotes

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# The Business of Insurgency: Defining the Growth of an Insurgency in Terms of Corporate America

*Philip S. Townsend*

*While much has been written on insurgencies, an adequate definition for the growth process of insurgencies has not been published. This paper defines the growth process of an insurgency in terms associated with a business or organization model, examining the aspects of recruitment, indoctrination, energy and time consumption, as correlations between outcomes of geopolitical insurgencies and organizational insurgencies.*

**T**he struggle between an insurgency and the state is a battle to dominate the political space within the nation. As an insurgency grows in size and capability, the state applies pressure against the insurgency and, at times, the general populace to diminish and ultimately eliminate the threat of the insurgency. While the state is trying to maintain its position of authority by applying pressure on the insurgency, the insurgency is trying to grow in terms of membership and resources. For an insurgency to survive, grow, and achieve victory over the state, it must evolve, adapt, and embrace an organizational structure that enables the insurgency to maximize efficient energy consumption, while withstanding the pressure applied by the state. The challenge for insurgent leaders is to determine the most efficient processes for capturing the political space through operational and tactical level operations, maximizing the effects of successful operations while minimizing the effects of failures.

Understanding this, the question then becomes, “How does an insurgency grow?” What factors influence the growth and success of an insurgency? Is the growth of an insurgency a calculated, deliberate process, carefully

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orchestrated by the leaders, or merely a collection of unrelated, coincidental events and decisions made by a group of individuals with no real thought to organizational goals or potential outcomes? To be successful, insurgent leaders must carefully manage all of the resources available, including the individual members of the insurgency, or else the insurgency will face the threat of collapse.

Assuming the growth of an insurgency is a process, what model can best describe the process? Leites and Wolf illustrate the insurgency as a system in which endogenous and exogenous elements provide inputs which are converted into outputs which then become endogenous inputs or turn to engage the authority.<sup>1</sup> While this system successfully simplifies the insurgency into four basic components, it does not provide an inclusive definition for the insurgency process. The Webster's College Dictionary defines the word process as "a systematic series of actions directed to some end."<sup>2</sup> The Leites and Wolf system fails to incorporate a key component of the insurgency process, the end, and while the Webster's definition gives an allusion to an end-state or goal, it does not clearly define the variables that influence insurgency growth. It fails to address the existence of internal and external variables that influence the actions taken by the insurgency leaders. If the Leites and Wolf model and the Webster's definition are insufficient for clearly defining the growth process of an insurgency, then a better definition is required. Utilizing Lawless and Bergman's quantum theory, Choucri's System Dynamics Model for State Stability, and illustrations of social movement within organizations, a business model definition of the word "process" proves to provide a solid foundation for defining and ordering the characteristics of the growth of an insurgency. BusinessDictionary.com defines the term "process" as a "sequence of interdependent and linked procedures which, at every stage, consume one or more resources (employee time, energy, machines, money) to convert inputs (data, material, parts, etc.) into outputs. These outputs then serve as inputs for the next stage until a known goal or end result is reached."<sup>3</sup> The subject of outputs and inputs has been discussed extensively, so for this paper inputs are defined as people or recruits, food, and materials, and outputs are those activities conducted by the insurgency against the state.<sup>4</sup> This leaves the remainder of the definition for further examination, starting with the procedures.

Defining a process as a sequence of procedures follows closely with the Webster's definition. The actions of a process follow an order that, if managed

sufficiently, lead to the desired outcome. Ford's assembly line for the Model T is a classic example of a sequence of procedures that led to the desired outcome. Prior to adding the engine and the transmission to the frame of the automobile, workers had to build the frame and prepare it to receive the engine and the transmission; however, the frame did not sit on the assembly line while the team assembled the engine and the transmission. All three components were fabricated and assembled simultaneously to maximize efficiency. There are numerous actions that occur in the early stages of an organization and in an insurgency, and these actions are interdependent and linked. Three significant actions are recruiting efforts, information management, and deception operations.

