

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES



“BY, WITH, THROUGH”
A SOF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

EDITED BY: DR. EMILY SPENCER

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	<i>Brigadier-General M.N. Rouleau</i>	iii
Introduction	v
CHAPTER 1	“By, With, Through”: A Historical Success Story <i>Colonel Bernd Horn and Dr. Bill Knarr</i>	1
CHAPTER 2	The Global SOF Network as an Enabler and Weapon System <i>Colonel Bernd Horn</i>	39
CHAPTER 3	Leveraging the Human Domain <i>Lieutenant General (Ret) Frank Kisner</i>	51
CHAPTER 4	Back to Basics: Old School Rules <i>Dr. Emily Spencer</i>	65
CHAPTER 5	Political Guidance for “By, With, Through” Missions <i>Greg Witol</i>	81
CHAPTER 6	Non-Traditional Partners: Strategic Utility and Risk <i>Dr. Richard Rubright</i>	87
CHAPTER 7	Non-Traditional Partnerships: Four Baskets and a Caution <i>Dr. David Last</i>	107
CHAPTER 8	Choosing Partners and the Moral Responsibility of Consequence <i>Dr. Mark Moyer</i>	143

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

CHAPTER 9	Choosing Partners: Three Paradoxes for SOF in Foreign Internal Defence Missions <i>Dr. M.A. Hennessy</i>	155
CHAPTER 10	How Do We Determine Who Does What?: A Planner’s Perspective <i>Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Vivian</i>	165
CHAPTER 11	Ground Truth on Military Assistance: Perspectives from the Frontlines <i>Dr. Emily Spencer</i>	171
CHAPTER 12	“Soldiering on the Margins”: Canadian SOF Moving Toward Interdependent Operations <i>Dr. Howard G. Coombs</i>	183
Contributors	201
Glossary of Abbreviations	205
Index	211

FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce the latest volume in the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) publication series. This book is based on the fourth annual Special Operations Forces (SOF) Symposium conducted jointly by CANSOFCOM and the United States Special Operations Command's (US SOCOM's) Joint Special Operations University (JSOU). Its subject, "By, With, Through': A SOF Global Engagement Strategy," is timely as the post-Afghanistan conflict period underscores the need to work within a whole of government approach and alongside allied and partnered nations.

As an integral part of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), the defence of Canada and its national interests is, and will always be, the primary focus of CANSOFCOM. Quite simply, I cannot envision a future CANSOF operation being done in isolation from a joint, combined or interagency framework. Indeed, it is through this combined synergy, underscored by the assistance and cooperation of allies, as well as friendly nations, where collective strength and resiliency is fully realized. This synergy is important to all nations. As the global security environment becomes increasingly more complex, chaotic and ambiguous, and as we are faced with sophisticated networks of those who would do us harm during a period of persistent conflict and hybrid warfare, Canada, its allies and partnered nations will take the necessary steps toward shaping a secure and stable world.

I believe this process entails a continuing emphasis on military assistance and engagement to assist our friends and partners in creating the necessary security environment in fragile, threatened, failed or failing states. What the contemporary and future operating environments likely mean for CANSOFCOM is that, in close co-operation with our traditional services, (particularly the Royal

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Canadian Air Force that has proven consistently invaluable in providing responsive and agile air support), as well as our allies, and fully in support of Government of Canada (GoC) policies, we will continue to assist partner nations develop capabilities that will assist them in achieving improved internal security and stability.

Key to this philosophical approach, and in accord with the subject of the December 2013 Symposium, military assistance to allied and friendly nations will be central to ensuring a secure and stable world. Whether conducting operations “by” us (namely the Western nations) for those states without the necessary capability or “with” those countries to secure their borders, the goal is, in the end, to work “through” those same countries by empowering them to conduct their own operations to secure their borders, with the ultimate goal of regional and international security. This state, of course, reduces the need for costly military interventions by Western nations.

Notably, to be able to achieve these goals CANSOF needs to continue to build out its network of trust with those with whom we interact. I contend that trust is our lifeblood. In a changing world building trust within strong networks is a non-negotiable down-payment for inevitable contingency operations that CANSOFCOM will be called upon to undertake.

“By, With, Through”: A *SOF Global Engagement Strategy* captures many of the themes central to the issue of military assistance and the “By, With, Through,” concept. It is intended to both inform and educate, and I highly recommend it to anyone with an interest in defence related issues.

M.N. Rouleau
Brigadier-General
Commander Canadian Special Operations Forces Command

INTRODUCTION

Special Operations Forces (SOF) perform a variety of tasks, both kinetic and non-kinetic, in order to further national interests at home and abroad. While the kinetic element is generally easy to imagine and fuels the stuff of Hollywood movies, the non-kinetic side, while perhaps less sexy, is arguably the bread and butter of SOF operations. In fact, non-kinetic activities are often key in providing a non-violent end to an event before it escalates. In essence, the shaping, influencing and training components of SOF military assistance missions often assist in stabilizing countries or regions that are at risk of imploding.

Central to this approach, and in accord with the subject of the December 2013 SOF Symposium, military assistance to allied and friendly nations is paramount in assuring a secure and stable world. Whether conducting operations “by” us (namely the Western nations) for those states without the necessary capability, or “with” those countries to secure their borders, the goal is, in the end, to work “through” those same countries by empowering them to conduct their own operations to secure their borders, with the ultimate goal of regional and international security. In simple terms, it is about collectively placing greater focus on the “pre-bang” phase of conflict and shaping the environment to assist our friends and partners in creating the necessary security environment in fragile, threatened, failed or failing states. This philosophy reduces the potential need for costly military interventions by Western nations through minimizing the number of smoldering issues that might erupt into larger national or international conflagrations.

Indeed, historically the concept of “by, with, through” has proven itself to be a sound practice. Nonetheless, it is not without its challenges. In particular, from the strategic through to the

I N T R O D U C T I O N

tactical level there are pragmatic, moral and ethical issues to navigate, such as decisions involving choosing partners and deciding who takes on which responsibilities. Ultimately, however, the concept, in its most effective form, allows for local solutions to potentially global problems and, as such, is not only a practical solution but a fiscal and sustainable one as well.

“By, With, Through”: A *SOF Global Engagement Strategy* explores these issues from the perspectives of practitioners, strategists and academics. Notably, this book is based on the fourth annual SOF Symposium conducted jointly by the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) and the US Joint Special Operations University (JSOU).

CHAPTER 1

“BY, WITH, THROUGH”: A HISTORICAL SUCCESS STORY

COLONEL BERND HORN AND DR. BILL KNARR

Many would argue that very little changes over time in military affairs. Yes, technology may evolve, thereby altering tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) but the underlying nature of war and conflict remains constant. Tenets of conflict, and by association international relations, raised by Sun Tzu in 400 BCE and Carl von Clausewitz in the 1800s are as relevant today as they were then. This truth is particularly salient after a decade of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, when Western nations are tired of war and are seeking solutions to the world’s insecurity and instability. Making this process more difficult is the worldwide economic difficulties that have lessened the tolerance for excessive military spending, thus creating a fiscally constrained environment for most militaries.

In the case of Special Operations Forces (SOF), one such solution to both the fiscally constrained environment and the problem of international instability is the global SOF network, which is designed to leverage partner capacity and resource sharing. Moreover, it allows participating nations to realize a more responsive, agile and effective approach to fighting global insecurity at less individual cost. The idea entails partner nations sharing capability and expertise, as well as the burden of providing military assistance to others, specifically by assisting friendly at-risk nations develop the necessary capacity to solve their own internal security problems before they become regional or international conflagrations. Importantly, the global SOF network represents

CHAPTER 1

the potential to provide a sustainable solution to the ever growing complex and dangerous international security environment.

Of note, the theory driving the global SOF network is not entirely new. It has roots in, and shares the basic premise of, the old “By, With, Through” concept, which was about leveraging capabilities of indigenous forces and people in pursuit of national security objectives. Its basic tenet was an evolutionary process of activities and operations “By us” to assist at-risk friendly nations deal with security issues. As the security capacity within those states was developed, the process transformed to cooperative activities and operations “With us” to deal with extant security matters. Finally, once the process was complete and capacity developed to its fullest extent, the process evolved to activities and operations “Through them” (i.e. those nations that were assisted) to achieve the necessary security effect desired in pursuit of national interest. In fact, “The most important military component in the War on Terror[ism],” former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates asserted “is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we enable and empower our partners to defend and govern themselves.”¹

As such, the underlying premise of the global SOF network is in consonance with the “By, With, Through” concept. It is about helping others to help themselves, while at the same time developing deep partnerships and a broad, close network that will allow a cooperative approach to combating those that would do us, our allies and friends harm. Significantly, the concept is arguably very sound and historically, the “By, With, Through” concept has been very successful.

