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JSOU and OSS Society Symposium

Irregular Warfare and the OSS Model

2-4 November 2009

Report of Proceedings  
Joint Special Operations  
University (JSOU)  
and  
Office of Strategic  
Services (OSS) Society  
Symposium

*Irregular Warfare  
and the OSS Model*



2-4 November 2009  
Tampa, Florida



## 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.

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# Preface

The JSOU and OSS Society hosted 68 attendees who included veterans of the OSS from World War II (including Major General [Retired] John Singlaub) as well as veterans from Afghanistan, Iraq, and other conflicts of the past seven decades at the Westin Harbour Island Hotel in Tampa, Florida from 2–4 November 2009. Representatives from the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) headquarters (including Admiral Eric Olson), USSOCOM components, Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) and selected interagency partners also participated.

The purpose of the symposium was to gather information about the OSS model and to stimulate thinking on whether and how elements of that model might be applied to contemporary and future irregular warfare challenges. Specific areas of focus included authorities, organization, recruitment, selection and assessment, desired skill sets, training, command and control, communications, sustainment, and interagency collaboration.

During the course of the symposium, several recurring themes and conclusions emerged. These are discussed within the report that follows and are listed in the conclusion.



# Symposium Agenda

## Monday, 2 November

- 1200-1700 Participant Arrival and Registration  
1700-1900 Icebreaker Reception

## Tuesday, 3 November

- 0830-0845 **Welcoming Remarks**  
Dr. Brian Maher, JSOU President  
Mr. Charles Pinck, OSS Society President
- 0845-0930 **Setting the Stage: What was the OSS?**  
Dr. Troy Sacquety, United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) OSS Historian
- 1000-1130 **Panel 1—OSS Vignettes: Challenges of OSS Operations**  
Mr. Bill Mendel, JSOU Senior Fellow, Moderator  
Messrs. Hugh Tovar, Art Frizzell, Caesa Civitella, and Art Reinhardt—OSS
- 1300-1500 **Panel 2—Historian Viewpoints: Strategic Impact of the OSS**  
Dr. Troy Sacquety, USASOC OSS Historian, Moderator  
Dr. John Chambers, Rutgers University  
Dr. Bruce Reynolds, San Jose State University  
Mr. Will Irwin
- 1530-1615 **Author Presentation/Discussion**  
Mr. Douglas Waller, TIME Magazine Congressional Correspondent
- 1900-2100 **Symposium Dinner**  
Major General (Ret.) John Singlaub

## Wednesday, 4 November

- 0830-0930 ***Future Challenges of Irregular War***  
Admiral Eric Olson, USSOCOM Commander
- 1000-1130 **Panel 3—*Future Security Challenges***  
Mr. Joe Celeski, JSOU Senior Fellow, Moderator  
Brigadier General (Ret.) Russ Howard  
Mr. David Hopley (U.K.)  
Mr. John Tsagronis

- 1300-1500     **Panel 4—*Applicability of the OSS Model***  
Mr. Jeff Nelson, JSOU Senior Fellow, Moderator  
Major General (Ret.) Geoff Lambert  
Mr. Mark Nutsch  
Mr. Dave Duffy  
Ambassador (Ret.) David Greenlee  
Lieutenant Colonel Dean Newman
- 1530-1600     **Symposium Wrap-up**  
Mr. Chuck Ricks, JSOU Senior Fellow, Recorder
- 1600-1615     **Closing Comments/Next Steps**  
Mr. Charles Pinck  
Dr. Brian Maher

## Executive Summary

The symposium relied on the use of individual presenters and four panels to address both the OSS model and current and future security environments. Additionally, extended video interviews were conducted separately with veterans of the OSS and Afghanistan to capture personal experiences and to analyze the relevance of those experiences for the future. Shorter interviews were also conducted with other attendees during breaks.

The cooperation between JSOU and the OSS Society is designed to build a bridge between the experiences and lessons of the OSS and today's special operations community while also tracing the roots of current irregular warfare and other United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) operations back to the OSS model to carve out fresh understandings that may have new relevancy.

What was striking was the similarity in the conditions and challenges faced by both the OSS and contemporary veterans. Obviously, technology has changed dramatically. Yet the decisive role of the individual persisted as the central theme for the entire symposium. As one of the Afghan veterans said about the OSS veterans, "We must understand who he is, not just what he did."

In his opening remarks, Dr. Brian Maher, JSOU president, proposed that we regard intellectual capacity as our strongest weapon and stressed the need to connect to the past to build visions for the future.

Central to that connection is the dominating figure of Major General William J. Donovan, appointed as Coordinator of Information in July 1941 and later, the Director of the OSS. Mr. Charles Pinck, OSS Society president, noted that Donovan was dedicated to intellectual pursuits and "encouraged independent thinking... some might say *insubordination*." The comments of other speakers built upon this theme and noted that the power of Donovan's personality translated into the OSS organizational structure.

In his review of the OSS, its philosophy and operations, Dr. Troy Sacquety also introduced various themes that charted a path for later presentations and discussions. He established several points of contrast between World War II and today's challenges. Chief among these was the state of total war

faced by the OSS during which participants experienced relatively unhindered support for the fight among nations rather than nonstate actors.

As with other speakers, Dr. Sacquety noted clearly that the OSS was about people, not technology.

Dr. Bruce Reynolds recalled that the OSS displayed an organizational determination to do great things. The OSS's *let's try it and see if it works* mentality was very helpful in developing innovative and effective ways of operating.

Mr. Will Irwin remarked that the OSS produced creative and unfettered minds, several of which, in spite of age, were on display during the symposium. Whether in formal presentations to the symposium, on-camera comments or private conversations, the OSS veterans, after more than six decades, continued to be imbued with a clear sense of strategic direction or strategic connectivity. While many, if not all, claimed that they had received no specific orders and only the most general guidance, each knew exactly what was expected of him or her. Furthermore, each reveled in the freedom granted to him or her to decide how to proceed in the uncertain environments in which they found themselves. While acknowledging the high-stakes danger and frequent losses, one of the OSS veterans also spoke of the excitement and the energy of his experiences, even occasionally using the word *fun* to describe his adventures. The agent of this strategic direction was and remains MG Donovan.

While operations were dispersed and independent, there was a sense that each OSS veteran believed his guidance to act came from Donovan himself! Each seemed to have met him personally and received from him directly his vision and intent. Each OSS member knew exactly what he or she was about, no matter the mission or its location. Reaching back more than six decades, Donovan remains an immediate presence that would rival the technologies of modern instant messaging or twittering.

A recurring topic of interest during the symposium involved the selection and assessment process for individual members of the OSS. Quite simply the OSS knew the kinds of exceptional people it wanted, then went out and got them. The OSS had identified the innate skills they needed, such as language and cultural awareness, and the other skills they could train to prepare for specific missions.

Not surprisingly, the comments of contemporary veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq at the symposium addressed many of the similar challenges

facing the SOF community today. The stories of the OSS veterans' individual experiences were strikingly alike: they were someplace training when they were unexpectedly summoned to meet with an officer who conducted an interview, then later received orders directing them to report to the Washington, D.C. area.

On the subject of languages and cultural awareness, several OSS veterans spoke in detail about the important distinction between *schoolboy French/Italian/German* and native speakers. One of them, a second-generation Italian, described the experience of fighting alongside Italian partisans as "almost like being at home . . . we liked the same food and music." Of course, the pool of native speakers today is very limited, especially for those regions of most intense activity.

An OSS veteran of China told the story of suggesting that a particular bridge be destroyed to prevent movement of Japanese forces in the area. The Chinese, reflecting a different way of evaluating the situation, vetoed the idea, saying that their long-term plan was to recapture the 500-year-old bridge from the invaders and to use it again. He then connected his experiences with today's situation by saying that kind of challenge probably remains true today in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Once selected, the process of what we would today call *team-building* continued. Several from the OSS reported that expressing doubts or challenging authority frequently resulted in immediate termination.

At the heart of his comments, Dr. John Chambers noted that the goal of the OSS comprehensive and intensive psychological assessments was to develop a secure, capable, and intelligent person to deal with uncertainty and stress with great self-confidence. Part of that process included a complex battery of compatibility tests and peer reviews that were hugely important in developing and sustaining the human resources. More than simply determining order-of-merit lists, OSS peer reviews formed an important component of retention decisions.

The entire process was designed to prepare both individuals and teams to conduct the most complex missions within the most difficult environments. Innate skill sets, combined with focused training and education, served to prepare the OSS force. One OSS veteran reported that the matching of individuals was so successful that many remained close friends and associates for the rest of their lives.

One of the unique aspects of the symposium was that the personal comments of the OSS, Afghan, and other veterans animated the observations presented by the historians, strategists, and other speakers. When asked to identify the toughest challenges he faced in both France and China, an OSS veteran chuckled and asserted that everything was a challenge. But his mood changed abruptly, and he calmly recited a list of specific steps he took to adapt within a variety of complex situations. More than six decades later, he spoke with absolute confidence that, as a young man of 21 years, he could face any challenge.

Not surprisingly, there were two distinct views on the central question of the relevance of the OSS model to contemporary and future irregular warfare challenges. One argued that the circumstances of World War II were so vast and so unique that the experiences and lessons of the OSS cannot apply to either the present or the future.

By contrast, others argued that the challenges of irregular warfare remain remarkably familiar and require the kind of ingenuity and unfettered mind that MG Donovan and the OSS employed in the face of global war. Some of these include the varied use of aircraft to include resupply; developing a cadre of pilots experienced in a specific region; communication among forces on the ground and with support organizations; integrating intelligence with operations; cultural awareness; building relationships and trust among indigenous peoples; understanding cultural complexity and mores; organizing, training, equipping, and advising credible security forces; deception operations; psychological operations; and training and employing available weapons systems.