Recruiting is the process of persuading or coercing an individual to join a team or an organization. In their 2006 article, "A Quantum Metric for Organizational Performance: Terrorism and Counterterrorism," Lawless and Bergman state, "The goal [of a terrorist group or insurgency is] to increase the number of supporters in the target organization, either by persuasion of greater benefits in the case of the modern organizations, or, when intellectual arguments fall short, by intimidation with threats to their very survival..."<sup>5</sup> The initial goal of an insurgency is to grow. An insurgency of one is not going to effect the change desired and overthrow a government. The first hurdle for an insurgency is the problem of how to grow, but to solve this problem, the insurgency must identify its target audience. Choucri et al. developed a system dynamics model (SDM) for analyzing state stability,<sup>6</sup> in which they organized the people of a state into three primary categories: the general population, dissidents, and insurgents.<sup>7</sup> This model defines dissidents as members of the population who are anti-regime and peaceful, while insurgents are anti-regime and violent. Assuming the SDM is correct, the goal of insurgency recruiting is to convince the dissidents to become insurgents and to increase the dissonance within the general population, causing more to become dissidents. Figure 1 illustrates the flow from the general population to dissident to insurgent. While this segment of the model shows the flow of recruits through the process, it does not incorporate the insurgency's information management operations that are occurring simultaneously.

Information management is addressed later in this paper as the mechanism for converting inputs to outputs, but in this section, managing information involves the signaling by the insurgency to the target population that the

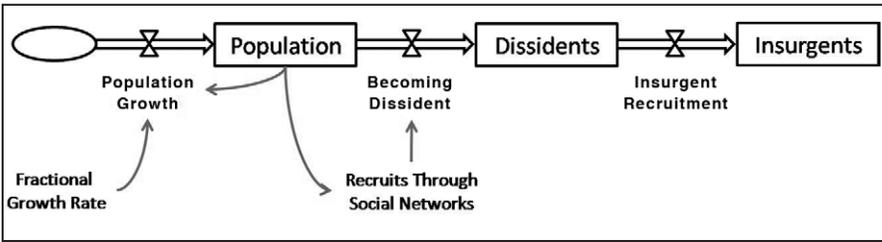


Figure 1. Adapted from Ways to Affect the Population-to-Insurgent Flow Model<sup>8</sup>

state authority is waning. The SDM continues to build on the above model, claiming that in the midst of, and in fact supporting, the recruiting process, the dissident and insurgent populations continue conducting operations that undermine the legitimacy of the regime, such as formal and informal messages, protests, and targeted attacks.<sup>9</sup> As the state reacts to these incidents, the insurgents manipulate the messages generated by the state’s reaction to create doubt in the minds of the general population as to the capacity of the state. This, combined with an effective recruiting program, may sway more dissidents to join the insurgency and increase the dissonance in the general population.<sup>10</sup> While increased dissonance amongst the general population and the increased numbers of potential recruits may seem like a positive gain for the insurgents, this remains a critical and precarious time. In order to recruit new members and stage incidents that capture the attention of the general population, the insurgents must expose themselves, providing a target for the state. This can be devastating, if not fatal, to the movement if the state can capitalize on the exposure and capture or kill insurgent leaders. Therefore, insurgent leaders must also conduct a deliberate deception plan to protect themselves and the movement.

Lawless and Bergman stated that “terrorists form regular groups [,] but ones with extreme beliefs, because their intents, if known would be rejected by society [;] they can only operate in unfriendly territory by hiding their intents [in order] to focus and time their destabilizing effects.”<sup>11</sup> The insurgents’ deception plan targets the populace and the state. The insurgents must deceive the populace to protect their true intentions and the state to protect their existence. As insurgents conduct operations against the state, these operations raise tension in the overall system. This tension “leads to an awareness of its source, [but] maximum deception occurs when deceivers act cooperatively to minimize disagreement with opponents, effectively remaining unseen by

reducing emotional responses to their presence and politics.”<sup>12</sup> To survive, the insurgents must recognize that if their true intentions are revealed before the level of dissonance in the population is high, they risk having the populace reject their recruiting efforts.<sup>13</sup>

While this is a very brief examination of this portion of the definition, the intent is to show the complexity of the interdependence and enmeshment of the sequence of events or procedures are in the growth of an insurgency, not to provide an exhaustive analysis of the three topics. The next portion of the definition to examine is the consumption of resources.