From a North American perspective one can go back to the colonial period to see the premise at work. From necessity, the early French military and political leadership understood survival of France’s wilderness colony in the harsh North American landscape depended on at first utilizing the skills of the Native peoples and later combining that with the skills and expertise of the settlers of

CHAPTER 1

New France, who after several generations, had taken on a distinct "*les Canadiens*" culture and approach to war.² Faced with a brutal war of annihilation against the Six Nations Iroquois confederacy, the King of France eventually relented to pleas for assistance from his colonial governors and dispatched the Carignan-Salières Regiment to New France in the spring of 1665.³

Upon arrival the French Regulars troops undertook the building of defences and operations against the Iroquois in conjunction with French Canadians in the colony. The experience inculcated volunteers with military experience. It also demonstrated the advantages of leveraging the indigenous elements within a country who knew the terrain, environment and peculiarities of the regions, to serve under arms. In fact, in April 1669, King Louis XIV ordered the governor of New France to organize a Canadian Militia and to ensure that the men between 15 and 60 years of age "always be well armed and always have the powder, lead, and fuses necessary to use their arms when needed."⁴

With the Iroquois threat quelled, the Carignan-Salières Regiment was redeployed to France in 1668. The defence of New France was now left largely in the hands of a few scattered regular and colonial troops and the French-Canadian settlers. This change was possible as the experience gained from the Regular troops and jointly conducted operations provided confidence and military prowess. Significantly, a core of regulars chose to remain in Canada.⁵ The benefit was enormous. It provided a nucleus of military experience, which when added to exposure and knowledge of the North American way of fighting, created unrivaled irregular fighters.

This capability of fighting in an irregular manner was increasingly demonstrated, much to the misery of the English, who replaced the Iroquois as the major threat to New France. The French-Canadians now arguably provided the French King with an effective, cost efficient manner to fight in North America. Having been imbued with war fighting instruction and experience, the French

CHAPTER 1

Canadians developed a highly effective war fighting strategy that was achieved by a mixed force that included the military strengths of regulars (e.g. courage, discipline, tactical acumen) with those of the French-Canadians and Indians (e.g. endurance, familiarity with wilderness navigation and travel, marksmanship) who relied more on initiative, independent action and small unit tactics than on rigid military practices and drills.

The effectiveness of the French-Canadian and Native warriors to protect French “national interests,” namely the colony of New France, was amply evident. Utilizing small raiding parties that terrorized the frontier and paralyzed the Anglo-American forces into focusing more on rear area security than invasion, they were able to maintain the balance of power against a superior (i.e. economically, militarily and population wise) antagonist in North America for almost a century.⁶

The French approach of using indigenous forces to achieve national interest in North America was not lost on the British. They too, eventually mobilized their indigenous forces to fight in the New World. Interestingly, they created “Rangers” to counter the French-Canadian and Native raiding threat. One of the first efforts was in 1744, in the North American theatre of operations, as part of the larger War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748). During this conflict the British presence in the Maritimes was once again prey to the marauding Abenakis and Micmac Indian war parties that were aligned with the French. As a result, an “independent corps of rangers” also known as the corps of Nova Scotia Rangers was raised in New England and commanded by Captain John Goreham.

Goreham’s command composed of 60 Mohawks and Metis warriors. Familiar with the Indian way of war, they swiftly engaged the French and their Indian allies. Massachusetts Governor William Shirley wrote, “the great service which Lieut. Colonel Goreham’s Company of Rangers has been of to the Garrison at

CHAPTER 1

Annapolis Royal is a demonstration of the Usefulness of such a Corps.”⁷ Goreham’s Rangers continued to serve on the volatile frontier even after the conflict ended. Prior to the onset of the French and Indian War, also known in its global context as the Seven Years War (1756-1763), Goreham’s Rangers were used to protect the British settlements in Nova Scotia against Indian raids. However, with the official outbreak of the war, they became increasingly involved in military operations specifically because of their expertise at irregular warfare.⁸

Despite their success, in the most current conflict Goreham’s Rangers were eclipsed by another British effort aimed at matching the effectiveness of the French-Canadian raiders in the strategically important Lake Champlain theatre of operations. The British once again tapped their indigenous forces to create the legendary Rogers’ Rangers. By the winter of 1756, Rogers’ bold forays with his small band of unofficial rangers behind enemy French lines were regularly reported in newspapers throughout the colonies. They provided a tonic to a beleaguered English frontier. In March 1756, Major-General Shirley ordered Rogers to raise a 60 man independent ranger company that was separate from both the provincial and regular units. As such, it was titled His Majesty’s Independent Company (later Companies) of American Rangers. His unit was directed to scout and gain intelligence in the Lake Champlain theatre, as well as “distress the French and their allies by sacking, burning and destroying their houses, barns, barracks, canoes, battoes...to way-lay, attack, and destroying their convoys of provisions by land and water.”⁹ In the end, Rogers’ Rangers, as they became universally known, brought to life the ranger tradition in North America and ensured it would forever endure. Their deeds and prowess have with time become legendary. However, key is the fact that both the French-Canadian and American “Rangers” represented a maturation of the “By, With, Through” concept in one of its earliest forms.

CHAPTER 1

Moving away from the North American continent, a more contemporary example of the successful application of the “By, With, Through” concept was the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) in the Second World War. The SOE was created by Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who preferred to call the SOE the “Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare.” On establishment of the SOE, the prime minister commanded, “And now, set Europe ablaze!”¹⁰ The SOE was responsible “to co-ordinate all action, by way of subversion and sabotage, against the enemy overseas.”¹¹ The War Cabinet subsequently approved the new SOE and its charter on 22 July 1940.

The mandate and objectives given to the SOE were almost unlimited. The Prime Minister’s charter to the SOE instructed “to undertake subversive action of every sort and description against the enemy.” It had a twofold objective. First was to exploit “every present means of harassing the enemy and damaging his war effort.” The second, was to assist in the organization of secret armies “by arranging for the supply of personnel, communications, arms and explosives etc., and by strengthening any underground propaganda that may be necessary to the ultimate objective of embarking on large-scale operations.”¹²

Notwithstanding the desire to cause as much short-term pain for the German war effort as possible, the key objective of the SOE was to organize a concerted uprising amongst the peoples of the occupied territories. In essence, the SOE intent was to create an “organisation of secret armed forces that can co-operate in any military offensive we may be able to take in the future and so compensate for our lack of trained troops.”¹³

To achieve its aim, the SOE was broken into country directorates, with each respective country directorate divided into one or more sections. For example, France had six distinct sections within its directorate. As such, the SOE was engaged in classic unconventional warfare (UW). It was responsible for training agents and

C H A P T E R 1

organizers, as well as deploying them into the various target countries with the object of establishing basic subversive organizations that could be expanded as required as the situation allowed. The main functions of the subversive organizations were explained as:

- a. Political Subversion and Propaganda: to encourage the population of the occupied countries against the forces of occupation and to undermine the morale of the latter.
- b. Sabotage: to build up a sabotage organization wherever the Axis can be effectively attacked, which is mainly in the occupied territories. The object of this activity is to wear down the Axis morally and economically and so hasten the date by which our military forces can take the offensive. Sabotage efforts must be correlated with those of the fighting services especially the bomber forces, and our present short term policy is, therefore, based on the instructions recently given to Bomber Command whose efforts we intend to supplement by attacking rail, sea, canal and road transport. The sabotage organization must also be prepared to harass the Axis lines of communication, should Great Britain be invaded, and to intensify its activities in close co-operation with any allied invasion of the continent.
- c. The Organization of Secret Armies: To build up and equip secret armies in occupied territories. These armies, in co-operation with the sabotage organizations, will be prepared to assist our military forces when they take the offensive, either directly in the theatre of operations or indirectly elsewhere, by attacks on communications, whether telegraphic or transport, by neutralization of seizure of aerodromes, by a general attack on enemy aircraft and personnel, and by producing disorder in the enemy's rearward services.¹⁴

CHAPTER 1

Important to note, is the fact that the SOE was not the only organization involved in creating capability behind enemy lines. The Americans also created a counterpart to the SOE. On 11 July 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt created the office of the Coordinator of Information (COI) to better coordinate the activities of the various American government intelligence agencies. He placed William Donovan, also known as “Wild Bill,” in charge of this new office. On 13 June 1942, the COI was renamed the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The OSS focused its efforts on Europe, Asia and North Africa with Major General Donovan at its helm.¹⁵

During his tenure, General Donovan approved the development of three unconventional warfare activities to support operations in Europe and the Far East:

1. Operational Groups (OGs) to operate in France;
2. Jedburgh teams to operate in France, Belgium and the Netherlands; and
3. Detachment 101 to conduct operations in Burma.

In July 1942, Donovan formed the OGs. Although their size varied, they were initially configured to consist of two sections of 15 men, each with two officers and 13 enlisted – closely mirroring the Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alphas (SFODA) of today.¹⁶ Members were bilingual volunteers recruited primarily as infantrymen and demolitions experts, but they also included medical technicians and radio operators. Their mission was to “organize and supply guerrilla bands, gather intelligence, and carry out commando operations behind enemy lines.”¹⁷

The Jedburgh Teams were created later, in the early spring of 1944, in Britain and Algeria. They were parachuted into Europe to support the invasion of occupied Europe. Under the direction of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF), their mission was to link-up with the guerrilla groups, collect

C H A P T E R 1

intelligence and support the Allied forces as they moved throughout Europe.¹⁸ Although team composition varied, they were originally intended to include one American, one British and one French or Dutch member.¹⁹

The Jedburghs and OGs that led, advised and assisted French guerrillas had tremendous effect. They crippled locomotives and rolling stock, severed communications trunk lines, blew bridges, and harassed enemy columns on the move, thereby delaying Germany's reaction to the Allied offensive. Teams then provided "timely, accurate intelligence" to Allied forces, such as General George Patton's Third Army during its dash across France.²⁰