The contemporary results of addressing these challenges likely will not look the same as those of decades past, a point emphasized by MG (Ret.) John Singlaub and others. However, the principles that drove OSS practices remain viable for today. Proponents of this perspective note that the flexibility of the OSS model allowed for adaptation when what worked in Europe did not work in China or other theaters of operations. While it might not be possible to transplant the OSS model intact, it would be practical to grab onto relevant elements and apply them to a new environment.

Thus assessment and judgment are essential to measuring effectiveness and driving adaptation. Then as now, it is necessary to understand what success looks like. A rather unique example came from one of the Special Forces veterans of northern Afghanistan. He reported that even when

dropped bombs missed their intended targets, they were very successful in communicating capability, intentions, and priorities of targets (foreign fighters targeted before Afghans).

Another anecdote originated with an historian who discussed the case of three OSS operatives who created the conditions to persuade 250,000 Italian troops to surrender on Sardinia.

One general assessment that emerged is that the track record of the OSS model into the 1950s and beyond is that it is “effective against unpopular, oppressive regimes. But it is unclear if it could be successful in a counter-insurgency environment” (Dr. Chambers).

MG (Ret.) Singlaub added to the discussion of different environments by emphasizing the principle to let people liberate themselves. To do so, it is important not to remove the motivation to participate in one’s own security by doing too much for them.

During his comments, Admiral Eric Olson, USSOCOM commander, spoke of close connections with the OSS and of MG Donovan as the “spiritual godfather” of modern-day special operations. As with the OSS, the list of what USSOCOM does expands all the time. By doing so, the SOF community learns about itself. For instance, SOF is “far more resilient than we thought we could be ... and our retention rates are higher than ever.”

In separate interview comments, Admiral Olson drew direct connections with the spirit and élan of the OSS and that linkages to the OSS help re-energize those elements of our DNA such as tactics, intelligence, and outlook. Noting that *temperature* of the global security environment is steadily rising, he characterized the USSOCOM mission as to “go around the world turning down the heat.” As part of that broad mandate, SOF presence without value is perceived as occupation. Thus there is a requirement to leave goodness behind in each area of operations.

BG (Ret.) Russ Howard crafted a strong linkage between the OSS model and contemporary challenges. He argued that the OSS addressed challenges and took advantage of opportunities during World War II that no one else was interested in doing or could do. He further suggested that the ad hoc nature of the OSS, its ability to construct and implement quick workarounds, its access to top talent and solid leadership, the flexibility afforded by its temporary nature, its ability to meet requirements that could not be met by existing structures, and its consistently credible performance offer a firm foundation for dealing with our current and future environments.

He balanced his assessment by noting that external jealousy, questions of who is in charge (command and control), inconsistent fiduciary responsibility, mission creep, and the tendency to extend organizations beyond their useful lives were inherent OSS limitations that must be addressed.

BG (Ret.) Howard also identified a list of specific current and future threats, as did other participants. These include problematic states, emerging powers, globalization, technology (a globalization enabler), demographics, the environment, and the resulting competition for resources.

Related to that complexity, Mr. David Hopley argued that uncertainty is the No. 1 future security challenge and warned of the danger that if you were to assume any level of certainty, you would become fixed and thus more vulnerable and less able to respond as required. He called for the strategic courage to act to put people in harm's way and take a chance and see what happens as did the OSS. He also echoed the comments of others about the importance of the building of strategic relationships with an eye toward understanding what it is SOF brings that is different. All of this, of course, is to be supported by the right mix of people and resources.

Ambassador (Ret.) David Greenlee addressed the implications of the role of the interagency, both through the country team at the local U.S. Embassy and the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). The presence of both structures has important implications for SOF that are deployed in areas of operation. There is a clear requirement for SOF to work closely with the ambassador and the country team to gain maximum effects from ongoing activities and to coordinate with the S/CRS and other similar organizations to limit duplication of effort and friction.

Veterans of Afghanistan presented observations that echoed the comments made by their OSS predecessors. One identified specific links to the OSS that included shared interdependence (including indigenous forces on the ground, human intelligence assets, and interagency resources), the capabilities of Special Forces NCOs and officers (including problem solving, culture and language, rapport within the team and with the local population, adaptability to complex situations, and a variety of essential skill sets), and the ability to conduct effective tactical operations with strategic implications and effects. As an example, he noted the important impact that increased medical treatment had on raising the morale of indigenous

forces who, before the arrival of the Special Forces, might have suffered more severely or even died from their injuries.

Another Afghan veteran spoke about the role of irregular warfare and its use of surrogates to achieve limited objectives that wear down our adversaries as a desired strategic effect. Such limited strategies are employed by irregular warfare practitioners to “bog down our opponents, not ourselves . . . and to make it the enemy’s long hard slog, not ours.” He reminded attendees that the OSS was not there to defeat the entire German Army, but to “wear them down . . . to mess with them.” Similarly, contemporary threats can be addressed by strategies that are not limited to kinetic options and that employ a variety of tactics to disrupt, deny, attrit, and generally wear down the adversaries.

As for measures of effectiveness, SOF entered the country in remarkably small numbers with the mission to render Afghanistan no longer a safe haven for hostile forces. As with the OSS, history has judged that effort to be a success.

Mr. Dave Duffy suggested a series of specific observations—for example, cultures do not get any stranger than nongovernmental organizations and the media; personalities trump doctrine; every day with the Afghans is a union negotiation; Afghans work in circles, we work linearly; and need PSYOP leaflets and products that are clearly linked to events on the ground.

MG (Ret.) Geoff Lambert spoke of the need for flexibility and continuous adaptation. He pointed out that ink never dries on an unconventional warfare plan, an awareness that drives conventional forces crazy. He also reminded the gathering of the importance of working through problems, as with the OSS practice of developing effective workarounds. For instance, in the absence of intelligence, SOF needs to be prepared to ignore the shortfall and go in and develop the situation.

In summarizing the discussion of the applicability of the OSS model, JSOU senior fellow, Mr. Jeff Nelson, suggested that education and force-generation capabilities are the keys to the way ahead in irregular warfare. The ability of SOF to build flexibility will assist in responding rapidly to situations, especially when surprised.

He also pointed out that the clarity of MG Donovan’s strategic certainty survives in the development of the contemporary commander’s intent and its role in building unity of effort and encouraging flexibility in the execution

of that intent. The OSS practice of identifying winnable engagements serves as an admonishment not to try to do too much in a given situation.

## 3 November Session

### Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Brian Maher, JSOU president, opened the symposium by pointing out that when USSOCOM was created 22 years ago its first commander, General James Lindsay, selected a gold lance-head on a black background as the command insignia. This insignia was modeled after a patch worn unofficially in the OSS and symbolizes the heritage and relationship of modern-day SOF to the OSS.

Dr. Maher also noted that General Peter Schoomaker, another former USSOCOM commander, recognized the challenging environments, new ways of warfare ahead, and a corresponding need for increased SOF intellectual capacity. Consequently, in 2000, General Schoomaker established JSOU to focus on education at the operational and strategic level. Dr. Maher noted that tactical success does not always translate into strategic success and a key component of the education mission is the emphasis on strategic studies that seek to develop and expand strategic thinking.

Returning then to the OSS model, Dr. Maher stated he is looking forward to the symposium take-aways that we can apply for years to come in the development of strategic visions.

Mr. Charles Pinck, the OSS Society president, presented the welcoming comments. He began by stating that the OSS Society first celebrates the historical accomplishments of the OSS during World War II—the



OSS Society president Mr. Charles Pinck and JSOU president Dr. Brian Maher exchange symposium mementos.

first organized effort by this nation to implement a centralized system of strategic intelligence and the predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the U.S. Special Forces—and also educates the public regarding the continuing importance of strategic intelligence to the preservation of freedom within this country and around the world.

From his perspective, Mr. Pinck firmly believes that USSOCOM can learn from OSS successes and failures. He attributed much of the OSS success to its leader and founder, MG William Donovan, who instilled in the OSS the following characteristics and attributes:

- a. Brains, brawn, and bravado
- b. Encouragement of people to take risks/chances
- c. Personnel rewarded, not penalized, for taking risks
- d. An eagerness to try things not tried before
- e. An ability to think and act independently
- f. A willingness to take the initiative and accept responsibility
- g. The flexibility to seek and pursue all effective means to defeat the enemy
- h. A mindset that you cannot succeed without taking chances

## **Setting the Stage: What was the OSS?**

Dr. Troy Sacquety, an historian with the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), presented an overview of what the OSS was by first describing the OSS model, then putting the OSS into an historical context. At a fundamental level, there is interest in the OSS because it was a global organization that touched virtually all aspects of World War II; was the first command/unit of its kind; developed its own standard operating procedures adapted to specific missions and roles; possessed special capabilities; and was the forerunner of the CIA. He said it was a commonly misunderstood organization, which at its heart is the fusion of intelligence collection and dissemination and irregular warfare. The OSS was able to achieve this with economy of force.

Dr. Sacquety traced the roots of the OSS to the early days of World War II when President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Donovan to evaluate the military situation in order to provide recommendations to meet American intelligence requirements and to take a strategic approach to the nation's

security challenges. Donovan envisioned an American SOF that could operate in three stages: infiltration and preparation; sabotage and subversion; and, finally, direct support to resistance units. Based upon Donovan's findings, and using the British model of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), President Roosevelt appointed Donovan as the Coordinator of Information (COI) in July 1941. (He was a civilian at that time with a retired rank of colonel.)

The COI was the nation's first peacetime, independent intelligence organization authorized to collect and analyze information and data; correlate the information and data and to make it available to the President and other government officials; and to carry out, when requested by the President, activities that may facilitate the securing of information important for national security not then available to the government.

Prior to the COI, American intelligence was conducted by various departments of the executive branch that included the Department of State, the Department of the Treasury, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Navy and War Departments.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and America's entry into World War II, a need was perceived to create resistance in enemy areas from which the U.S. and its allies had withdrawn.