The resources of an organization, whether it is a modern corporation or an insurgency, are those elements that are consumed during the process. Some of the more obvious resources are the basics: food, water, money and hardware. However, there are two resources that are often overlooked or taken for granted: energy and time. Returning to the Ford analogy, the purpose of the assembly line was to maximize the number of automobiles produced in relation to the amount of time required to produce an automobile. By training and organizing the workers in accordance with their assigned positions on the assembly line, Mr. Ford was able to harness their collective energy, which led to the production of more automobiles in a smaller amount of time. As Lawless and Bergman state, “[the] purpose of an organization is to find collective sources of energy (*E*) for the benefit of its members. By working as a team, more complex solutions can be attempted, forming a strategy, algorithm or business model.”<sup>14</sup> In the beginning, the number of insurgents is small, requiring the insurgents consume or exert higher levels of energy to conduct operations. However, as the membership grows, the collective energy of the insurgency grows meaning a smaller amount of energy is consumed at the individual level during operations.

The resource of time has an interesting effect on energy consumption. For an insurgency, the perception of time fluctuates based on the size of the insurgency. While the state perceives the insurgency threat as low, the insurgency has more time to grow and expand. Inversely, the higher the perceived threat to the state, the more pressure the state will put on the insurgency, meaning less time for the insurgency to grow and expand. As the insurgency’s perceived time for growth and expansion shrinks, its willingness to expend and consume higher levels of energy at lower levels of efficiency will grow unbounded, leading to more risky behavior. During times of high energy consumption at low efficiency rates, insurgent leaders are vulnerable to making catastrophic

mistakes that, if exploited by the state, can decimate the insurgency. When an insurgency is declining or the insurgents perceive it to be ending, they will be more willing to consider tactics that were previously rejected: suicide bombing, large-scale conventional battles with the state, and terrorist acts against the populace, like in Al Fallujah in 2004, where al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) attempted to regain the support of the populace forcibly through a terror campaign.<sup>15</sup> This critical error by AQI exacerbated the division between the organization and the general populace, leading to the creation of the Anbar Awakening.<sup>16</sup>

Resource consumption is a reality; every organization consumes resources, from the individual consuming his lunch to corporations like Ford, Southwest Airlines, and Microsoft consuming fuel and raw materials. The successful organizations are those that can consume resources most efficiently, which leads to the question, “How does an organization become more efficient in its consumption?” How does an organization or an insurgency become more efficient at converting its resources into a finished product? Efficiency is increased through training and education, also known as indoctrination.

Reiterating the interdependence of the process, every action taken by the insurgency influences the decision-making process of potential recruits. By manipulating the information in the recruits’ environment, the insurgency controls what messages potential recruits receive, limiting their perceptions of possible alternatives, making joining the insurgency appear the only viable option for security and survival. Once the decision is made, the indoctrination begins in earnest. The importance of this indoctrination cannot be overestimated. One purpose of the insurgency growth process is to create a controllable, effective insurgent, willing to do whatever the insurgent leader asks. Krause points out that “insurgencies by their very nature are fractious affairs, and the stress and discord generated by decisions at strategic junctures can bring to the fore internal disagreements or variances over the direction that the insurgency is moving.”<sup>17</sup> BusinessDictionary.com defines the term “process control” as the “activities involved in ensuring a process is predictable, stable, and consistently operating at the target level of performance with only normal variation.”<sup>18</sup> Gray and Ariss illustrate that ideologies or visions form the basis for consensus and when those ideologies are accepted, agreement about mission, strategy, and tactics is relatively easy to achieve and maintain.<sup>19</sup> However, if the ideology is not widely accepted, conflict will arise between those of competing motivations.<sup>20</sup> Olson argues that during times of rapid

economic growth, populations shift geographically to meet the new demands, but the new settlements experience social upheaval because “the social groupings that bind people . . . have not had time to develop.”<sup>21</sup> In an insurgency, social grouping derives largely from the quality of the indoctrination. If the insurgency grows faster than the cadre can indoctrinate new recruits, the organization must decide to either dilute the message or limit the number of recruits it is willing to accept. If the insurgent leaders choose the former and dilute the message or vision, the potential for dysfunctional terror and lapses in security<sup>22</sup> grows rapidly as new recruits are shuffled through the indoctrination process too quickly. If the insurgent leaders choose the latter and limit their recruiting efforts, they face the danger of exposure to state forces by disillusioned, spurned former recruits.