On 14 April 1942, Major General Donovan, activated Detachment 101 for action in Burma. The Unit, commanded by Colonel Carl Eifler, gathered intelligence, identified targets for Army Air Force bombing raids, rescued downed Allied airmen and harassed/disrupted Japanese operations. Detachment 101, composed of a core element of Americans, depended on support and recruits from the various tribes in Burma, particularly the Kachins, who were fiercely anti-Japanese due to harsh treatment by the Japanese and who were renowned for their skills in the Burmese jungle.²¹ Notably, the small group of Americans, supported by thousands of Kachins secured a major transportation route between India and China, known as the Burma-Ledo Road. After its deactivation in July 1945, Detachment 101 was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. Its accomplishments included killing or wounding more than 15,000 of the enemy, destroying or capturing more than 3,500 tons of supplies, rescuing more than 550 Allied Air crewmembers, and designating the majority of targeting in the area for the 10th Air Force.²²

In the end, the SOE and OSS and their application of the "By, With, Through" concept were immensely successful.²³ In a SHAEF report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on 18 July 1945, General Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower's staff noted, "without the organization,

C H A P T E R 1

communications, training and leadership which SOE supplied... resistance [movements] would have been of no military value."²⁴ For example SOE and OSS teams arranged reception of three-man Jedburgh teams that were designed to assist local resistance networks to coordinate their efforts. They provided a wireless link, supplied arms and ammunition and provided training on the use of weapons and basic tactics. Fourteen teams dropped into Britain alone and they helped organize 20,000 underground fighters. A large part of the German effort was spent simply to fight the resistance forces.²⁵ Furthermore, a Chiefs of Staff report assessed, "It can be fairly concluded, therefore, that SOE activity forced the Germans to retain considerable forces in areas of no immediate military value to us. The forces could have been usefully employed elsewhere and were contained by an economical expenditure of effort."²⁶ Similarly, SOE-led guerrilla groups in the Far East killed more Japanese forces than the regular Army. One guerilla force alone is credited with killing an estimated 10,964 Japanese soldiers and wounding another 644.²⁷

In the post-war era, the "By, With, Through" concept proved equally effective. The post-war era did not provide the war-weary and debt-ridden governments or their public with a prolonged period of peace and tranquility. The onset of the Cold War in 1948 created additional financial pressures on the Western nations as they now were faced with the creation of large peacetime standing armies. The savage wars of peace, namely the eruption of brush fire wars around the globe ignited by communist insurgents, as well as aspirations of independence by former colonies merely exacerbated the problem of affordable military solutions. As such, the UW and Foreign Internal Defence (FID) provided a means of leveraging additional capability.

The first application was during the Korean war, 1950-1953, when the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was responsible for all covert operations. As such, they created partisan forces to operate against the enemy, as well as a Special Missions Group that

C H A P T E R 1

was responsible for raids on the enemy's coastal railway system. Despite the CIA mandate, by 1951, the US Far East Command (FEC) created the Miscellaneous Group, 8086 Army Unit, which was responsible for creating and controlling a large partisan force that was designed as a combat force and not just an intelligence gathering body. By the end of the year, FEC created the "Covert, Clandestine, and Related Activities – Korea" (CCRAK) organization to control all unconventional warfare operations in theatre.²⁸ These efforts had the effect of tying down large numbers of enemy forces.

Aside from the Korean War, the Cold War also established the specter of two large heavily armed camps facing off in Europe. The fact that the seemingly aggressive and very belligerent Soviet Union maintained a buffer of occupied territories and peoples between itself and the West clearly presented an opportunity for unconventional warfare. This opportunity was not lost on strategic planners and commanders, particularly those with recent OSS and SOE experience. As a result, the Americans resurrected their UW capability. In 1952, the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) was activated. The following year the bulk of the 10th SFG was deployed to Bad Tolz, West Germany. The troops of the 10th SFG, the officers of which were largely drawn from Second World War SOF organizations such as the OSS, Rangers and airborne units, were tasked, in the event of the expected Soviet invasion, with developing and exploiting the resistance potential of the population in those areas behind the enemy lines. In essence, the teams were expected to train and advise resistance movements in the art of guerilla warfare, as well as conduct strategic reconnaissance to locate Soviet headquarters and nuclear weapon installations.²⁹ The organization and plan was steeped in the success of the concept during the Second World War.

Concurrently, as indicated earlier, the globe erupted in a series of conflicts, a combination of wars of independence and communist inspired insurgencies. Regardless, the complex nature of

CHAPTER 1

such conflicts, which were of long duration, required political and not simply military solutions, and were normally conducted in complex terrain that provided cover, concealment and protection for the less heavily armed and equipped insurgents, overwhelmed the conventional military capability and proved to be potentially extremely expensive. As such, the British quickly turned to the “By, With, Through” concept, utilizing SOF forces to train, assist and augment indigenous capability to defeat the internal, as well as external threats to their security.

The success of the application of SOF to solve the security problems in such locations as Aden, Borneo, Brunei, Dhofar, Indochina, Malaya and Oman, to name but a few, underscored the strength of the “By, With, Through” concept. Importantly, it also revealed that the employment of SOF achieved a “comparatively low cost in lives set against results achieved.”³⁰ Quite simply, frugal bureaucrats realized that SOF provided an inexpensive means of waging war against insurgents in distant jungles and deserts, often largely on their own in support of governments in place. Savings realized by replacing generic capability backed with quantity, with specific skill sets reinforced by quality, in support of in-place indigenous forces, became an attractive option.

John F. Kennedy, influential congressman and later president, was quick to see the threat, as well as the solution. In 1958, he identified the new threat as “Sputnik diplomacy, limited brush-fire wars, indirect non-overt aggression, intimidation and subversion, internal revolution.”³¹ When he became president in 1961, Kennedy espoused his personal commitment to a stepped-up, integrated counter-insurgency program that was based on the “By, With, Through” concept. Kennedy warned, “the free world’s security can be endangered not only by a nuclear attack, but also by being nibbled away at the periphery... by forces of subversion, infiltration, intimidation, indirect or non-overt aggression, internal revolution, diplomatic blackmail, guerrilla warfare or a series of limited wars.” However, he also asserted, “the main burden of

CHAPTER 1

local defense against overt attack, subversion and guerrilla warfare must rest on local populations and forces.”³²

President Kennedy reaffirmed that assertion in a 1963 interview concerning the future of Vietnam when he proclaimed, “In the final analysis, it is their war. They are the ones that have to win or lose it.”³³ That would be an important reminder, in particular as the United States escalated its involvement in Vietnam.

The United States was involved in Vietnam as early as 1945 when the OSS was working with Ho Chi Minh, who would later lead North Vietnam in its efforts to recapture the south. In 1950, the French were heavily involved in Vietnam while the United States provided aid and established the Military Assistance Advisory Group, Indochina, to administer the program. However the French, fatigued with fighting, and the cost of the conflict, led to a brokered peace. The Geneva Accords of 1954 was the agreement between France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North), which divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel. France agreed to withdraw its forces by 1956. With the ensuing power vacuum, the United States subsequently increased its involvement by advising and assisting the government of South Vietnam in its resistance against the North Vietnamese regime and a growing insurgency.

By 1959, the insurgents, known as the Viet Cong (VC), had significantly increased their activities and by 1960 South Vietnamese infrastructure and counter-insurgency efforts had deteriorated to the point that the VC had gained the initiative.³⁴ A year later, in May 1961, Kennedy decided to send 400 Special Forces (SF) soldiers into the Central Highlands to train the Montagnard tribesmen in counter-insurgency as an early commitment to the Civilian Irregular Defense Group program (CIDG).³⁵ The CIDG, active from 1961 to 1971, was developed for two reasons: 1. To help the South Vietnam government secure ungoverned spaces (potential VC

C H A P T E R 1

sanctuaries) by recruiting tribes and minority groups into their counterinsurgency program and, in doing so, 2. Preclude their recruitment by the VC.

If left unchecked, VC recruitment was a very real possibility given tribal dissatisfaction with the South Vietnamese Government. In addition to their value as a counter-insurgent paramilitary force, the Montagnards were also a valuable source of intelligence as their tribal affiliations and networks spread throughout the highlands of South Vietnam and Laos. Those affiliations and networks provided South Vietnamese and American intelligence on North Vietnam's military infiltration and supply routes into the south via Laos.³⁶

The Combined Studies Division of the US Operations Mission originally managed the CIDG program with Special Forces support. In 1963, the majority of the effort was transferred to Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV). This command included hamlet militiamen, mountain scouts and border surveillance personnel. There were a number of other initiatives supporting the program, including Mike Force, a rapid reaction force led by Special Forces to support the CIDG camps. By 1971, the CIDG program was transferred to the Vietnamese Special Forces. The objective was to eventually transition them into the South Vietnamese Regular Army.³⁷

There were other "By, With, Through" initiatives over the span of American involvement in Vietnam that deserve discussion. Two notable programs include the Military Advisory Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group (MACVSOG) and the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program. CORDS included the much debated Phoenix program (i.e. recruit or capture/kill VC leadership) that garnered much attention.

MACVSOG was created as a joint operation in 1964 and was responsible for unconventional warfare operations against North

C H A P T E R 1

Vietnam that included developing resistance forces, direct action missions against economic targets and psychological operations all within North Vietnam. Its charter was approved by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964 under OPLAN 34A as he looked for ways to influence the government in Hanoi to change their support for prosecution of the war against the south. Missions included inserting agents into the north, conducting reconnaissance missions in Laos and Cambodia, and in particular addressing challenges associated with interdiction missions along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.³⁸

CORDS in turn, was developed specifically to address President Johnson's frustration over a lack of coordination between the embassy and the military regarding pacification programs in South Vietnam. As such, in 1967 he issued National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 362, Responsibility for US Role in Pacification to create the program. CORDS placed all of the pacification initiatives under a single commander, at the time General William Westmoreland, Commander of MACV, who put one of his principle deputies, a civilian, in charge of CORDS. This military/civilian mix, under CORDS, was represented at every level down to province and district.³⁹ The most significant and controversial part of the program was Phoenix.