This expanded role led to COI evolving into the *Office of Strategic Services* in June of 1942. The OSS was placed under the Joint Chiefs of Staff with two primary functions: intelligence and operations. Dr. Sacquety noted that not everyone supported the OSS, in particular General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz, who saw little need for the OSS in their theaters, and the FBI, who prevented OSS operations in Latin America.

Dr. Sacquety then gave a brief overview of the structure of the OSS and discussed the roles of several of its branches, each of which was responsible for a specific function. The two primary OSS functions could be divided into intelligence and operations, each administered by a deputy director. Intelligence Services was responsible for:

- a. Special Intelligence (SI)—HUMINT by means of espionage and by liaison with other allied intelligence agencies; it recruited agents, developed networks in neutral and enemy-occupied territory, and exploited sources (underground and guerrilla groups)
- b. X2—counter-espionage abroad

- c. Research and Analysis (R&A)—coordinating intelligence from all sources and producing finished intelligence studies of a strategic, political, geographical, and economic nature
- d. Censorship and Documents—providing cover documentation for personnel infiltrating enemy-controlled areas.

Strategic Services Operations (SSO) was responsible in part for:

- a. Special Operations (SO)—organizing, supplying, and training sabotage operations and resistance groups behind enemy lines; examples were the Jedburghs in France and Detachment 101 in Burma
- b. Morale Operations (MO)—propaganda that subverted the enemy's morale at home and at the front; an example given included false orders to enemy combatants to surrender
- c. Maritime Unit (MU)—water infiltration and resupply, sabotage against enemy shipping, and the design of specialized maritime equipment
- d. Operational Group (OG)—organizing and operating guerrilla forces in deep penetration operations; in China, and in other places, such as Greece, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway, and Burma, it recruited, trained, and led guerilla groups; and in France after D-day, the OGs supported the Marquis (French Resistance).

Another branch that Dr. Sacquety mentioned was the Communications Branch, which he called the *key and backbone* of operations because without it you could not get the intelligence out or conduct resupply. Transitioning to the applicability of the OSS model to contemporary challenges, Dr. Sacquety placed the OSS within the context of World War II. He noted that the operational environment involved total war, possessed unhindered support, and was a fight of nations—not nonstate actors. From a personnel standpoint, the draft provided access to a greater pool of talent and the ability, and willingness, to direct commission.

A steep learning curve existed and an atmosphere that personnel casualties were unfortunate but accepted. To illustrate this point, Dr. Sacquety used the case study of Detachment 101 that was created to lead a resistance/ guerrilla force against the Japanese in Burma. Detachment 101 had lost five of the six long-range penetration teams sent into the field by the end of 1943. However, the group learned from their lessons, had the flexibility to strengthen roles that worked, and the commander had the freedom to adapt

missions/roles as he saw fit. As a result, Detachment 101 became the linchpin for operations in theater where the OSS took over as the sole combat effort by the end of the war. This ultimately led to Detachment 101 being awarded the Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation in 1946.

Taking a step back to the broader OSS organization, Dr. Sacquety stated that the tactical commanders had the flexibility to decide for themselves what works best. He further noted that in World War II all combatants possessed the same basic technological level for conducting unconventional warfare; thus an OSS strength was the people rather than the technology. His final area of comparison was in public relations. In World War II, the media was not as divisive a factor as it is in today's environment. Great risks could be undertaken with little chance of blowback. Then, communication was slow and could be controlled/censored, whereas today it moves in real time. The military is no longer the sole authority in the control of information. Consequently, military public relations in World War II were largely proactive rather than reactive as it is today.

## **Panel 1—OSS Veteran Vignettes: *Challenges of OSS Operations***

Mr. Bill Mendel, JSOU Senior Fellow, Moderator

Messrs. Hugh Tovar, Art Frizzell, Caesar Civitella, and Art Reinhardt—OSS

### **Mr. Caesar Civitella, *The OSS Operational Groups***

Mr. Civitella presented an overview of the OSS OGs that included the mission, objectives and techniques, organization, selection and training, and missions conducted and concluded with OG characteristics that made them successful. The OG mission was to select foreign-language-speaking Army personnel and train them to operate as military units in enemy or enemy-held territories.

The OGs organized resistance groups into effective guerrilla units, equipped them with weapons and supplies, and led them in attacks against enemy targets. Mr. Civitella made the distinction that the OGs differed from the SO branch in that the OG did not participate in sabotage. OG personnel activated guerrillas as military organizations to engage enemy forces and always operated in uniform as military units.

The OGs had two primary objectives: to serve as the operational core of guerrilla organizations that had been formed from resistance groups in enemy territory and to execute independent operations against enemy targets. The OGs accomplished their objectives by training, equipping and supplying individuals unfamiliar with military operations as well as quasi-military organizations, and by coordinating OG missions with allied military plans. The end state was to aid allied military operations by harassing the enemy behind his lines—that is, disrupting his lines of communication and supply and by forcing him to divert troops to protect himself.

Mr. Civitella emphasized that recruiting, assessment, and peer evaluation were key to OG successes. Prospective OG personnel were selected from Army volunteers who not only met high physical standards but also possessed good judgment and stability and were daring. Additionally they were selected based on language and cultural awareness for the areas in which they would be operating. OG personnel underwent a 6-week training period in the U.S. where they focused on small unit tactics, field craft, weapons (Allied and Axis), foreign vehicle operation and maintenance, enemy espionage organizations, and organizing and training guerrilla forces.

Additional training was conducted overseas that oriented personnel to their area of operations while continuing military training in selected skills. Organizationally, the OG (led by a captain) was the basic field unit that consisted of 4 officers and 30 enlisted men that could be further broken down into two sections with two squads each. However, OGs frequently operated in sizes less than half the standard strength. Mr. Civitella emphasized the importance of peer evaluations that would eliminate misfits—personnel who would not be compatible with the OG values that were designed to build a strong sense of teamwork.

OGs operated in Norway, France (22), Italy (18), China (4), and Yugoslavia and Greece (8). In December 1944, OG strength was approximately 1,100 soldiers. Missions ranged from hit-and-run strikes to directing partisans in attacking enemy supply lines and rescuing downed pilots. When the OSS was disbanded in October 1945, OG personnel were transferred to the Army and later formed the nucleus of 10th Special Forces Group.

Keys to the successes of the OGs included integrity and stability through selection and training; teamwork facilitated through the use of peer evaluations; reliance on comrades; and less reliance on the military chain of command and more on individual leadership and skills. Mr. Civitella

concluded his remarks with his personal SOF lessons learned over a 43-year OSS/Special Forces/CIA career:

- a. Before handing out weapons to indigenous troops, conduct an eye exam.
- b. Language and cultural awareness are critical to mission success.
- c. Do *not* go native.
- d. It is a disservice to new SOF soldiers for Command Post Exercise (CPX) and Field Training Exercise (FTX) scenario writers to make every special operation score a touchdown.
- e. Psychological and peer assessments are paramount before going into a high-stress environment.

### **Mr. Art Frizzell, *Operational Group Emily***

Continuing the OG discussion, Mr. Frizzell discussed his experiences in the OSS to include his leading of OG Emily. Mr. Frizzell entered the Army as a private in November 1941. In early 1942 he went to Officer Candidate School and upon graduation, the OSS recruited him. He was called into an office to meet with the OSS representative who asked if he would volunteer for hazardous duty.

After special operations training at the OSS Base at the Congressional Country Club in Maryland, he was assigned to the newly formed French OG. In January 1942 Mr. Frizzell went overseas to Algeria to set up a camp for the first contingent of French OGs. He was later assigned as commander of Operation Emily (2 officers and 13 enlisted), with the mission to prevent German reinforcements from reaching the Normandy invasion area. The initial parachute insertion on 7 June 1944 was postponed after running into foul weather in French airspace, but the second attempt was successfully executed on the early morning of 10 June.

Upon parachuting into France, his OG met the Marquis reception committee, and OG Emily went to work. On the night of 12-13 June, OG Emily and a Marquis security team successfully blew up a railroad bridge slowing the movement of the 2nd Panzer Army into Normandy. OG Emily remained in France, supporting the resistance and receiving aerial supplies of arms and conducting subsequent training of the Marquis in their use. Follow-on missions included further attacks against the railroad infrastructure until his unit was overrun by the Allied landing in southern France.

OG Emily returned to the U.S. and was trained for their next assignment to China in the spring of 1945, serving there until October 1945.

Mr. Frizzell echoed the comments of his colleagues by observing that MG Donovan's OG philosophy was to recruit language capability and to use hit-and-run tactics.

### **Mr. Art Reinhardt, *OSS Operations in China***

Mr. Reinhardt was recruited by the OSS in May 1944 and received advanced training as a radio operator/cryptographer at the OSS Area C, a parkland tract at Dumfries, Virginia. He commented that there were deficiencies in his training. Notably there was not enough communications training—specifically, a lack of cryptographic training. Furthermore, he could not type and was not tested for his proficiency before deployment.

Mr. Reinhardt deployed to China in September 1944 and subsequently was assigned to the 5329th Air and Ground Forces Resources Technical Staff (AGFRTS), a joint OSS/14th Air Force unit created to provide intelligence targets for the 14th Air Force. It is interesting to note that AGFRTS was established because of difficulties working with the Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO), a Chinese-American effort to carry out espionage, special operations, and signals intelligence. Through his personal efforts,



Dr. Troy Sacquety with OSS veterans Messrs. Art Reinhardt, Hugh Tovar, and Caesar Civitella

MG Donovan found an ally in the 14th Air Force commander, General Claire Chennault, who needed better target intelligence for his bombers.

While conducting operations in China, Mr. Reinhardt noted that wireless stenography underpinned operations, and he had to overcome some significant challenges. For instance, he did not have antennae wire, thus scavenged a trailing wire antenna from an old B-24 bomber. Additionally, he developed new techniques for code that simplified procedures to enable communications through coded messages. Returning to his initial communications training, Mr. Reinhardt emphasized the importance of not exporting deficiencies/problems to the field.