Both decisions pose significant challenges to the insurgent leaders as they try to strike a balance between growth and efficiency. Once that balance is achieved and the insurgency is gaining momentum, what happens next? What is the next step in the evolution of the insurgency? After the definition addresses the conversion of inputs to outputs, it states that the outputs from the previous stage serve as the inputs for the next stage, a concept that the Leites and Wolf system supports. Without ascribing to the Army doctrine that insurgencies can be tracked through distinct phases, an insurgency does evolve over time. As an insurgency grows, and the process converts inputs into outputs while consuming resources in order to grow and counter the state’s pressure, the system of the insurgency evolves.

The final portion of the definition to examine is the *known goal or end result*. Once the insurgency has successfully grown to the point of being capable of defeating the state’s forces, having forced the state beyond its operational limits, the insurgents must now focus on establishing themselves as the dominant authority in control of the political space, the new state. “[Osama] bin Laden, like the Mafia and others who forcibly gain cooperation from a people to achieve the ends, fail once in power. They cannot rise above the laws of physics to generate nor to adapt to new [situations]; they can only use the tool that brought them to power: subjugation.”<sup>23</sup> If the ultimate goal is to defeat the state, and the insurgency is successful, the insurgent leaders must be prepared to become the very being they spent so much time, energy and resources to defeat. Insurgencies fail for any number of reasons: the leaders commit strategic mistakes, inexperienced insurgents expose themselves

to the state and are captured, and sometimes the state pressure proves too formidable and the insurgency fails before it ever gets started. Sometimes the insurgency does win.

Zald and Berger point out four possible outcomes for insurgencies in corporate organizations: Failure and repression, Segmental Operation, Enclave Support and Total Incorporation.<sup>24</sup> Failure and repression easily provide the most recognizable correlation between the models of an insurgency within a state and an insurgency within an organization. For the organization, they mean the suppression and disbanding of the insurgency through expulsion or punishment; two examples are police officers and priests, who may be exiled to undesirable positions.<sup>25</sup> For an insurgency, they most likely mean execution or jail. One interesting similarity is that authorities in the corporate organization must also consider the impact of the punishment on the rest of the organization. Overreaction may work to discredit the corporate authorities, a fact also seen in America's use of long-range missile strikes.<sup>26</sup>

It is difficult to argue that segmental operation is a potential result of an insurgency against a state. In the corporate organization, this occurs as the insurgency is maintained over a long period of time without any formal guidance from the leaders; this is most common in diverse organizations with multiple lines of interest.<sup>27</sup>

While the definition of enclave support closely parallels external support for an insurgency, the corporate application of the term has a special nuance. Enclave support of an insurgency in a corporate organization occurs when external pressures coerce the authorities to recognize and tolerate the insurgency.<sup>28</sup> While it is certainly feasible that one state could coerce another state to tolerate an insurgency, it is not as common and would likely invoke an international condemnation.

In the corporate setting, a total incorporation means that, over time, if the insurgents' product proves to be viable and supportive of the corporate goals, the organization may adopt the insurgents' perspectives and the insurgents themselves may be promoted.<sup>29</sup> Zald and Berger provide the creation of the armed helicopter and the doctrine of mobile infantry as an example of total incorporation of an insurgency.<sup>30</sup> In the national setting, it is possible to see insurgencies incorporated into the fabric of the state, like in the negotiated peace in Nepal. In 2006, the competing political parties in Nepal united to peacefully end the Hindu monarchy and elect a democratic government.<sup>31</sup> While the situation in Nepal is far from stable and further from democracy,

negotiated peace settlements do occasionally happen, allowing both the insurgents and the states to survive.

While it would be reckless to suggest that the study of corporate business models can provide an accurate tool for predicting the growth of an insurgency, there are enough significant similarities between a corporate organization, state and an insurgency to utilize corporate business models to assist in thinking strategically about how to understand and defeat an insurgency. The business definition of a process illuminates the interdependence of the procedures within the growth process, and by gaining a clear understanding of the definition presented and the terms it contains, a clearer understanding of the growth of an insurgency can be gained. In no way is this list of definitions, correlations, and analogies exhaustive. Each of these subjects can and should be explored and tested further to ensure the most succinct understanding is achieved. The number of possible tracks of study on the inputs and the outputs of an insurgency is overwhelming and requires significantly more time and effort for a thorough examination. The Quantum Theory and the System Dynamics Model offer enormous potential for understanding the complexity of insurgencies and terrorist groups; linking the theory and the model to organizational life cycles has the potential to create common understanding of the greatest external threats our nation faces today.