The Phoenix program, symbolized by the Vietnamese as *Phung Hoang*, a mythical bird with all-seeing powers, specifically targeted the Viet Cong infrastructure (VCI) in South Vietnam. As such, operations were intelligence-driven with Provincial Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centers (PIOCC) and District Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centers (DIOCC) throughout the country. Those centers, consisting of Americans and South Vietnamese, collected information on VCI suspects and disseminated intelligence to field force units where they were captured, killed or turned. Those units included the Vietnamese national police, National Police Field Force, US Navy SEAL teams and US Army special operations groups, and Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU).

CHAPTER 1

The most controversial of these units was the PRU, who were CIA funded, trained and operated independent of the other force units. Despite vetting and oversight the PRU had gained a reputation for assassinations. Later studies, for the most part would, profile the PRU as a professional force whose mission was to capture VCI suspects for their intelligence value rather than kill them. In general, captured documents and post-war testimonials by North Vietnam military leaders indicate the Phoenix program was extremely effective in eliminating the VC leadership infrastructure.⁴⁰

Although Americans were focused on Vietnam, the United States was also applying “By, With, Through” operations in Latin America. One of many examples is the United States’ support to Colombia, which provided the challenge of dealing with both drug trafficking and insurgent activities.

Colombia’s insurgent problems began in the 1950s-1960s, as several groups emerged, the primary one being the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, also known as the FARC. The initial response of the Colombian government was to ignore the problem, as long as the insurgents remained in the savannahs and jungles to the south east and stayed away from the population centers. Under those conditions the government simply left the insurgents alone.⁴¹ However, in the late 1970s, the narcotics industry migrated to Colombia as a result of successful counter narcotics programs in other South American countries such as Peru and Bolivia. Although the FARC initially opposed any dealing with the drug industry, they quickly realized the financial benefits of such a partnership.⁴²

The effect on the US was noticeable. By the mid-1980s the US administration was concerned by the increase in the illegal import of Colombian drugs, as well as the violence of the cartels in doing business. As a result, in 1986, President Ronald Reagan declared illicit drugs a threat to national security. Subsequently, the Department of Defense (DOD) received a sizeable part of the national

CHAPTER 1

program funding and the counter-narcotics mission. Three years later, in 1989, President George Bush expanded the mandate and dispatched SOF to “train Colombian military and police forces for operations against the big Colombian cartels.”⁴³

However, the cap on the number of advisors allowed in country, well-intended policies on human rights violations, and prohibitions on the use of forces and funds for counter-insurgency (as opposed to counter narcotics), frustrated the advisory and training mission. That, combined with the corruption and the quality of Colombian recruits and leadership, led to a Colombian government on the verge of collapse by 1998. Colombia desperately required changes in-country, as well as US support to halt the rapid deterioration of the situation.⁴⁴ Colombian changes included a new administration in 1998, as well as a new strategy the following year entitled “Plan Colombia,” which boosted most aspects of counter-narcotics support, as well as Colombian military capacity and activities. In turn, US changes included President Bill Clinton’s 1998 waiver of the Leahy Law that prohibited aid to countries with “credible gross human rights abuses” and an increase in aid in subsequent years.⁴⁵

Those changes were not enough, however. As a result of 2002-2005 policy, leadership and strategy changes, both in the United States as well as Colombia, a marked increase in the Colombian government’s capability to confront and defeat the narco-insurgents transpired.⁴⁶ For example, a major obstacle and frustration for American support to Colombian military operations was a US Congressional prohibition on funding counter-insurgency operations but not counter-narcotics operations. This dichotomy was a major irritant since in many cases the two were inseparable. In 2002, President Bush signed an executive order authorizing the use of counter-narcotics funds for counter-insurgency. Additionally, in 2004 Congress authorized an almost twofold US force cap increase in Colombia from 400 DoD personnel and 400 contractors to 800 and 600 respectively. In concert, in Colombia the Uribe

CHAPTER 1

administration expanded the number of Army brigades and police, and developed platoons of peasant soldiers to fight the narco-insurgents in their territory, previously ungoverned insurgent sanctuaries. This process represented a wholesale philosophical change. The Uribe administration focused on security first, as a foundation for governance and development, rather than trying to build all three simultaneously. Additionally, SOF, and in particular SF, worked with the rapidly expanding Colombian SOF units, as well as the counter-narcotics units and regular army.⁴⁷

By 2008, the Colombians fielded a professional force, which was highlighted by the dramatic rescue of three Americans and several high profile Colombians who had been held hostage by FARC. The Colombian planning and execution were a tribute to the quality and commitment of the Colombian SOF organizations, as well as to the advisory and training, of the “By, With, Through,” concept implemented by SOF and other interagency partners.⁴⁸

Another relative success story for the “By, With, Through” concept, at least in the context of the time period, was the Western support for the Mujahedeen during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. As early as 15 January 1980, just three weeks after the first deployment of Soviet troops, American, British, German and French diplomats met to discuss assistance to the Afghan resistance. According to a British report:

Aid to the rebels is highly desirable in itself. A prolonged counter-revolutionary war there could only have the most profound effects on the whole Soviet system. Certainly anything in the nature of a Soviet ‘Vietnam’ – to use an analogy which has been widely employed – would presumably have the same effect on a government in Moscow as the real Vietnam did in Washington. We trust the Western leaders are prepared for the enormous beneficial possibilities that could just possibly open up if the Afghan rebellion were to succeed.⁴⁹

CHAPTER 1

As such, the Western nations provided money, supplies, munitions and training support, as well as advisors, to the Mujahedeen organization, who numbered approximately 90,000. Acting in a classic UW role, the West was able to leverage their limited support to indigenous forces to gain significant “national interest.” The cost to the Soviet Union is estimated at approximately 15,000 killed in action, 54,000 wounded in action as well as billions of dollars to support the war effort, economic resources that were scarce to begin with. Arguably, the war also became a catalyst for the implosion of the Soviet Union.

The Philippines provides yet another good example of the effectiveness and efficiency of the “By, With, Through” concept. Suffering from a number of insurgencies fueled by Islamic extremism since the early 1990s, the Philippines represented a friendly at-risk nation on the verge of disintegration. Groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), an Al-Qaeda (AQ) affiliated terrorist organization, as well as the Jemaah Islamiya and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, wreaked havoc through bombings, kidnappings and other terrorist activities. American assistance focused on increasing the ability of the Filipino Government and its security forces to deny the insurgents sanctuary, control the lines of communications and improve the infrastructure for the local populace through civil affairs. They also assisted with information operations to bolster the image of the Filipino Government in the eyes of its citizens.

Working with the Filipino security forces by providing training and intelligence support, the Americans were able to help the Philippines stabilize their internal domestic security issue. In fact, by 2002, the ASG, which represented the most significant threat, had been decimated. They were pushed from their sanctuary and almost all of their key leadership has been captured or killed. Importantly, the American assistance came at minimal (relative) cost in both resources and lives. The effort to save the Philippines cost

CHAPTER 1

approximately \$50 million annually and represented a deployment of approximately 600.⁵⁰

The most contemporary application of the “By, With, Through” concept, however, is in Afghanistan and Iraq. With regard to Afghanistan, in the aftermath of the horrific terrorist attack on the morning of 11 September 2001 (9/11) on the twin towers of the World Trade Center (WTC) the Americans moved quickly to strike at the terrorists who were behind the well-planned and coordinated attacks, as well as those who supported and abetted them.⁵¹ Osama Bin Laden and his AQ terrorist organization sheltered in Afghanistan by Mullah Omar and his Taliban government quickly became the centre of attention.

On 7 October 2001, the Americans launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). In an extremely short period of time, approximately 300 American Special Forces soldiers and a handful of CIA operatives were on the ground in Afghanistan.⁵² These operators rallied and forged cohesive teams out of the unorganized anti-Taliban opposition groups and equally as important, using a small amount of high-tech targeting equipment, brought the weight of American airpower down on Taliban and AQ fighters. Approximately four weeks of bombing finally created the necessary effect. On 9 November 2001, the Northern Alliance (NA), who were supported by US SF and CIA operatives, as well as American air support, broke through the Taliban lines at Mazaar-e-Sharif. The Taliban collapsed and were totally routed.

Within the next three days all of northern, western and eastern Afghanistan fell to the NA and their US SF partners. The remaining Taliban forces fled south to Kandahar. In total, it took only 49 days from the insertion of the first SF teams assigned to NA forces to the fall of Kandahar.

In the aftermath of victory, the “By, With, Through” concept was fully embraced by the Western nations to assist the new interim

C H A P T E R 1

government and then later the newly created Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). The approach took a Security Force Assistance (SFA) role. SFA in accordance with US doctrine refers to “the unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority.”⁵³ It basically involves the conduct of action programs, such as developing capacity within in security agencies, military and/or police, of another country to assist them in protecting their society from subversion, lawlessness and insurgency.

This critical role has allowed SOF to build a more effective internal Afghan security capability.⁵⁴ For instance, SOF has created a number of highly effective counter-terrorist forces and has worked closely with the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in sharing intelligence to conduct operations, as well as developing the NDS’s ability to assist with the concept of governance by improving its evidentiary capability to bring suspected terrorists and insurgents to trial and successful prosecution.