One of his final assignments was to select an airport where the Japanese surrender ceremony in China would be held. Mr. Reinhardt prepared the airport at Shangja and had trenches and holes on the airfield filled in. Although the airfield was ready, the surrender ceremony did not happen there; Mr. Reinhardt reported that about 5 years ago he learned the reason was because the Japanese refused to surrender to the Chinese.

### **Mr. Hugh Tovar, *OSS Assessments in Indo-China***

Mr. Tovar shared his experiences as part of an OSS team, called Raven Team, which was sent into Indochina to assess the Japanese situation and search for prisoners of war. Raven Team was commanded by Major Aaron Bank and consisted of seven officers and one Chinese interpreter. Mr. Tovar provided some background on the events that had shaped the Indochina environment prior to Raven Team's arrival in September of 1945.

In 1942 the Japanese invaded Indochina and allowed the French/Vichy administration to remain. However, in March 1945 the Japanese imprisoned the French/Vichy administration. In July 1945, at the Potsdam Conference, it was decided that the Chinese would be responsible for Indochina (Laos and Vietnam) above the 16th Parallel with the British responsible for territory below it.

The Raven Team jumped into Vientiane, Laos from a C-47 in September 1945, and it quickly became apparent that the Japanese had left the area. From Vientiane, they went to Thailand/Siam and met with British and French representatives. Mr. Tovar noted that they seemed somewhat arrogant and the French did not know they were supposed to stay out of Indochina. Major Bank then went to Hanoi and, while there, met with Ho

Chi Minh. Mr. Tovar noted that the Japanese they encountered and Ho Chi Minh were polite.

One final incident occurred when a British SOE party, led by LT Peter Kemp and accompanied by a French officer, LT Klotz, and an OSS officer, LT Reese, crossed the Mekong River from Thailand/Siam into Laos. Although the French were supposed to stay out of Indochina, the French officer held the attitude that he was going into *French territory*. The party was later surrounded by a Viet Minh patrol that ultimately killed LT Klotz. The French subsequently blamed the U.S. for encouraging the killing of a French officer. Shortly after this incident, the Raven Team went home.

Mr. Tovar attributed initiative, dedication to mission, integrity, informed decision making, technical competence, and innovation as keys to their success. When asked about his personal experience regarding OSS selection and assessment, he noted that the OSS selected people who were compatible, often through the use of peer and psychological evaluations. This contributed to infectious camaraderie within the OSS.

## **Panel 2—Historian Viewpoints: *Strategic Impact of the OSS***

Dr. Troy Sacquety, USASOC OSS Historian, Moderator

Dr. John Chambers, Rutgers University

Dr. Bruce Reynolds, San Jose State University

Mr. Will Irwin

### **Dr. John W. Chambers, *OSS Training and Irregular Warfare***

Dr. Chambers began by providing the Department of Defense definition of *irregular warfare* as the violent struggle between state and nonstate actors for legitimacy and influence over particular populations. He then asserted that the OSS during World War II was involved in irregular warfare, particularly with the SO and OG branches, who aided indigenous resistance groups—nonstate actors—in insurgent guerrilla operations against the German and Japanese occupying regimes. The OSS then, like SOF today, dealt in intelligence, psychological operations, and direct action, and it is the direct action component that Dr. Chambers emphasized in his presentation: What was OSS training for SOs and OGs? What were its results? And what, if any,

relevance does that OSS direct action experience have for modern irregular warfare?

Dr. Chambers next briefly described the SO and OG branches. Recruits for both had to meet high physical requirements as well as rigorous mental and psychological standards of uncommon stability, judgment, daring and independent thinking. They were to speak the language and know the culture of the region in which they would operate, which Dr. Chambers credited as one of MG Donovan's great insights that helped gain the trust of the indigenous populations.

Both SOs and OGs engaged in irregular warfare, but SO generally worked in teams of two or three and often focused on particular acts of sabotage or subversion. (A select number of SO Branch agents were assigned to the three-man, multinational teams—Jedburgh teams—deployed in France and the Low Countries in the summer of 1944.) By contrast, OGs were organized into sections of 34 and half sections of 2 officers and 13 NCOs, including weapons and demolitions specialists, a shortwave radio operator, and a medic. The uniformed OG units were seen as military forces capable of longer and more sustained independent action. In practice, however, SOs and OGs often spent similar periods of time and engaged in the same kinds of missions by working with resistance groups.

The OSS direct action recruits also possessed a high aptitude and had already completed Army basic training. To weed out recruits who were not qualified physically or emotionally for the hazardous and unpredictable situations that faced OSS direct action operatives behind enemy lines, the OSS used a psychological assessment program. Not surprisingly, evaluation teams learned that, beyond the specific skills and training, what made an effective OSS direct action operator was a secure, capable, intelligent, and creative person who could deal effectively with uncertainty and considerable stress.

The OSS conducted basic training stateside that, because of pressure to produce direct action personnel, was initially 3 to 4 weeks in length but later expanded to 6 to 8 weeks. Personnel also received advanced training overseas in the combat theaters in which they were planning to operate. The overseas training included combat-experienced instructors; contact with the regional languages and cultures; and exposure to the political, economic, and military situations. Physical conditioning meant not just calisthenics

but challenging exercises testing the limits of stamina and nerve. Because of the OSS emphasis on individual prowess, initiative and self-reliance, close combat (e.g., hand-to-hand) was a major feature of the training.

Weapons training, on both Allied and Axis weapons, was likewise emphasized. The OSS replaced the standard marksmanship training in favor of practical combat shooting. Instead of carefully aimed firing at a fixed bull's-eye, trainees shot quickly/instinctively at pop-up targets of human silhouettes—at times in pistol houses or indoor mystery ranges under varying degrees of light with sound effects and moving objects—to test the moral fiber of the student and to develop his courage and capacity for self-control.

For sabotage training, OSS trainees were taught the use and placement of explosives on various types of targets. Students also conducted escape, evasion and survival techniques, field exercises, and clandestine radio-procedure training. A common theme of training was the use of realistic field exercises.

The OSS stateside training had its weaknesses, particularly in its early evolutions. One flaw was inadequate instruction in how to organize and work with indigenous populations, especially non-Europeans, and how to handle resistance groups, particularly those with diverse factions and conflicting political agendas. Returning OSS combat veterans commented there had been too much *cloak and dagger* in their training instead of what should be more matter-of-fact.

On the positive side, many OSS direct action members attributed much of their success to their training. They commonly cited the advantages of physical conditioning, specific skills, the building of confidence in themselves and the organization, as well as their sense of importance of their mission. Dr. Chambers noted that MG Singlaub, who served as a young SO officer in France and China, said that his training developed a confident and aggressive state of mind or attitude that gave him the ability to concentrate on the mission and not his personal safety.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower noted that indigenous resistance movements—mobilized, supplied, and directed in irregular warfare by SOs and OGs—made important contributions and helped the Allies achieve victory sooner and with fewer Allied casualties. Impressive results were produced by direct action-oriented SOs and OGs and their indigenous forces from French and Italian partisans in Europe to Kachin tribesmen in Burma.

Clearly the OSS had a multiplier effect, dramatically intensifying the fighting power of the Allied forces. In France a couple of hundred OSS agents armed and organized 20,000 civilians in the resistance. Across the European continent, SOs and OGs, working with local partisans, interdicted enemy lines of communication and supply; impeded the movement of enemy reinforcements against the Allies; alerted fighter bombers to troop concentrations, hidden depots, and emplacements; rescued downed airmen; and tied down tens of thousands of German troops who were searching for them in France, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Norway.

In Asia the OSS and their indigenous forces in Burma and China performed similarly against thousands of Japanese. In China a force of only 2,000 American OSS members was credited with killing more than 12,000 Japanese soldiers. In Burma fewer than 200 Americans from Detachment 101 parachuted into the jungles to direct some 10,000 Kachin and other tribesmen. These results, and more, were accomplished by an OSS that in total numbered between 13,000 and 22,000 and, more precisely, by SO and OG components that probably did not exceed a few thousand Americans, the latter smaller than a single Army brigade.

Dr. Chambers concluded by discussing the relevance of the OSS experience in irregular warfare. Although OSS had its supporters, President Harry S. Truman eliminated the OSS after World War II, integrating many of its branches and functions into the U.S. military and government. However, within a few years two new entities—the CIA and the Army's Special Forces—adopted many elements of the OSS model, including its training methods and recruited many OSS veterans. In 1952, the Army adopted OSS OG training manuals when it began training the Army's new Special Forces.

OSS selection, assessment, and training methods remain applicable. Today's SOF engaged in irregular warfare still require individuals who are bold, daring, innovative, and capable of independent judgment, thought, and action. Also, special operations personnel still benefit by extensive regional knowledge of the languages and cultures where they operate. And of course training still emphasizes top physical conditioning, exceptional proficiency in weaponry, demolition, unarmed combat, field craft and wilderness survival, and the kind of powerful self-confidence and determination so characteristic, and so crucial to success, of an elite military organization.

In irregular warfare, the attitudes of the civilian population are crucial. In World War II the OSS succeeded in mobilizing insurgencies against unpopular occupying forces and regimes in countries where the population overwhelmingly supported the American/Allied effort—for example, in France, Italy, Greece, Norway, Burma, and China. But in areas where the population did not support the Allies or where the Axis regimes were in complete control, OSS efforts to create and direct insurgencies failed—for example, in Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria, where the local population would not or could not protect the infiltrated teams, whose locations were often reported to the enemy.

However, the OSS model of SO and insurgency has continued to prove successful in areas where the insurgents are supported by the population and the occupying regime is widely despised. For example, in the 1980s in Afghanistan, the CIA Special Activities Division and the U.S. Army's Special Forces successfully mobilized indigenous groups and helped drive the Soviet Army out of the country. A decade later those units were the first U.S. forces sent back into Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001.