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30. *Ibid.*, 841.
31. Ganga B. Thapa and Jan Sharma, *From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal*, *International Political Science Review*, (2009) 30, no. 2, 209.

# Implementing an Integrated Approach to Train SOF for the FID Mission

*Ken Watson*

*SOF Irregular Warfare capabilities are in critical high demand and must be bolstered to ensure sufficient capacity for future interagency efforts. A new dual track approach is in order that will increase specialization between direct and nondirect organization and training while bridging the interagency collaboration gap. Growing regional experts through targeted and extended tours, while embedding SOF teams with the country mission is a potential tool that could be utilized in this endeavor.*

Special operations training attempts to find and develop within individuals an extraordinary inner strength and an ability to think and innovate. At the same time, training emphasizes the sanctity and necessity of small teams, the unit that undertakes most operations. Only through belief in the team and trust among its members will special operators be successful<sup>1</sup>

— Susan L. Marquis

**U**nited States Special Operations Forces (SOF) are a hallmark capability supporting our national interests at home and abroad. They have provided solutions to some of the wickedest problems we face in attempting to foster a more stable and secure world environment, capable of adeptly blending aspects of both hard and soft power. Yet, the security environment today continues to evolve and challenge our abilities to respond with greater diversity and flexibility. The comparatively simple strategies based upon a bipolar world dominated by Cold War superpowers have been replaced by an increasingly complex and unpredictable global security quandary in which

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we must now use a fully integrated whole-of-government approach. Engaged in battle in Southwest Asia since the early 90s, we are at a turning point in our strategy for defense for the coming century as we can no longer afford, both in cost of lives and treasure, to continue largely unilateral and hard power-centric operations around the world while maintaining the economic strength that has enabled our military capabilities. The recent Quadrennial Defense Review states thus in the opening executive summary:

The United States faces a complex and uncertain security landscape in which the pace of change continues to accelerate. The distribution of global political, economic, and military power is becoming more diffuse.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly we must adapt our methods and strategies for defense against new threats to our national security in entirely new ways in order to maintain our position as a primary world power. SOF Irregular Warfare capabilities in the areas of Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and Security Force Assistance (SFA) are at the forefront of the capabilities that we must project effectively in potential trouble spots in weak and failing states. Effective operations to deal with these new threats will require a whole new set of training rubrics, tools, and wide range of options, relying much more on non military-specific solutions and close interaction and integration with host-nation governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In the following pages I will discuss one approach for facilitating the education and training of SOF operators with the skill sets necessary to succeed in this new environment and make recommendations for implementation. This approach seeks to maintain the “sanctity” and effectiveness of the small 12-man team, but adds more specialization to delineate between hard and soft capabilities while preserving the ability to *think and innovate* as part of a more diverse organizational team.

The most recent National Security Strategy of the United States makes it clear that stabilization operations are now at the forefront of our ability to deter violence and prevent conflict around the globe.

Where governments are incapable of meeting their citizens’ basic needs and fulfilling their responsibilities to provide security within their borders, the consequences are often global and may directly threaten the American people. To advance our common security,

we must address the underlying political and economic deficits that foster instability, enable radicalization and extremism, and ultimately undermine the ability of governments to manage threats within their borders and to be our partners in addressing common challenges.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, all elements of our national power — diplomacy, information, military, and economic (DIME) — must be brought to bear in order to address the security and stabilization of weak and failing states. The key to taking fullest advantage of these capabilities is to ensure we use all elements of power in concert with one another. This requires close integration between all of the players involved, most notably Department of State (DoS), Department of Defense (DoD), and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). As stated in the Joint Operating Concept for Irregular Warfare, “To prevent, deter, disrupt, and defeat irregular threats, the joint force must seek to work in concert with other governmental agencies and multinational partners, and, where appropriate, the host nation to understand the situation in depth, plan and act in concert, and continually assess and adapt their approach in response to the dynamic and complex nature of the problem.”<sup>4</sup> There is an acute need for intermeshed civil military collaboration and cooperation in new and innovative ways, yet disparities persist. The USAID Civil-Military Program Operations Guide states, “One of the recurring frustrations on the part of USAID is that many key USAID offices have no equivalent in the DoD universe. There is no DoD program office, no monitoring and evaluation office (although there is a center for lessons learned). There is no DoD-USAID cooperation policy, in part because USAID is viewed as one of many civilian entities with which the Defense Department cooperates.”<sup>5</sup> We must develop new organizational constructs that will serve to bridge this apparent collaboration gap, especially with regards to the major U.S. government stakeholders in FID and SFA; a teaming approach that will bring the interagency together towards a common U.S. national-level objective.