In addition, SOF has also taken a key role in training the 10,000 strong police force that was established in villages across Afghanistan as part of Afghan President Hamid Karzai’s decision to enhance the delivery of security through locally recruited “community watch” forces under the local defence initiative (LDI). This village stability program was one of SOF’s highest priorities in theatre. This initiative not only creates additional forces and presence for the counter-insurgency (COIN) fight, but also serves to connect remote villages to the Afghan government thereby achieving not only tactical results but also strategic effects.

SOF was also targeted to provide additional training to 40 percent of Afghan’s elite police force, the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP). In fact, by 2010, SOF trained eight ANCOP *kandaks* (i.e. battalions) and was partnered with four of them. The training and partnership directly resulted in lower attrition rates and greater effectiveness of the Afghan forces.⁵⁵

C H A P T E R 1

Arguably, however, there was no bigger success than the SOF Commando program. The US SF created and partnered with a force actually called Afghan Commandos. By 2010, they had become known “as Afghanistan’s premier direct action force, specializing in air assault missions that kill or capture insurgents.”⁵⁶ The effort has had great effect. The first commandos trained were the training cadre. From that point Afghan commandos trained other aspiring commandos, thereby increasing internal capacity. As of 2010, 5,300 commandos in nine *kandaks* had graduated.

The benefits of the SFA program run deep. On one level, SOF created a larger and more effective national security force, which was desperately needed. However, on a much deeper level, they strengthened the relationship between Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the Coalition. “We are working like brothers,” one Afghan commando confirmed.⁵⁷ Moreover, and arguably more important in the larger COIN context, SOF have enhanced governance by providing a direct link between the population and government/coalition troops.

This linkage is crucial. As noted by Colonel Chris Kolenda, special assistant to a former ISAF commander, “All problems in Afghanistan, or at least all social local problems, are solved at the community level. And so enfranchising communities with ownership in local governance, local security, localized development, will help bring communities together and help create the pressure and attraction to bring young men back into peaceful existence.”⁵⁸ Notably, SOF have been on the forefront of the battle of building internal governance and credibility. “Our biggest problem isn’t caves; it’s credibility,” General Mike Mullen conceded, further explaining, “Our messages lack credibility because we haven’t invested enough in building trust and relationships, and we haven’t always delivered on promises.”⁵⁹

C H A P T E R 1

Other programs embracing the “By, With, Through” idea were also undertaken. Canadian SOF undertook the Afghan National Army (ANA) TOOFAN (Storm) Program, which was the training and operational mentorship of an Afghan partnered force, based on a formed Reconnaissance Platoon from 205 ANA Corps. The Canadians also took on the training and operational mentorship of the Kandahar based Afghan National Police (ANP) Provincial Response Team. Finally, in coordination with US SF, Canadian SOF also participated in the Village Stability Operations programs, which entailed the deployment of small teams partnered with Afghan Local Police (ALP) to provide security at the village level.

In sum, the Coalition efforts and “By, With, Through” methodology were instrumental in creating capacity in Afghanistan. Although initially heavy on the “By,” the evolution to passing more and more of the security requirements to the Afghans has created a much more resilient and capable state than existed before, and has allowed for the draw down of Coalition forces.

Almost parallel in time to the Afghan effort, in the aftermath of the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Coalition’s use of “By, With, Through” once again proved extremely useful in Iraq. For instance, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – North (CJSOTF-N), also known as Task Force Viking, was responsible for the northern front during the invasion of Iraq. The 10th Special Forces Group formed the nucleus of the task force that also included a Special Operations Group from AFSOC, civil affairs units, a special boat squadron from the United Kingdom and elements from a Marine Expeditionary Force, the 10th Mountain Division and the 173rd Brigade – forces totaling more than 5,000 personnel. Just as important, and perhaps more so, was the 70,000 member Army of Peshmerga that was already there on the ground.⁶⁰ The CJSOTF’s mission was to conduct unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance, direct action and air support in order to disrupt and fix Iraqi forces. The Task Force was credited with securing Kirkuk, Mosul and the northern oil fields, and preventing Iraqi

CHAPTER 1

divisions from moving south and defending Baghdad, or reinforcing defensive operations against Coalition forces coming from the south.⁶¹

In the aftermath of the invasion, in November 2003, Army Special Forces were tasked to develop the Iraqi Special Operations Forces. They started with the 36th Commandos, the only Iraqi unit praised for its actions during the first battle for Fallujah. To reflect an Iraqi face and demonstrate an Iraqi capability, the 36th Commandos, accompanied and advised by an Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA), led the attack during the second battle of Fallujah by seizing the Fallujah hospital, a high-value insurgent information operation node.

The 36th Commandos were only the start. From there, US SOF started developing the rest of the Iraqi SOF brigade, which included a counter-terrorism battalion and support battalion. Importantly, Coalition SOF continued to advise and accompany Iraqi SOF on operations throughout the country.⁶²

The “By, With, Through” approach also played an important part in the Awakening or *Al Shawa*, in Iraq. In general, the Awakening movement was the partnering of the tribes in Al Anbar Province with the Coalition to fight Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). The movement is credited with the Coalition and Iraqi success in Al Anbar Province. Most people associate the turning of the Iraqi tribes against Al-Qaeda with Sheikh Sattar Abu-Risha in the Ramadi city of Al Anbar in 2006. However, historians are starting to agree that the first significant turning of the tribes against AQI occurred in Al Qaim, in western Al Anbar Province in 2005, where SOF played a major role. The Abu-Mahal in Al Qaim revolted against Al-Qaeda’s murder and intimidation campaign but soon realized they couldn’t beat the terrorists on their own and turned to the Coalition and Iraqi Government for help. An ODA from 5th Special Forces Group helped the Iraqis recruit and vet tribal members. They were then trained by the SEALs in Habbiniyah, south east of Ramadi and

became what was known as the Desert Protectors. Accompanied and advised by the ODA, they became the scouts for US Marines operating in the area, as well as elements of the 1st Iraqi Brigade during operations in the fall of 2005. Subsequent Coalition and Iraqi government operations, which relied on intelligence and reconnaissance tasks conducted by the Desert Protectors, eventually turned the tide in Western Al Anbar.⁶³

On a smaller scale and apart from the major operations undertaken in Afghanistan and Iraq, other contemporary examples exist that support the effectiveness of a “By, With, Through” approach. The Canadian and US SOF efforts to assist the Jamaican Defence Force (JDF) Counter Terrorist designated unit is one such example. The mission objectives include: building JDF capacity to conduct counter-terrorist (CT) operations; enhancing JDF ability to enforce the domestic rule-of-law; building and maintaining professional relationships; and acting as a technical advisor for equipment procurement and infrastructure development. The program demonstrated rapid dividends. The JDF Counter Terrorism Operational Group (CTOG) was able to demonstrate its leadership and capability when it successfully stormed CANJET Boeing 737 Flight 918 in Montego Bay, on 20 April 2009, when a gunman held 159 passengers and 6 crew hostage.⁶⁴ The following year, in May 2010, the CTOG led the break-in into Tivoli Gardens in the search and capture of Jamaican drug lord Christopher “Dudus” Coke, who presided over an international drug and weapon trafficking organization, and represented a major threat to Jamaican internal security.⁶⁵

Finally, in an ongoing example of the effectiveness of the “By, With, Through” concept, the US and Canada, as well as other allied nations, have been using the methodology in various North African countries (e.g. Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauretania, Senegal) in an attempt to bring stability to a number of nations undergoing internal and external security problems, specifically the expansion of the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) organization,

CHAPTER 1

which uses the remote, wide-open space, as well as the vacuum in governance and security of the weakly governed states to operate training camps, bases and conduct terrorist attacks. The threat the AQIM, as well as others, represents has the potential to explode into larger regional, if not international, crises.

As such, the program undertaken includes training and advising security forces in a number of North African countries, as well as supporting the North African Union in taking a larger role in African affairs. The training missions are in direct support of the Governments' Counter Terrorism Capacity Building Programs and are closely synchronized with the US Special Operations Command – Africa (SOCAFRICA), specifically, Joint Special Operations Task Force – Trans Sahel operations. Tying efforts together is the American organized Exercise Flintlock, which was started in 2006 and has been conducted annually ever since. It includes up to 16 participants and is designed to foster regional cooperation to enable African partners to stabilize regions of North and West Africa, thereby reducing sanctuary and support for violent extremist organizations. Importantly, it provides increased interoperability, counterterrorism, and combat skills training while creating a venue for regional engagement.

The theory was put into practice in January 2013, when British and French SOF assisted Mali defence forces turn back an Islamic militant (AQIM) offensive to increase their hold on territory they had seized from the Mali government in the previous year. As they began their renewed offensive pushing south to the capital of Mali, government forces backed by Western nations halted and then turned back the militants. During the combat operations French and British SOF advised, supported and even commanded Malian troops who did much of the heavy lifting in terms of fighting. For France, much of the success was based largely on its ability to leverage forces, equipment and knowledge from its historic footprint in North Africa, as well as the reliance on a Coalition that used host-nation forces and African allies to assist.

CHAPTER 1

This conflict was an exemplary example of the importance and power of a global network.⁶⁶

Although not providing a definitive list, this chapter has illustrated cases of where the “By, With and Through” concept, operationalized through UW, FID, COIN, and various other programs, has had a dramatic affect in furthering “national interest” at reduced risk and cost.⁶⁷ It is a means of leveraging indigenous forces and providing expertise and limited resources in a progressive manner to assist friendly forces and countries to help themselves solve their own internal and regional problems before they become major conflagrations.