The CIA and Special Forces worked with the Northern Alliance as a force multiplier that, in combination with U.S. air attacks and conventional forces, toppled the Taliban in Afghanistan. In 2003 in Iraq, CIA and Special Forces worked successfully with the Kurdish *pesh merga*, providing assistance to conventional forces in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship. Thus the OSS-styled employment of indigenous guerrilla organizations continues to be of considerable value to conventional forces in the defeat of unpopular, repressive regimes.

Dr. Chambers noted that it is more difficult, however, to determine whether the OSS experience is relevant to counterinsurgency operations. The OSS had helped insurgents against Axis regimes. But when insurgents threaten U.S. interests and friendly governments, and the U.S. military is called upon to assist those governments to work against an insurgency, can OSS-type SO be useful in such counterinsurgency campaigns?

Stateless insurgents often have the tactical advantages of mobility, invisibility, and ruthlessness. Once again what is crucial is the attitude of the population, or rather populations, since the insurgents seek not only to control the local population but also to exhaust the will of other nations like the United States that lead the effort to contain or destroy the insurgency.

### **Mr. Will Irwin, *The Jedburgh Experience and Its Relevance in the 21st Century***

Mr. Irwin's presentation began by explaining the Jedburgh concept, continued with how the Jedburgh force was built and prepared, then followed with a summary of operations and results. He concluded with thoughts on how to leverage the Jedburgh legacy.

The Jedburgh concept was first proposed by the British SOE in May 1942. It was to be a military Special Forces unit composed of one British officer, one target-country officer, and one radio operator. This three-man team's mission was to deploy behind enemy lines to organize, train, equip, and advise resistance groups in guerrilla warfare and to serve as a communications link between the resistance and the Allied high command. The OSS was later invited to participate, with an early draft concept review by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in August 1942, General Eisenhower's endorsement in September, and the formal SOE-OSS agreement signed in January 1943.

Recruiting began in September of 1943. Potential Jedburgh candidates were recruited based on leadership, daring, language proficiency, physical conditioning, small arms skill, and having received basic military training. Training in the U.S. was 3-weeks long and conducted at Area F, the Congressional Country Club, where assessment and selection were made. From there, the training and selections shifted to Area B, the Catoctin Mountains. Upon arriving overseas, additional training was conducted in the United Kingdom (Scotland), Milton Hall, and Ringway where OSS personnel were trained on parachuting from Royal Air Force (RAF) bombers.

Jedburgh operations were initially focused on the Allied invasion of Europe: Operation Overlord. The Allies needed a beachhead secured in Normandy to allow for the buildup of forces before going on the offensive, an effort estimated to take 5 to 6 weeks. The Germans had 58 divisions in France and were deemed capable of moving about 31 divisions to Normandy by D+25. The three means of deterring/delaying the movement of German divisions were by deception (Operation Fortitude), a Transportation Plan (bombing of key rail systems and bridges), and the French Resistance.

During Phase I of operations, the French Resistance would contribute to the Transportation Plan, then transition to Phase II operations of guerrilla warfare behind the German lines. The Jedburghs were to infiltrate by parachute into France, meet up with the French Resistance (or Marquis),

facilitate the French Resistance sabotage of transportation nodes, coordinate their efforts with Allied headquarters, and resupply the French Resistance. The Jedburghs were supported in their efforts by the F Section Circuits that were established in France beginning in 1943. The F Section Circuits conducted covert paramilitary operations; organized and trained the underground; identified drop zones, landing zones, and safe houses; and conducted some industrial sabotage.

Of the 478 F Section Agents sent to France, 132 were killed or arrested. There were 87 Jedburgh teams sent into France; of those 276 Jedburgh personnel, 17 were killed, 18 wounded, and 4 captured. After supporting the D-day operations, the Jedburghs remained in the field conducting Phase II operations until overrun by Allied forces. Of the 32 Jedburghs who participated in Operation Market Garden—the Allied attempt, using the largest Airborne force ever, to flank the Siegfried line, capture the industrial Ruhr valley, and end World War II in Europe before the end of 1944—4 were killed, 5 wounded, and 3 captured.

An overarching Jedburgh theme would be leveraging a small force for large returns, but the Jedburghs also provided valuable intelligence. Mr. Irwin presented vignettes from World War II commanders to illustrate the following:

What cut ice with us was the fact that when we came to France the resistance was so effective that it took half a dozen real live German divisions to contend with it, divisions which might otherwise have been on our backs in the Bocage. – Ralph Ingersoll, planning officer on General Bradley's 12th Army Group Staff

Over 30,000 armed FFI [French Forces of the Interior] rendered invaluable fighting and intelligence aid to the spearheads. These unknown and humble resistance combatants, fighting heroically and effectively, deserve undying tribute for their great contribution to this crucial victory. – Colonel Robert Allen, staff officer at General Patton's Third Army Headquarters

We had expected a good deal of assistance from them, and we were not disappointed. Their knowledge of the country, of enemy disposi-

tions and movements, was invaluable, and their fighting ability was extraordinary. – LTG Lucien Truscott, U.S. Corps commander.

In no previous war, and in no other theater during this war, have resistance forces been so closely harnessed to the main military effort. – General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied commander.

Mr. Irwin stated that the Jedburgh legacy is to use the OSS and the Jedburgh project as models of innovation and to revisit the lost art of applying the lessons of history to contemporary events. He concluded with imperatives/recommendations:

- a. We need creative and unfettered minds.
- b. It is wasteful to replicate unconventional warfare capability throughout the military.
- c. Make Special Forces joint.
- d. Unconventional warfare doctrine should be joint and interagency doctrine.
- e. Area studies are important and we need more of them (e.g., anthropologists, economists, and theologians), perhaps within USSOCOM?
- f. All successful military leaders are students of history.
- g. We need to study history to use as analogies, to analyze against, and to know how people will perceive our actions.

### **Dr. Bruce Reynolds, *Strategic Operations in Asia***

Dr. Reynolds discussed OSS strategic operations in Asia by looking at activities in China, Indochina/Vietnam, and Thailand. He stated that OSS operations in Asia were not central to the ultimate success in World War II. However, he went on to demonstrate that the OSS presented strategic opportunities that the United States either chose to pursue or disregard in favor of other options. These decisions had enormous strategic impacts that shaped the world in 1945, and we continue to live with the impacts of those decisions today.

In China the OSS participated in the Dixie Mission, an effort to assess the Chinese communists and People's Liberation Army in the communist stronghold of Yen-an. The purposes were to evaluate potential Chinese communist contributions in defeating Japan and to see what was going

on. Some members of the mission became convinced that the Chinese communists would win power in China and thought it in the U.S. interest to develop relations with the communists. Chiang Kai-shek, however, objected, particularly to the idea of providing arms to the communists. Washington proved unwilling to force the issue, the mission ultimately failed to achieve any strategic purpose, and it became politically controversial.

The next area in Asia discussed was Vietnam/Indochina. Near the end of the war OSS had personnel in Indochina that were working with the known communist Ho Chi Minh and his Viet Minh organization to gather intelligence on Japanese activities. OSS members developed a rapport with Ho Chi Minh, who viewed the U.S. as sympathetic to his cause because of President Roosevelt's negative attitude toward French colonialism. However, after Roosevelt's death, President Truman adopted an Europeanist view and supported France's post-World War II efforts to reestablish control in Indochina. Accordingly, efforts to develop relations with Ho Chi Minh failed.

The final Asia operation presented was Thailand. In Thailand the OSS infiltrated and trained U.S./Thai agents for SI and SO purposes. SI provided intelligence and influenced Thai government decision making, and SO prepared and armed guerrillas for an uprising against the Japanese. Both of these initiatives contributed to a favorable U.S. position with Thailand, both in the near and long term.

Dr. Reynolds then examined why the Thai operation succeeded where the others failed. He began by listing the favorable circumstances. Thailand had been independent before the war, thus the U.S. could claim equal right to operate there since it was not a former European colony. Thailand had also made an alliance with Japan early in the war and needed to get out of it. Further, as part of Thailand's entry into World War II, Thailand, under pressure from the Japanese, had declared war on Great Britain and the U.S.; however, of the two, only the British declared war on Thailand.

The Japanese used Thailand as a logistics base and did not act aggressively against the underground; finally, communism was not an issue in the country. Against this backdrop there was the OSS itself, which Dr. Reynolds asserts possessed an organizational determination to do great things. This was characterized at a critical moment by the decision of Colonel Richard Heppner, the commander of Detachment 404, to put agents into Thailand without British approval.

Although American military commanders in the region were skeptical of the OSS operations in Thailand, OSS enjoyed support from the Asian section of the State Department. Although the latter was unable to prevail over their more influential European counterparts regarding reimposition of European colonial rule in Southeast Asia, the Asian specialists were able to insist on supporting a free and independent Thailand. The combined OSS-State Department effort led to favorable relations with Thailand, an independent Thailand after the war, and an American foothold in mainland Southeast Asia.

Dr. Reynolds closed his remarks with three threads common to operations in Asia: they all involved coalition warfare; success was about the people involved—their determination and creativity; and all initiatives involved an economy of force—leveraging a small force for potential large strategic returns.