Furthermore, while a whole-of-government approach is essential as stated above, it is equally important that the objective be clearly aligned for all players. What is the objective of FID, and how does it differ from SFA? FID is defined as “Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency terrorism, and other threats to its security.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, SFA is defined as

“activities that contribute to unified action by the U.S. Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions.”<sup>7</sup> Although closely aligned, the two terms are distinguished apart by the threat itself. Whereas FID is exclusive to internal security threats, SFA is concerned with both internal and external. Both missions require working by, with, and through the host-nation governments whom we seek to support. This of course requires a level of cultural awareness, language capabilities, and deep understanding of the complex societal intricacies on a new level for our operators. While USSOCOM is addressing these new education requirements for its personnel, there are other additional steps that can and should be taken to improve the effectiveness even more. While the added language and cultural education is certainly required, time on the ground provides a much greater depth of understanding and long-term benefits. For the sake of simplicity, I’ll term that new level of cultural awareness, and even cultural acceptance, as a *native capability*.

“Going native” has long been used as a negative term for personnel, military or otherwise under some other official employment capacity, who have in the performance of their duties in some foreign land become assimilated into the local culture. While not always the case, this typically corresponds to an apparent dereliction of duty with regards to their original purpose for being in the foreign area in the first place. This brings to mind the crew of HMS Bounty and most notably her First Officer, Mr. Christian. Although, stereotypical perceptions aside, there is a higher degree of operational environment knowledge, as well as local legitimacy that can only be gained by time and being embedded with the people of the country we seek to assist. These are crucial factors to be able to swiftly react to dynamic, unstructured, and unforeseen situations. This is the difference between knowing enough of a language to be able to speak it, and speaking it daily with natives so that even local dialects become apparent. There is no substitute for time in this regard. Additionally, the kinds of close relationships that can and should be fostered in support of FID actions in general, are garnered through the levels of trust that come with long-standing personal relationships. This is the same concept that has led to the current Joint Staff sponsored ACPAK Hands program, whereby working relationships are stabilized through utilization of the same U.S. personnel on regular rotations. A derivative of this personnel management policy would provide the SOF community with an additional tool on either a country, or perhaps regional, basis to put experts in place for longer

periods of time. In this case we would encourage and even reward our trained security experts to be “native.” Operationally this would require a uniquely different make-up of the 12-person SOF team. This proposed soldier-diplomat team would have a non-kinetic focus and composition that was specific to the stability of an assigned country or region.

The integrity of the direct action teams and the incredible amounts of specialized training and education involved with their development must be preserved. It represents trademark clandestine capabilities that are in increasing demand in the unstable global security environment of today and the foreseeable future. However, just as the requirements of direct action capabilities have increased, we must also grow specialized indirect action SOF capabilities to meet the increasing demand for stabilization operations that will in turn prevent violent conflict from occurring in the first place. Attempting to train our operators to be experts in both areas potentially wastes precious training resources and is counterproductive in light of the diversity of the missions. Furthermore, increasing time on station requirements in order to grow regional specialists would not coincide with the operational requirements of traditional direct action forces/teams. To attempt to mix these two distinct tracks would undermine the specialization necessary to perform both with the necessary proficiency.

Thus, specialization towards the FID and SFA missions is a crucial step towards enhancing the education and training of SOF. Much of the education of SOF operators is already being well accomplished via the robust curriculum taught through professional military education. Training, however, must be distinguished from education. According to Webster, training is defined as the act of teaching “so as to make fit, qualified, or proficient.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore the end-goal is to improve our SOF operators’ abilities to work collaboratively within a larger country-specific Internal Defense and Development strategy to engage with foreign militaries to improve their capabilities to repel external enemies and internal subversive elements. In short, the objective is to make them more secure and in doing so, increase stability and the chances for economic development and growth. This answers the question as to *why*. The harder question at the operational level is *how*. To answer this question, I will attempt to answer the four additional *W questions*: who, what, when, and where.