This approach to global stability and security is important as it underscores the potential value of a global SOF network which is designed to leverage capacity and resource sharing through the partnering of like-minded nations and the sharing of capability and expertise, as well as the burden of providing military assistance to others, specifically by assisting friendly at-risk nations to develop the necessary capacity to solve their own internal security issues. Specifically, based on the historic success of this approach, the global SOF network can be seen as a potential sustainable solution to the complex security environment that we all face.

NOTES

1 Remarks as delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates at the Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, 26 November 2007.

2 See Bernd Horn, “Marin and Langy – Master Practitioners of la petite guerre,” in Bernd Horn and Roch Legault, eds., *Loyal Service: Perspectives of French-Canadian Military Leaders* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2007), 53-86; Bernd Horn, “Only for the Strong of Heart: Ranging and the Practice of La Petite Guerre During the Struggle for North America,” in B. Horn, ed., *Show No Fear: Daring Actions in Canadian Military History*

CHAPTER 1

(Toronto: Dundurn, 2008), 17-64; and B. Horn, "Terror on the Frontier: The Role of the Indians in the Struggle for North America," in B. Horn, ed. *Forging a Nation: Perspectives on the Canadian Military Experience* (St. Catharines: Vanwell Publishers, 2002), 43-64; and Bernd Horn, "A Necessary Evil? Indians as Allies in the Struggle for North America, 1754-1760," in P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Craig Leslie Mantle, eds., *Aboriginal Peoples and The Canadian Military: Historical Perspectives* (Kingston: CDA Press, 2007), 1-28.

3 See Jack Verney, *The Good Regiment. The Carigan-Salières Regiment in Canada, 1665-1668* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1991).

4 W.J. Eccles, *The French in North America 1500-1783* (Markham, ON: Fitzheny & Whiteside, 1998), 73.

5 Of the 1,200 members of the Carignan-Salières Regiment that landed in 1665, 446 settled in Canada and 200 returned to France. Intendant Jean Talon stated, "integrate the soldiers and the settlers so that they can teach each other how to farm and help defend themselves in times of need." Letter, Talon au ministre, Québec, 27 October 1667, Library Archives Canada (LAC), MG 1, Series C11A, Vol. 2, folio 308, microfilm F-2.

6 See Bernd Horn, "La Petite Guerre: A Strategy of Survival," in Bernd Horn, ed. *The Canadian Way of War. Serving the National Interest* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2006), 21-56. The scale of the threat was enormous. During the French and Indian War (1754-1760), the English colonies outnumbered New France in manpower by nearly 25 to one. The supply of foodstuffs appeared limitless. In 1755, the Governor of Pennsylvania asserted that he alone could produce food for an army of 100,000 men. In addition, the colonial iron industry was able to compete effectively with that of Britain. See Ian K. Steele, *Guerillas and Grenadiers* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1969), 74.

7 *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* [henceforth DCB], Vol III, 1741 to 1770 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 261.

8 *DCB, Vol IV, 1771-1800* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1979), 308.

CHAPTER 1

- 9 See Burt G. Loescher, *The History of Rogers Rangers. Volume I – The Beginnings Jan 1755 - 6 April 1758* (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, Inc., (1946) reprint 2001), 63-64; John R. Cuneo, *Robert Rogers of the Rangers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 32-33; and *Warfare on the Colonial American Frontier: The Journals of Major Robert Rogers [Journals of Major Robert Rogers] & An Historical Account of the Expedition Against the Ohio Indians in the year 1764, Under the Command of Henry Bouquet, Esq.* (Reprinted from an original 1769 Edition – Bargersville, IN: Dreslar Publishing, 2001), 13-14.
- 10 Quoted in William Manchester and Paul Reid, *The Last Lion. Winston Spencer Churchill. Defender of the Realm 1940-1965* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 2012), 273.
- 11 War Cabinet Memorandum by Lord President of the Council, Neville Chamberlain, 19 July 1940. Imperial War Museum (IWM) display, 15 January 2012.
- 12 “The Reconquest of Norway. SOE’s Role,” 6 April 1942. National Archives (NA), HS 2/218, File SOE/Norway 68.
- 13 “SO 2 Programme,” 9 June 1941. NA, HS 2/79, File Policy and Planning of SOE Activities in Denmark.
- 14 “Outline Plan of SO 2 Operations From September 1st, 1941 to October 1st 1942,” ND. NA, HS2/79, File Policy and Planning of SOE Activities in Denmark.
- 15 National Archives Military records, Records of the Office of Strategic Services (Record Group 226), <<http://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/oss/index.html>>, accessed 4 March 2014.
- 16 Benjamin Schemmer and John T. Carney, *US Special Operations Forces* (Tampa: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates Inc., 2003), 55.
- 17 David W. Hogan, Jr., *The U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II*, Center of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 1992, CMH Pub 70-42.

C H A P T E R 1

18 Jedburgh teams were named after a town near their training grounds in Scotland. Schemmer and Carney.

19 Thirteen of 101 teams were configured in that manner. 17 teams were mostly French, 30 included two Americans and 39 contained two British.

20 Schemmer and Carney, 60.

21 Troy J. Sacquety, *Behind Japanese Lines in Burma: the Stuff of Intelligence Legend*, Central Intelligence Agency, Library, Center for the Study of Intelligence, <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/fall_winter_2001/article07.html>, accessed 7 March 2014.

22 Schemmer and Carney, 59.

23 This is a subjective assessment by the authors based on the results the SOE and OSS achieved. There is still debate on the subject. Many senior military and political decision-makers, as well as historians, discounted the role the SOE and OSS played in the defeat of the Axis powers. Many blamed the SOE and OSS for the political turmoil created in the post-war years when many of the left wing resistance movements that were trained and equipped turned from fighting the Germans to fighting the re-established democratic governments.

24 Quoted in Peter Wilkinson and Joan Bright Astley, *Gubbins & SOE* (London: Leo Cooper, 1997), i.

25 Ian Dear, *Sabotage and Subversion. The SOE and OSS at War* (London: Cassell, 1996), 188.

26 "Chiefs of Staff Committee Value of SOE Operations," 21 November 1945, 3. NA, AIR 20/7958.

27 Dear, 207-208.

28 Michael E. Haas, *In the Devil's Shadow* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 11-53.

CHAPTER 1

29 See Charles M. Simpson III, *Inside the Green Berets. The Story of the US Army Special Forces* (New York: Berkley Books, 1984), 35-54; Adrian Weale, *Secret Warfare* (London: Coronet, 1997), 147-148; and Joseph Nadel, *Special Men and Special Missions* (London: Greenhill Books, 1994), 33-34.

30 See Kenneth Macksey, *Commando Strike: The Story of Amphibious Raiding in World War II* (London: Leo Cooper, 1985), 208; and Ken Connor, *Ghost Force* (London: Orion, 1998), 84-85; Anthony Kemp, *The SAS. Savage Wars of Peace 1947 to the Present* (London: Penguin, 2001), 37-41; and Tony Geraghty, *Inside the SAS* (Toronto: Methuen, 1980); and Charles Messenger, *The Commandos 1940-1946* (London: William Kimber, 1985), 49.

31 *Instruments of Statecraft: U.S. Guerilla Warfare, Counterinsurgency, and Counterterrorism, 1940-1990*, Chapter – “The Kennedy Crusade. A Dynamic National Strategy To Defeat the Communists.” <<http://www.statecraft.org/chapter6.html>>, accessed 27 November 2011.

32 Ibid.

33 John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, <<http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/Vietnam.aspx>>, accessed 6 March 2014.

34 Viet Cong is from *Việt Nam Công-sản* that translates to Vietnamese communist, from the World English Dictionary, <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/vietcong>>, accessed 17 March 2014.

35 David L. Anderson, *The Military and Diplomatic Course of the Vietnam War*, <<http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/vietnam/anderson.htm>>, accessed 6 March 2014.

36 *Vietnam Studies: U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971*, Center for Military History Publication 90-23, Washington, D.C. 1989, <<http://www.history.army.mil/books/Vietnam/90-23/90-23C.htm>>, accessed 11 March 2014. Additionally, in its early stages, it was called the Village Defense Program.

CHAPTER 1

37 *Outline History of the 5th Special Forces Group: Participation in the CIDG Program 1961-1970*, U.S. Army Military History Institute, undated, <<http://ehistory.osu.edu/vietnam/pdf/sfcdig.pdf>>, accessed 11 March 2014.

38 William Rosenau, Chapter 2, "U.S. Ground Operations Against the Ho Chi Minh Trail, 1966-1972," in Rand Report MR 1408, *Special Operations Forces and Elusive Enemy Ground Targets*, <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1408/MR1408.ch2.pdf>, accessed 11 March 2014. No successful insertion of agents in the North was ever achieved.

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40 William Rosenau and Autsin Long, "The Phoenix Program and Contemporary Counterinsurgency," RAND Occasional Paper, 2009.

41 Thomas Marks, "Colombian Army Adaptation to FARC Insurgency," *Strategic Studies Institute*, U.S. Army War College, January 2002.

42 Hector Pagan, Mark Moyer and Wil Griego, *Persistent Engagement in Colombia*, Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) Monograph, (in press, 2014).

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 HumanRights.gov, <<http://www.humanrights.gov/2013/07/09/an-overview-of-the-leahy-vetting-process/>>, accessed 17 March 2014; Pagan, Moyer and Griego, 8.

46 Robert D. Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience 1998-2008*, Combat Studies Institute Press, Occasional Paper 34, December 2009.

47 Pagan Moyer and Griego.

CHAPTER 1

48 Rear Admiral Nan DeRenzi, "Operation Willing Spirit," *JAG, Magazine of the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps*, Volume III, (2009): 9.