### **Major General (Ret.) John Singlaub Remarks**

MG (Ret.) Singlaub began with a brief summary of his OSS and military experience. As part of a Jedburgh team, he parachuted into France to support D-day operations. As the war in Europe came to a close, he transferred to Indochina where he trained guerrilla forces and, at the conclusion of the war, conducted a prisoner-of-war (POW) rescue. His post-war assignments included two tours in Korea and work with the CIA. MG (Ret.) Singlaub noted that we are losing people from World War II, and we need to preserve their history and lessons. He did not refer to them as lessons learned but as *lessons available to learn*. He spoke of four such lessons:

- a. The first is “make certain bureaucrats do not get involved in operational decisions.” He provided the example of the Jedburgh teams operating in France. The teams were not getting answers to their requests for resupply, which was causing the Jeds to lose face with the resistance. The reason they had difficulty was because “all the operational personnel went to the continent and left the bureaucrats in charge... who, for some reason, decided to only answer requests submitted in French.”
- b. The second is a caution against “the popular belief that you can reduce the amount of thinking if you can develop a system that works.” As

an example, what the OSS did in France did not work in China. The OSS assumed the Jedburgh concept would work in Indochina, but OSS personnel were killed upon arrival on the drop zone. The human capacities to assess, plan, and act remain essential to success.

- c. The third is that “sometimes commo [communications] is too good.” He compared Lewis and Clark’s expedition where they did not have communications and could focus on the mission to Desert One, where every phase had to be reported back before proceeding to the next.
- d. The fourth is “don’t allow compassion or humanitarian concerns to rob you of resistance fighters.” To illustrate this point, he discussed the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War. The military situation was going poorly, and the U.S. sent word to the locals to move south. Later when the U.S. went in to conduct special activities in the North, the prior migration south had removed potential resisters. He also mentioned a similar situation in Vietnam, where few to no sources remained in the North to use for resistance or intelligence.

He closed with the remarks that people who struggle against oppressive regimes are better resistance fighters, they appreciate their freedoms, and create an environment where they take ownership of their freedoms and their situations.



OSS veteran Mr. Walter Mess with MG (Ret.) John Singlaub

## 4 November 2009 Session

### Admiral Eric Olson, *Future Challenges of Irregular War*

ADM Olson's comments contained both an update on the current status of the USSOCOM and a discussion of the relationship between the activities and lessons of the OSS and today's SOF community. He established a connection with the *pillars* of the 10th Group (1952) who pursued unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency operations and PSYOPS, indicating that those efforts helped to create part of the linkage with the OSS model that persists today.

He also addressed the need to re-find some of our roots in such areas as language proficiency, regional expertise, the ability to move among the indigenous people, building trust and confidence, medical support, and infrastructure development.

The admiral recognized the effectiveness achieved by the OSS in understanding how intelligence and operations worked together and said that we are getting back to that now. He also noted the OSS success in figuring out things that never had been done before.

Noting that USSOCOM is now fully *joint*, the admiral echoed earlier descriptions of the OSS experience when he reported that the list of what we do expands all the time. He also spoke of the continuing need to educate about the proper uses of SOF.

He reminded the attendees that SOF is not a toolset; it's a mindset. He went on to address the complexity of the SOF role by pointing out that SOF is "not a community of Rambo's ... SOF is much more subtle and nuanced."



Adm Eric T. Olson speaking on *Future Challenges of Irregular Warfare*

He touched on the difficulties encountered when developing regional and language expertise, acknowledging that it is not possible to sprinkle language dust on everyone.

The admiral discussed his Project Lawrence initiative as an effort to identify, recruit, train, and manage those most motivated and best qualified for carrying out SOF responsibilities. Once again, the linkage to the OSS experience is clear with today's efforts to identify, recruit, and train the very best personnel available.

He noted that SOF were victorious over the Taliban using a relative handful of personnel who worked by, with and through the Northern Alliance and other indigenous forces. The admiral expanded his thoughts on relationship building, reporting that the brotherhood is strong among the international SOF community and those relationships help produce success in a wide variety of settings.

He then expanded the notion of cross-cultural communication to include the very collaborative environment of the interagency community to include the USSOCOM involvement in Special Operations Support Teams (SOSTs), Joint Interagency Task Forces (JIATFs), and other interactive bodies.

### **Panel 3—*Future Security Challenges***

Mr. Joe Celeski, JSOU Senior Fellow, Moderator  
BG (Ret.) Russ Howard  
Mr. David Hopley (U.K.)  
Mr. John Tsagronis

This panel tackled the requirement to survey the contemporary international security environment, assess its threats and opportunities, and project into the future a vision for dealing with them. Once again, the members of the panel noted the many similarities between the situations facing the OSS and contemporary SOF. Mr. Tsagronis's comments echo many of those expressed in what follows, but are not contained in this report.

#### **BG (Ret.) Russ Howard**

BG (Ret.) Howard presented a detailed survey of both nonstate and state actors. Emphasizing an important distinction between the environments faced by the OSS and contemporary SOF, he concluded that nonstate actors

will form the primary threat for at least the next decade. He also pointed out that the linkages among terrorist networks; drug, weapons, and human traffickers; and criminal cartels are increasingly becoming the norm in today's international security environment.

Such nonstate actors tend to thrive in ungoverned spaces, denied (sanctuary) areas, and within failed or failing states. Their presence and activities tend to destabilize further such areas, creating conditions under which local populations become increasingly impoverished and subject to conflict.

He addressed the concerns over so-called *rogue states* that can present direct security threats to the United States and the wider international community. They are frequently involved with promoting terrorism, developing and proliferating weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and providing support for various nonstate actors in the form of sanctuaries, finance, training, weapons, and professional expertise.

He specifically cited North Korea—whose increasing belligerence, economic chaos, and further withdrawal into isolation could result in the starvation deaths of 2 million of its citizens this year—and Iran—with its ongoing post-election instability, continuing support of insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the lack of resolution of concerns over its nuclear programs—as examples of such states.

BG (Ret.) Howard went on to discuss *problematic states*. While not typically developing and exporting WMD, such places often brutalize their own people and squander their national resources for the personal gain of those in power, reject basic human values, and are not open to conventional methods of negotiation and diplomacy.

He also spoke in traditional terms of the emerging powers of Russia and China:

- a. Specific points about Russia included its substantial nuclear force, sizeable military, continued development of modern weaponry, and increasingly assertive foreign and security policies in such places as Georgia.
- b. China has invested in more than a decade of double-digit increases in defense spending, pursued accelerated missile and space programs, sought to acquire advanced Russian systems, succeeded in generating many years of surging economic growth and expansion, demonstrated increased diplomatic influence, and provided large-scale financial aid

and technical assistance to developing countries with an emphasis on Africa.

Both cases, and a few others, represent a more traditional state-based analysis of international security concerns.

BG (Ret.) Howard then considered a range of complicating factors, beginning with globalization. One view of globalization argues that it has already resulted in improving the functioning of the global economy and will increase in its importance as an engine for worldwide economic growth and a factor in decreasing poverty in affected regions.

Contrary views argue that globalization in fact increases the disparity between winners and losers with the losers residing in a vast *arc of instability* that stretches from the Caribbean, through Africa, the Middle East, and Central and Southeast Asia. Some believe that grievances caused by globalization constitute many of the root causes for today's terrorism in the forms of worker exploitation, increased poverty, and the replacement of ancient cultures with Western consumerism.

Technology also has become a two-edged sword. On the one hand, advances in nanotechnology, robotics, genomics, and biotechnology assist in building government capacities for addressing medical, nutritional, environmental, transportation, and other concerns that help build stability and legitimacy as hedges against terrorists and other nonstate actors.

That same technology, however, is also available to those who would seek to do harm by facilitating the exchange of information, command and control, financial fraud and manipulation, recruitment and training, and the acquisition of the knowledge of sophisticated weapons to include WMD.

Emerging demographics, including both the decline and growth of populations, are also of increasing importance. For instance, the explosive growth in the number of people in specific regions, especially along the arc of instability, presents serious concerns because research has established that the majority of civil conflicts occur in countries with large youth populations.

Climate change is another issue containing national security implications. In addition to increasingly severe weather events, worldwide climate change also leads to an intense competition for increasingly scarce resources. Rising energy costs threaten economic activity, especially in poorer countries and regions. While climate change concerns have spurred development

of alternative energy sources, there are no substitutes for water, which is in decreasing supply, and food. Both drought and growing populations competing for available stores of water result in diminishing supplies of food and eventual starvation. The instability created by those factors is a major concern wherever it occurs.

BG (Ret.) Howard concluded by identifying the implications of the evolving international security environment for SOF. He concluded that SOF will find themselves operating regularly within the arc of instability and in various failed and failing states. Drawing a link to many OSS experiences in World War II, he assessed these areas as being typically austere and have limited logistics, transportation, and communications infrastructures.

Further drawing parallels with the OSS, he suggested the need for SOF to be more self-sufficient for logistics and intelligence. Echoing a familiar theme, he emphasized the need for knowledge of the operating environment, local culture, the local population, and the nature of the conflict. In addressing measures of effectiveness, BG (Ret.) Howard noted that accomplishing the mission without the application of force may be the key to success.

### **Colonel (Ret.) David A. Hopley OBE RM**

Colonel (Ret.) Hopley presented a detailed analysis of future security challenges to include what he calls *possible* security drivers and *likely* security drivers that are joined together by notional future timelines.

Possible security drivers include peak oil pricing; a decline in the availability of natural resources; climate change and the consequences of ineffective responses from the international community; the continued rise in religious extremism; the destabilization of nation states that leads to regional conflict and wider instability in such places as Nigeria, the Sudan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan; population migration as a result of competition for natural resources, instability, and other factors; the importation of extremism through unmanaged migration; and the Chinese acquisition of global resources and the means to exploit and defend them.

Likely security drivers include religious extremism and hate propaganda; terrorism; hydro-politics that emerge because of the increasing scarcities of water; resource protection and global food security; nuclear proliferation; chemical, biological, radiological, and various nuclear threats; and cyber warfare and distributed network attacks.

He then proposed three possible timelines to animate how these various threats might work together into the future.