As postulated earlier in this paper, the *who* are SOF teams that are specialists within the art of FID and SFA; i.e. non-kinetic and with heavy focus on civil

affairs. These are personnel who have experience and education working with both interagency partners and non-governmental organizations that operate within a particular regional focus area. These regional experts have a deep understanding of local insurgent movements, their membership, underlying causes of instability, history, objectives, claims to legitimacy, and methods by which they carry out their campaign. In addition to their comprehensive knowledge of the external environment, they understand that FID is an activity that at its core is interagency in which the military plays one role of a larger group effort. Thus, the military presence as an instrument of power will be *small M* in the DImE construct, with either the DoS or USAID taking the lead role. *What* refers to the capability and subsequent effects that this team would be able to provide to the host nation. Arguably, the most effective and productive teams are those that work together closely on a day to day basis. The ad-hoc methods by which we assemble and employ the interagency team supporting specific FID or SFA missions are no longer practical, especially from an economic standpoint. Therefore, *what* we deploy should be interagency field teams that have trained together extensively prior to deployment. The training should be scenario based and scripted to confront them with the most likely challenges they will face over the duration of their time in country. Optimally, a train-the-trainer approach could be utilized whereas SOF FID and SFA experts could be assigned to country missions where we have targeted stabilization operations. Thus after spending considerable time on the ground, working with the local NGOs and developing close relationships within the embassy and with USAID field personnel, they could then facilitate the training of the team assembled stateside to deploy for accomplishing the mission.

Duration is one aspect of answering the *when* question. Experience in the region at hand is crucial, as is the continuity and consistency provided by a team that remains in place for no less than a 12-month period, unless extenuating circumstances or the external environment drastically shift to cause an early withdrawal or change in overall strategy by the U.S. While some individual supporting members may flow in and out based upon specific requirements, such as medical or engineering support, the main cast of team members should remain largely fixed for the duration. These modern-day legionnaires would be core capabilities that could be reutilized after set force reconstitution times to redeploy back into other countries within the same region, thereby adding to the regional experience levels and building upon

competencies. The desired effects of these kinds of efforts are long-term and based upon a root-cause strategy that seeks to alleviate those elements that pose risk to stability and security. Lastly, *where* is to those regions where we have targeted stabilization operations that the host nation has requested FID and SFA efforts. Every effort should be undertaken to preserve the regional integrity of the teams so as to build upon existing education and experience.

In conclusion, the vision advocated in this brief paper seeks to facilitate educating and training SOF operators with the FID and SFA skill sets necessary to succeed by increasing specialization of training, encouraging greater regional focus, and building cohesive interagency teams. Admittedly, there are many operational hurdles to overcome in order to implement this approach. While it is easy to espouse that integration and greater levels of collaboration amongst all stakeholders are a strategic imperative, the policy changes required are significant. Our ability to work through the U.S. diplomatic missions in a specific host nation, as well as working in a subordinate role to USAID who ultimately has the responsibility for carrying out non-military U.S. foreign assistance, per the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, is at an infancy stage. To move beyond that infancy and take fuller advantage of an integrated whole-of-government approach will require removal of barriers, such as funding, as well as clear lines of authority between the supporting and supported activities. Embedded SOF non-kinetic experts are one way of helping to bridge the gap. While we are likely not at the point of being able to bring together a national-level mission force that incorporates all of our elements of power, we can and should begin to take measures to meld our capabilities together towards common goals in those weak and failing states that we anticipate contributing to global insecurity in the coming decade. SOF capabilities will be an instrumental part of that, particularly the preventative nature of FID and SFA that they bring with them. In seeking to reduce the need for U.S. and/or coalition partners to intervene militarily around the world, increasing our fundamental abilities to train personnel to perform this mission promises to help alleviate fundamental causes of instability that plague the developing nations around the globe.

## Endnotes

1. Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare: Rebuilding U.S. Special Operations Forces*, Washington DC, 1997, 264.

2. Barack Obama, National Security Strategy of the United States, Washington DC, 2010, p.14 [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf).
3. Ibid., 26.
4. Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare: Countering Irregular Threats, Joint Operating Concept, Version 2.0*, May 17, 2010, executive summary, 4.
5. U.S. Agency for International Development, *Civilian-Military Operations Guide*, Version 1.0, April 27, 2010, 13.
6. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, November 8, 2010 (as amended through May 15, 2011), 145.
7. Ibid., 326.
8. Merriam-Webster, Inc. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, Springfield, Mass., 1989, 1251.