49 Martin Beckford, "National Archives: Britain agreed secret deal to back Mujahideen," *The Telegraph*, (30 December 2010). <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8215187/National-Archives-Britain-agreed-secret-deal-to-back-Mujahideen.html>>, accessed, 19 February 2011.

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CHAPTER 1

of relationships. In this case it was bringing together General Dostum's Uzbeks, Commander Atta's Tajiks and Commander Mohaqeq's Hazzaras. The key to this was building trust and uniting those factions into a force at a point in time so they could capture Mazar-e Sharif. And, that was the "By, With and Through" magic that most people do not fully appreciate in the capture of Mazar and its pivotal role in the downfall of the Taliban. W.M. Knarr & R.F. Richbourg, *Learning from the First Victory of the 21st Century: Mazar-e Sharif, An Educational/Training Resource Guide*, (Revised), Institute for Defense Analyses Document D-4015 (2010).

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CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 1

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66 See David Axe, "British and French Commandos Take Charge of Mali War," <<http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2013/01/mali-commandos/>>, accessed 28 November 2013; and Murielle Delaporte, "Mali: France's Version Of Shock And Awe, Add Allies, Crush AQIM," (19 February 2013). <<http://breakingdefense.com/2013/02/mali-frances-version-of-shock-and-awe-add-allies-crush-aqim/>>, accessed 28 November 2013.

67 Programs include:

COIN: Comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to defeat an insurgency and to address any core grievances.

UW: Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary and guerilla force in a denied area.

Guerrilla warfare: A form of irregular warfare in which a small group of combatants such as armed civilians or irregulars use military tactics including ambushes, sabotage, raids, petty warfare, hit-and-run tactics, and extraordinary mobility to fight a larger and less-mobile traditional army.

FID: Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism and other threats to its security.

SFA: Security Force Assistance is the unified action of the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIM) community to generate, employ, sustain and assist host nation and regional security forces in support of legitimate authority. SFA includes the task of organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding and advising foreign security forces and foreign security institutions.

C H A P T E R 1

DDMA: Defence, Diplomacy, Military Assistance are special operations conducted to support, stabilize or influence local authorities through the provision of specialized military advice, training and assistance to friendly or allied forces in peace, crisis and conflict.

Nation Assistance: Civil and/or military assistance rendered to a nation by foreign forces within that nation's territory during peacetime, crises or emergencies, or war based on agreements mutually concluded between nations. Nation assistance programs include, but are not limited to, security assistance, foreign internal defence, other US Code title 10 (Department of Defense) programs, and activities performed on a reimbursable basis by federal agencies or international organizations.

CHAPTER 2

THE GLOBAL SOF NETWORK AS AN ENABLER AND WEAPON SYSTEM

COLONEL BERND HORN

War weary, most Western nations are loath to become ensnared in further conflict. Yet, globalization has resulted in an increasingly international economy that ties nation states together. As such, global security and stability is just plain good business for everyone. Unfortunately, chaos and violence abound and no nation is immune to its economic, political or social effects. While most states welcome security, there are those individuals, organizations and states that prefer to do harm. The global special operations forces (SOF) network, which acts both as an enabler to national and international security, as well as a weapon system, can minimize the impact of those who seek to do us harm. Notably, the global SOF network is not about deploying more troops around the world. Conversely, it is about leveraging partner capacity and resource sharing. It allows participating nations to realize a more responsive, agile and effective approach to fighting global insecurity at less individual cost. Importantly, the global SOF network is not simply a temporary bandage to an ever growing complex and dangerous international security environment; rather, it represents a sustainable solution.

It is generally agreed that the contemporary operating environment (COE) is uncertain, volatile, often ambiguous and, almost certainly, complex. While it appears that in the short term a conventional war with another nation state employing conventional tactics is remote, the rise of regional powers, or power blocks, capable of challenging the United States and the West is increasingly

becoming a reality. Geopolitical uncertainties, rapid technological developments and the proliferation of technology and weapons of mass destruction (including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN)) underscore the complexity and threat of the COE. In addition, continued social and political instability, exacerbated by rampant urbanization, competition over scarce resources (e.g. water, food, fuel and other market commodities) and dramatic climate change have fueled the disintegration of the social order and resulted in increased global instability.

Further complicating the issue, diverse, networked and sophisticated adversaries, often supported by rival and or rogue states, intent on imposing their political, ideological and/or religious views have emerged. Taking advantage of pockets of instability that stretch across the globe, these groups have targeted weak and failing states, particularly for the control of their populations. Motivated by economic, political and/or religious motives, these adversaries have proven resilient, particularly in states that lack the structural or institutional capacity to respond. Aided by globalization, these nefarious networks of organized crime, narco-traffickers and terrorists, to mention but a few, have been able to seemingly seamlessly share financing, planning, information, tactics, techniques and procedures both within, and between, respective networks.

Despite the seemingly regionalized nature of these areas of conflict, their impact on global security has been enormous. In essence, local problems, if untreated, threaten to become global issues. Indeed, their activities have led to widespread acts of terrorism, insurgency, illicit economic exploitation, as well as the proliferation of weapons, the creation of terrorist training and/or staging bases, and criminal activity including trade in drugs and humans. Moreover, these illicit criminal activities have had the corollary consequences of population migration and social and political instability. Clearly, even relatively minor conflicts, or what appears

to be internal instability in distant obscure countries, underscores the need for international engagement and containment to ensure these regional conflagrations do not become breeding grounds for larger threats to global stability.

Notably, the cost of engagement post-crisis, which has become abundantly clear, is often prohibitively high. Adversaries, painfully aware of the West's dominance in technology and sophisticated military capability, have turned to persistent, slow-burning, attritional conflict, utilizing hybrid warfare that encompasses both conventional and asymmetric methodologies and weaponry to attack the enemy. Targeting the West's political and public will through long, drawn-out campaigns of attrition, our adversaries have focused on bleeding the West of blood and treasure in an attempt to force withdrawal from the respective regions of contention.

Separate, yet concomitant with the hybrid warfare and intertwined with the larger issue of regional instability, is the spectre of international terrorism, which, notably has left no nation immune. The threat of terrorism remains substantial as it becomes more and more difficult to ascertain who in fact we are fighting. The enemy is often difficult to identify as groups such as Al-Qaeda become more an ideology than a physical organization and morph into a "network of networks." In addition, an increasing number of trained and experienced veteran jihadist fighters returning to their native lands has raised the lethality and sophistication of possible attacks in various regions. Moreover, the beginning of the "home-grown" and "lone wolf" terrorists, radicalized on the internet or extremist institutions within Western industrialized states, has also started to take root.

Significantly, adding to an already complex environment, is the ever increasing ubiquitous presence of the global media. Instantaneous feeds from operational areas around the globe are pumped directly into the homes of civilians around the world in real time.

Whether through such vehicles as CNN or YouTube, seemingly innocuous tactical situations on the ground are catapulted into potentially strategic significance. In essence, the reporting of seemingly minor events can generate hostility around the world and create international incidents for domestic governments if the actions or words are construed as disrespectful or unnecessary (particularly if taken out of context).

Furthermore, increasingly unfiltered, instantaneous feeds on real-time activity, emanating from individuals and their social network devices around the globe will have the capability of fuelling conflict and instability through the ability to create flash mobs, protests and discontent. The ability to act in the margins, in a discreet manner, will become increasingly difficult and the ability to suppress social media will be extremely problematical, if not impossible. The instantaneous information society has created a new reality where individuals are empowered as a group as witnessed in the Arab Spring revolts.

In sum, the COE, and arguably the foreseeable future operating environment(s), will see only an increase in ambiguity, chaos, complexity and uncertainty. Persistent conflict, based on hybrid warfare, will be the strategy of choice by adversaries who will both feed and attempt to take advantage of global instability. Left unaddressed, simmering problems in regions throughout the world will boil over thereby creating larger security issues for the international community.

The implications of the COE for governments are enormous. Already, it has become evident that the large international institutions, humanitarian organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and alliances created in the aftermath of the Second World War, which developed and evolved in the Cold War and pre-9/11 era, are neither structured, nor designed to meet today's, let alone tomorrow's, security needs. Indeed, they are increasingly unable to deal with the conflagrations erupting around

the world. As a result, new approaches and methodologies will be required to bring stability to the globe.

Exacerbating this reality is the fact that the economically constrained environment will continue to impact the will, and ability, of these organizations, as well as nations to undertake or sustain prolonged operations in far-flung regions of the world. More than ever, this situation will create a tendency for states to react and deploy forces and provide assistance only to those missions that encompass very specific respective national interests. This hesitancy to engage global trouble spots could, in turn, create the “space” required by adversaries to further their nefarious activities and intent.

As a result, partnerships and “coalitions of the willing” must become the operating methodology of today and tomorrow. Working together, sharing the burden and leveraging geographic, technological and informational, as well as cultural attributes and specific skill-sets, will become the hallmarks of the operational approach to achieving global security aspirations in an effective and economically efficient manner.

Consequently, the traditional Western default policy of crisis response, that is deploying troops and aid after a situation has become a major disaster or significant security threat to Western nations, must be replaced by a more proactive mindset of strategic engagement. This new methodology must focus defensively on providing military and other (i.e. fiscal and developmental) assistance to weak, failed and failing states in an effort to allow them to deal with internal instability prior to the localized problems exploding into larger regional and international security threats. It will also entail engaging opponents actively on the moral and informational planes. This pro-active security posture will be particularly well supported by a global SOF network that can act as both an enabler, as well as a weapon system. After all, international SOF represent high readiness, operational agility, cultural

acuity and a wide-range of other skill-sets which, in turn, are able to provide assistance to the security forces of our friends, partners and allies, thus, creating a rapidly accessible capability around the globe.