Timeline	Description
2009 to 2015	<p>Oil prices are driven up by the increasing realization that peak oil has occurred, a consequential lack of new investments to replace reserves, and the heavy burden of new resource exploitation leads, all leading to volatile national security positions.</p> <p>Increasing concern over the availability of water and resources, first in the Middle East and East Africa, but eventually spreading into Asia and Far East.</p> <p>Localized conflicts threaten to spill over into wider arenas.</p>
2015 to 2025	<p>Increased security needs for protection of energy and food reserves, global teaming (a New Great Game), and the rush for alternatives led by nuclear-industry-threatening proliferation.</p> <p>Impact on the integrity of nation states (the United Kingdom embraces the European Union too late, then does so on detrimental terms).</p> <p>China and Russia seek alliances against the West, resulting in Cold War II.</p> <p>Pakistan destabilises further, resulting in an Indian military response.</p> <p>Afghanistan participates in the export of Brand Taliban.</p>
2025 to 2050	<p>The realization that climate change is irreversible leads to wide-spread social insecurity, population migration, and the rise of religious extremism.</p> <p>The recognition of a Chinese stranglehold on strategic energy reserves and supply chains generates a need to adapt to a new world order led by the Far East.</p> <p>The Far West emerges as the Center of Gravity of global power changes as the U.S. in particular seeks to protect its national interests.</p>

Related future security challenges include the following:

- a. The Blame Game—that is, Christians and Apostates are accused of stealing Muslim oil, food, water, and other essential resources.
- b. The intent to widen the Islamic Caliphate into mainstream Africa, then eventually to Europe.
- c. An encouragement to Muslims worldwide to become extremists/activists, especially if NATO is still in Afghanistan in the unwinnable war.

He continued by discussing in greater detail the specifics of the threats posed within these timelines.

Threats	Description
Hydro-politics	<p>The world is running out of water.</p> <p>Nations are already seeking to control water flows for national self-interest: Turkey, Iran, Syria, Israel, and China.</p> <p>Dams are already seen as legitimate targets; their destruction or compromise could be catastrophic.</p>
Resource protection and global food security	<p>Maritime, land, and air supply-chain protection.</p> <p>Asset tracking and asset security, specifically protection of:</p> <p>Strategic supply depots and stores</p> <p>Strategic fuel stocks and supply mechanisms</p> <p>Critical national infrastructure.</p>
CBRN and dangers of proliferation	<p>Israel already has a nuclear capability, a Jordanian nuclear program exists, and Iran is volatile and unstable.</p> <p>Other Middle East countries likely to follow.</p> <p>Threat of extremists gaining chemical and biological capabilities.</p>
Cyber warfare and distributed network attacks likely to increase	<p>Countries are increasingly reliant on the Internet: banking, bureaucracy, industry, and utilities.</p> <p>Critical national infrastructure attacks are likely to increase, especially in the U.S.</p> <p>Cyber warfare is difficult to stop as they take various forms: viruses, trojans, malware, bot armies, DDOS attacks.</p> <p>Such attacks are very cheap and simple to organise and execute.</p> <p>Huge bang for buck: efficient and effective effects.</p>

In preparing to confront these threats, the SOF community faces, among others, the following challenges:

- a. The mistaken perception that SOF is the solution to all problems. There are times when you receive resources you do not need to perform tasks you do not want. For instance, the United Kingdom has a fixed number of SOF and do not want more.
- b. It is necessary to be realistically honest in confronting these threats because we must, not simply because we can.

- c. It is essential to match capabilities with the indigenous forces with which SOF works. For instance, partisans cannot call for B-52 strikes. As the OSS recognized, you must fight with what you have and augment as feasible.
- d. Technology is an enabler, not a panacea. Do not allow technology to erode the risk-taking that is essential to success.

### **Panel 4—*Applicability of the OSS Model***

Mr. Jeff Nelson, JSOU Senior Fellow, Moderator

MG (Ret.) Geoff Lambert

Mr. Mark Nutsch

Mr. Dave Duffy

AMB (Ret.) David Greenlee

LTC Dean Newman

The fourth and final panel was tasked to examine the applicability of the OSS model to the current and future challenges of irregular warfare.

#### **Ambassador (Ret.) David Greenlee**

Ambassador (Ret.) Greenlee spoke in detail about the complexity SOF face when they are deployed and seeking out nodes for coordination within their areas of operation. Earlier, Admiral Olson and both OSS and contemporary veterans also spoke of those coordination requirements while conducting operations.

At the heart of the challenge lies the reality that no single department or agency of the U.S. Government is able to address all tasks on its own. The focus on a wider, whole-of-government approach as exercised through the interagency process has become the uneven path for cooperation and coordination within the U.S. Government.

Beyond that, experience teaches that no single nation is capable of achieving success by operating on its own, thus requiring relationship building and cooperation with allies, coalition partners, host-nation officials and agencies, intergovernmental organizations and nongovernmental organizations.

Ambassador (Ret.) Greenlee first addressed the implications of the role of the interagency process through the U.S. ambassador and the country team that serves as the ambassador's cabinet and contains representatives of the

major U.S. Government departments and agencies back home. Also called the chief of mission (COM), the ambassador serves as the representative of the President of the United States.

He pointed out that it is essential that the ambassador be kept in the loop as no ambassador wants operations or exercises to take place that distort policy and undermine relations with the host nation. The ambassador's recommendation was to avoid acrimony by establishing a dialogue early and sustaining it.

Ambassador (Ret.) Greenlee then went on to discuss in some detail the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). As with the country team, the presence of the S/CRS structure has important implications for deployed SOF. Like the country team, there is a clear requirement for SOF to work closely with the S/CRS to gain maximum effects from ongoing activities and to coordinate with the S/CRS and other similar organizations for limiting duplication and friction.

He briefly addressed the components of the S/CRS, which contains staffing representation from the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Defense, U.S. Corps of Engineers, the Department of Justice, and the U.S. Joint Forces Command. Coordinative relationships exist with more than a dozen other agencies throughout the U.S. Government.

The ambassador also briefly mentioned the establishment of the Civilian Response Corps of the United States of America. In addition to State Department agencies, U.S. Government interagency partners include the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, and the Department of the Treasury.

There will be three levels of participation:

- a. Core of 250 full-time positions who can deploy within 48 hours
- b. Standby force of 2,000 trained members who are federal employees and deployable within 30 days for up to 180 days
- c. Reserve force of 2,000 volunteers recruited from the private sector and state and local governments to provide skills not typically available within the U.S. Government.

The existence of the Civilian Response Corps is of interest to SOF operators because it would seem inevitable that contact will take place

within the area of operations. As with any interagency coordination, the ambassador and his country team remain the primary focal point for SOF coordination.

### **Mr. Mark Nutsch**

Mr. Nutsch's presentation addressed the activities and lessons learned from the first U.S. military unit on the ground within Afghanistan. They deployed with the very general, OSS-sounding mission to "... conduct unconventional warfare (UW) in support of General Dostum in order to render UW operational areas unsafe for Taliban and terrorist organizations."

When the Special Forces arrived, the three major indigenous leaders in the area—Dostum (Uzbeks), Atta (Tajiks), and Mohaqq (Shia)—fielded forces with fewer than 3,000 armed fighters. Dostum had been developing his campaign plan for several months, and that plan became the basis of the coalition operation.

The Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) joined up with Dostum and mounted horses to travel to his encampment. Echoing an OSS lesson repeated by Colonel Hopley earlier—you must fight with what you have—the ODA commander reported, "the men attack with ten AK-47 bullets per man, machine gunners with less than 100 rounds, and with less than five rounds per rocket launcher. They have little water and less food." He went on to express a level of amazement, "I am advising a man on how to best employ light infantry and horse cavalry in the attack against Taliban tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery, antiaircraft guns, mortars and machine guns ..."

Addressing measures of effectiveness, the ODA commander reported that on 5 November 2001, "with American bombs literally in the air, Commander Lai's cavalry charged the key defensive positions at Baluch to overrun and destroy the enemy." On 10 November, the ODA arrived in Mazar-e Sharif with the Northern Alliance as *liberators* through cheering crowds lining the streets. After 10 November, six northern provinces had collapsed, and by 17 November all major Afghan cities had fallen to the Northern Alliance with the exception of Kandahar, which was abandoned on 7 December, and Konduz that fell on 26 November.

The effects of the Special Forces efforts were clear: "I have ridden 15 miles a day since arriving, yet everywhere I go the civilians and the *muj* soldiers

are always telling me they are glad the USA has come. They all speak of their hopes for a better Afghanistan once the Taliban are gone.”

Mr. Nutsch then addressed three categories of lessons learned with clear linkages to the OSS:

- a. The first of these is what he called *shared interdependence*. Chief among these was the importance of relationship building and operational integration with the Northern Alliance Resistance Groups. Key to this structure was the ability to draw on human intelligence that derived from on-the-ground knowledge of the indigenous SOF counterparts. He also spoke about the interagency aspects of the operations to include interface with other U.S. Government agencies affecting authorities to take action, aerial strike capability, air and battlefield resupply, and collective maneuver force abilities.
- b. Under the title of *capability of Special Forces NCOs and officers*, Mr. Nutsch resurrected a theme discussed often by the OSS veterans: that of working entirely from the commander’s intent. This allowed the team to rely on the decentralized execution of tasks to gain maximum effects from the operation. The fact that the team was dispersed over long distances under austere conditions required that each member be adaptable to the situation and to have a developed mindset to take advantage of the various technical- and tactical-skill sets each member brought to the fight. The problem-solving skills of each team member were tested regularly. Given their reliance on the indigenous forces, cultural awareness and language skills were essential as was the patience to develop a strong rapport with both their counterparts and the local populace.
- c. The third area of interest involved conducting *tactical operations with strategic implications*. Mr. Nutsch began with the fact that Special Forces operations in Afghanistan relied on 12-to-14-man elements that were employed as force multipliers. As the ODA commander noted, they carried the weight of U.S. foreign policy in our rucksacks. Employing two ODAs and one other interagency asset, they were able to liberate Mazar-e Sharif and six northern provinces in about a month, actions that served as a catalyst for the rapid collapse of the Taliban and their regime throughout Afghanistan. Finally, their approach to

relationship building among the Afghan people helped establish an enduring rapport with the people and their counterparts.

Mr. Nutsch's comments and recounting of the events of 2001 in Northern Afghanistan provided strong evidence for those who argued that the OSS model has strong relevancy to contemporary conditions. The skillful execution of tactical operations resulted in clearly measured success within the operational area that then spread throughout the region and, finally, the entire country.

### **LTC Dean Newman**

LTC Newman began with the admonishment that we should not expect the context and circumstances of past irregular warfare successes like the OSS and the early Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to be replicated. It is important to analyze historical case studies, but to study the successes achieved, not to assume future applicability.

In understanding irregular warfare, it is important to remember that in successes like the OSS and OEF, the strategies and the campaign planning behind them were limited. LTC Newman pointed out that the term *limited* is frequently misunderstood and results in making both military and political leaders uncomfortable and even scared while often resulting in rejection by the American public as not acceptable.

At its essence, a major goal of such operations is to “wear down your opponents and seek out strategic effects.” He identified several propositions to guide the understanding and discussion of irregular warfare:

- a. Irregular warfare and its limited strategies are viable so long as those limitations affect our enemies rather than ourselves. Make it the enemy's long hard slog, not ours.
- b. Irregular warfare fought under our conditions is different than irregular warfare forced upon us under someone else's conditions.
- c. The limited strategies of irregular warfare increase our warfighting options against our enemies. The first cognitive challenge of understanding irregular warfare is that limitations are advantages, not disadvantages.
- d. The amalgamation of small, unpredictable, carefully chosen, winnable, and tactical surrogate engagements that are strategically linked only by desired effects can comprise an effective strategy of exhaustion.

- e. Developing surrogates capable of carrying out strategies of annihilation is rare. The limited capabilities of surrogates make operations against enemy resources a better option. The strategic targeting of resources equates to a strategy of exhaustion.
- f. Today's enemies are themselves often irregular, including nonstate actors and many potential adversaries within the order of battle of current states of concern. Since these irregular adversaries often lack resources, a strategy of exhaustion from U.S.-backed irregulars focuses on the adversary's Achilles' heel.
- g. The prescriptive use of irregular warfare allows us to turn an asymmetric conflict where regular forces face irregular enemies into a symmetrical one where irregular surrogates target irregular enemies.
- h. Use irregulars where their skill sets and mission parameters are decisive at the tactical level, but where decisive results at the strategic level are not required ... or are discouraged. Avoid strategies of annihilation, destruction, or unconditional surrender. Seek strategies to disrupt, deny, subvert, deceive, delay, attrit, sabotage, wear down, and exhaust.

He went on to cite several historical examples including the OSS efforts in Western Europe during which the OSS was not there to decisively defeat the German Army, but to disrupt, delay, sabotage, and subvert. Similarly, during the early stages of OEF, Special Forces were not there to eliminate Al Qaeda, but instead to render Afghanistan no longer a safe haven for terrorism. That would include efforts to deny Al Qaeda sanctuary in space or population.

LTC Newman concluded with what he identified as the risks inherent in irregular warfare operations. These include illicit or immoral surrogate activity such as war crimes; the loss of surrogate control, especially in changing political landscapes in which loyalties can shift quickly; moral obligations that develop toward those who take the risks to themselves and their families and join in the irregular warfare effort (e.g., Montagnards, Meo, Lao Theung, and Kurds).

### **Mr. Dave Duffy**

Mr. Duffy arrived in Afghanistan in January of 2002 at a time when the perception was that the war is over; it's time to clean up. The conventional wisdom was that Operation Anaconda would be the last major combat of the

war. He presented a series of anecdotes that challenged those assumptions and supported the proposition that components of the OSS model retain their relevancy for both current operations and the future.

Mr. Duffy described the complexity of the interagency environment, then touched on how more complications can arise. He reported that, from personal experience, cultures do not get any stranger than the nongovernmental organization's and the media. He also observed that in such environments, personalities trump doctrine in getting things done.

Cultural understanding and adaptation was particularly important because "every day with Afghans is a union negotiation ... Afghan work in circles; we work linearly." Culture also played a role in his comments about the need for relevant communication campaigns directed at the populace. He bemoaned the fact he discovered that frequently PSYOP leaflets were not linked to what was going on. Thus the inevitable disconnect served to undermine the credibility of the Special Forces effort and created doubts instead of building support.

As with other speakers, he discussed the need for effective air support and suggested the development of new units for the employment of responsive SOF air assets.

In preparing SOF to operate in such complex and unfamiliar environments, Mr. Duffy expressed concern that recruitment standards not be lowered simply to achieve manning objectives.

### **Major General (Ret.) Geoff Lambert**

MG (Ret.) Lambert discussed the fact that at the time of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, there was limited knowledge about UW and no true UW constituency. He characterized the situation as *bottom up* with stale and outdated doctrine on both UW and counterinsurgency (COIN) warfare.

Consequently, he identified some specific consequences of these shortcomings. One of his major concerns was that interagency coordination was limited or even nonexistent. Beyond the interagency, structures, equipment, and procedures for coordinating fires, close air support, communications, and mobility were also lacking. He also expressed concern about the general ineffectiveness of strategic communications.

MG (Ret.) Lambert identified parallels between the OSS model and contemporary challenges, noting that much is to be learned from the OSS.

As part of these comments, he identified various factors that would have been different if an OSS-styled organization existed before the September 11 attacks. Some of these were as follows:

- a. UW and COIN doctrine would have been current.
- b. Human Intelligence (HUMINT) and supportive networks would have been in place (to include evasion).
- c. The need for cultural training would not have been a surprise to General Purpose Forces (GPF) or the civilian leadership.
- d. Language technology advances would have been in place.
- e. Biometric and historical contact records would have been developed to assist in the documentation of friends and influencers.
- f. Site exploitation would be an art form.
- g. Low-tech air fleets would exist in adequate numbers.
- h. Aerial resupply tactics, techniques, and procedures and pinpoint parachutes would have been available.
- i. GPF would be comfortable with IW.
- j. Interagency liaison would have been in place.
- k. Necessary authorities and odd career patterns would have been institutionalized.



## Conclusions and Observations

**A**s the symposium ended, agreement emerged that significant similarities exist between the challenges faced by both the OSS and contemporary SOF, even with the gap of nearly seven decades. Though agreement was certainly not universal, an examination of the proceedings serves to illuminate specific principles and practices of the OSS that, properly adapted, can have an impact on the contemporary irregular warfare environment. The conclusions listed below provide many reference points for further study and analysis.

### Conclusions

- a. Though the contemporary security environment differs significantly from World War II, there is much for today's SOF to learn from the OSS model. As noted by Admiral Olson, "the roots of today's SOF lie in the OSS."
- b. The OSS provided an important multiplier effect that dramatically increased the combat effectiveness of allied forces. SOF continues to play that role.
- c. It is necessary to understand what success looks like and to translate that awareness into credible measures of effectiveness.
- d. The OSS-styled use of indigenous guerrilla organizations continues to be of considerable value in the defeat of unpopular, repressive regimes in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and other areas.
- e. Flexibility and adaptability remain essential because what works in one place is not likely to work in another without creativity and cleverness.
- f. Though shut down in October 1945, many OSS components, training methods, techniques, and procedures lived on in the CIA and the U.S. Army's Special Forces, establishing a clear connection between the OSS and the contemporary CIA and SOF.
- g. As with the OSS, the individual remains the primary focus in SOF operations, beginning with the recruitment and assessment of those

with innate skills sets that are to be enhanced through training and education.

- h. Psychological and peer assessments are essential for building individual self-confidence and team cohesion.
- i. Today's SOF share with the OSS the requirement to field individuals who are bold, daring, innovative, and capable of independent judgment, thought, and action. SOF training continues to emphasize top physical conditioning, exceptional proficiency in weaponry, demolition, unarmed combat, field craft and wilderness survival, and the kind of powerful self-confidence and determination so characteristic and crucial to the success of an elite military organization.
- j. As recognized by the OSS assessment and selection process, irregular warfare requires a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach that has come to include what is called the interagency process.
- k. The OSS requirements for regional expertise, cultural awareness, and language proficiency remain essential for SOF.
- l. It is important to have clear standards of performance and that expediency does not intrude to dilute those standards.
- m. Flexibility and freedom of action are enabled by the strategic direction provided by the commander's intent.
- n. As with the OSS, SOF must have the freedom to develop and execute creative workarounds to meet challenges on the ground.
- o. There is a requirement for highly responsive multifunction air support for SOF.
- p. Aerial and battlefield resupply techniques in remote areas remain critical elements of force sustainment.
- q. Reliable communications are essential to success, including the best technology, effective training to a standard, and the most efficient techniques and procedures.
- r. SOF must learn from and expand on the OSS skills in merging intelligence with operations.

## Observations

The observations of the veterans who attended the symposium also provide insight into the kinds of people who have spent time in both the OSS and SOF. A brief collection of comments reflects these insights:

We experienced a dearth of infrastructure. — Afghan veteran

I expect the primitive conditions I found in China were similar to what I think was found in Afghanistan. — OSS veteran

After the war, I vowed to learn something new every year; things like bridge, chess, golf... stuff like that. — OSS veteran

Took a lot of time to distinguish between training and education in preparing SOF. — Afghan veteran

Expressed concern about a lack of performance assessments of personnel after training, which 'let the guys in the field sort out the competent ones.' — OSS veteran

I relied on my personal ingenuity... what I saw as a lack of training, I overcame through my personal determination. — OSS veteran

There is no unimportant contact with the population. — Afghan veteran

We must move beyond learning organizational structure and begin to understand organizational dynamics. — Afghan veteran

... I didn't have the foggiest notion what I planned to do! — OSS veteran