SOF by their very nature are agile, unobtrusive and cost-effective. These characteristics, added to their low profile, make SOF an ideal force to create and grow a global network. In the end, by empowering partners to develop local solutions to global problems, SOF networks provide a rapid, efficient and effective manner of dealing with transnational threats while simultaneously minimizing the cost to each nation. In essence, they afford a collective, pre-emptive and cost-effective security solution for an increasingly volatile and interconnected world.

As such, the SOF global network is a dynamic enabler to national defence capabilities, as well as to international security. First, the network provides increased capacity within vulnerable states. It furnishes assistance to partners who possess the will but not necessarily the capacity, or expertise, to conduct counter-terrorism, as well as other security and/or national defence operations, build that capacity. This approach is key as it solves problems at the lowest possible level, ideally allowing target countries to deal with their own security issues as an internal problem, prior to the issue becoming potentially insurmountable, spreading across borders and becoming a larger international problem, notably, one that becomes complex and costly to deal with it. The “left of bang” or phase zero approach of military assistance and engaging the target countries and partnered nations, particularly their SOF, is an economy of effort. It is a case of the proverbial ounce of prevention being better than a pound of cure.

The global network is also an impressive enabler as it allows for the development of potential deep-rooted regional partnerships with all that that entails. Specifically, strong, well-developed relationships will allow for the sharing of information (i.e. cultural,

political, military, geographical). This information sharing is key, as it increases regional understanding, which promotes stronger ties, which feeds a reinforcing cycle. The sharing of information will open new networks and should increase situational awareness, critical to disrupting and dislocating threats before they become a major international concern.

In addition, global networks that focus on building relationships through military assistance and cooperation also increase military capability. First, the receiving country accesses the necessary military training and assistance to deal with internal threats on its own. This capability outlives the longevity of foreign troops deployed to the country. Second, the global network allows for the sharing of tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), as well as other professional military education and training, not only with the forces of the receiving country, but also with all of the participating partnered nations. This sharing increases interoperability, which allows for rapid coalition/partnered actions since the SOF forces share TTPs and have a common understanding and experience of working with one another.

Another key factor that makes a global SOF network an important enabler to national military capability stems from the partnerships and relationships built with the receiving countries, as well as partnered SOF. These partnerships offer the opportunity to develop regional hubs, if not forward operating locations. Whether simply agreements for landing/transiting, basing, storing equipment or training in a specific geographical/terrain-related environment the opportunities presented represent significant enhanced military capability. For example, the access to regional hubs linked to a global network increases the rapidity of military or diplomatic action. Deployment of individuals and/or organizations into a safe transit point in proximity of the objective areas, replete with access to individuals with regional expertise and knowledge, as well as infrastructure and resources is priceless in a crisis. Notably, as Admiral William McRaven, Commander US Special Operations

Command professes, “you cannot surge trust.” Trust must be built prior to a crisis and cannot be generated at the last minute. Therefore, the development of partnerships and relationships, that cultivate trust over time, feed into the provision of support during crises.

Finally, the global network as an enabler just makes fiscal sense. One nation, particularly in the current fiscally constrained environment, cannot be expected to carry the load of thwarting global chaos and insecurity. Through burden sharing, like-minded nations, partnered in their belief and commitment of a stable, secure world, can more effectively provide assistance to the vulnerable states that represent a potential risk to international security. Global SOF networks can leverage the best strengths of each contributing partner nation in terms of resources, cultural knowledge and language ability, as well as geographic positioning. Through the development of shared TTPs and professional military knowledge and training, interoperability will be advanced to the point where a larger cohesive force can be built that can work together and augment deployed forces so that the actual requirement to send troops to engage in security operations or combat will be minimized since partner nations, regionally located to the epicentre of a crisis, are able to operate alongside SOF from other nations. This cooperative approach represents a larger global reach and decreased response time, at a lesser cost.

The SOF global network also has the potential to become a potent weapon system. As already noted, partnerships and relationships build trust, mutual experience and interoperability. This collaboration in turn magnifies forces throughout the world available to engage adversaries. Quite simply, more SOF are available to address a problem. This coalition of highly trained forces translates directly into the requirement to deploy less troops and/or to have forces of different nations located in proximity of the crisis deal with the issue. NATO SOF provides a practical example. NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ) worked diligently at increasing partnering

efforts and the expansion of overall SOF capabilities throughout the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. After only six years of operations, NSHQ standardized SOF practices throughout Europe resulting in an estimated fivefold increase in the number of operators deployed to Afghanistan.

The global network as a dynamic weapon system is also manifested in quicker response times. By leveraging partnerships and regional hubs/forward operating locations, a coherent response to a crisis can be staged faster and supported longer at lower costs through the use of network agreements and resources. This use of partnerships allows for a longer, faster and more potent, as well as more economical global reach for like-minded nations intent on ensuring international stability and security.

In essence, the global SOF network enhances the strike capability. Whether intended as strategic disruption that will focus on disrupting, pre-empting and dislocating extremist, terrorist and insurgent leaders in an attempt to deprive those adversarial groups of the leadership necessary to foment global instability, or whether required as a crisis response, leveraging the global network (i.e. burden sharing through force deployment, use of hub/forward operating base concept, intelligence sharing) will ensure a more rapid, economical and effective response.

In the end, the global SOF network can only enhance national capability. Specifically, it builds on national SOF's contribution to its government and national security by providing:

1. High-readiness, low-profile, task-tailored Special Operations Task Forces (SOTF) and/or SOF Teams that can be deployed rapidly, over long distances and provide tailored proportional responses to a myriad of different situations.
2. Highly trained technologically-enabled forces that can gain access to hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas.

C H A P T E R 2

3. Discrete forces that can provide discriminate, surgically precise kinetic and non-kinetic effects.
4. A deployed capable and internationally recognized force, yet with a generally lower profile and less intrusive presence than larger conventional forces.
5. An economy of effort foreign policy implement that can be used to assist coalition and/or allied operations.
6. A rapidly deployable force that can assess and survey potential crisis areas or hot spots to provide “ground truth” and situational awareness for governmental decision-makers.
7. A highly trained, specialized force capable of providing a response to ambiguous, asymmetric, unconventional situations that fall outside of the capabilities of law enforcement agencies (LEA), conventional military or other government departments (OGDs).
8. A force capable of operating globally in austere, harsh and dangerous environments with limited support. SOF are largely self-contained, can communicate worldwide with organic equipment and can provide limited medical support for themselves and those they support.
9. A culturally-attuned SOTF or SOF team that can act as a force multiplier through the ability to work closely with regional civilian and military authorities and organizations, as well as populations through Defence, Diplomacy and Military Assistance (DDMA)/Security Force Assistance initiatives.
10. A force capable of preparing and shaping environments or battle spaces (i.e. setting conditions to mitigate risk and facilitate successful introduction of follow-on forces).

C H A P T E R 2

In closing, it is important to note that a global SOF network is not about “more boots on the ground.” In fact, the converse is true. A global SOF network leverages capacity building, resource sharing and dynamic cooperation. It allows participating nations to realize a more responsive, nimble and effective impact on fighting global insecurity at less individual cost. In essence, the global SOF network is not just a viable solution to an ever growing complex and dangerous international security environment; rather, it is an achievable, resourceful and sustainable solution. After all, the world is, and will continue to be, a complex place that holds remarkable opportunity. Unfortunately, it also contains enormous potential for chaos and violence. While security and stability is the goal of most states, there are those who would rather do harm. The global SOF network, which acts both as an enabler and a weapon system, can minimize their impact.

CHAPTER 3

LEVERAGING THE HUMAN DOMAIN

LIEUTENANT GENERAL (RET) FRANK KISNER

This chapter explores the human domain and underscores the necessity of looking at lessons from the present to ensure that we capture them when assessing the future. Understanding the human domain is critical for all the forces of government – diplomatic, economic, information and armed – in order to properly assess current and anticipated operating environments. Nonetheless, it is even more so the requirement of special operations forces (SOF) so that they may be able to offer a variety of courses of actions to allow options for our senior military and elected leaders. Notably, those options might not otherwise be available. Indeed, even with the end of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, SOF will continue to be of value in resolving 21st century challenges and conflicts due to their responsiveness and agility, and, importantly, ability to deliver unique options.

In a recent address, a former United States (US) Department of Defense (DoD) senior civilian leader discussed the past decade of war. First, he emphasized the need to study history in order to gain an understanding of the environmental factors (i.e. custom, culture and defining events) that shaped and continue to shape the operating environment. Second, he observed that “we”, referring to American decision-makers and military members, did not fully appreciate the complexities of cultural, tribal, ethnic, and familial influences on the strategic landscape of Afghanistan and Iraq.

As a senior military leader actively engaged in the conflict, I was perplexed by the civilian’s comments, until I evaluated them with the realization that “we” constitutes a perspective associated with

the level or layer of colleagues within which one defines “we”. Certainly, “we” at Task Force DAGGER in October of 2001 and soon thereafter Task Force K-BAR, understood the complexities of Tajik, Hazarra, Uzbek and Pashtun, as well as the loose geographic boundaries associated with the followers of anti-Taliban leaders like Abdul Rashid Dostam, Ustad [Atta] Mohammed, Mohammad Mohaquek, various Kahn’s – Ismail, Fahim, Bismillah – and Karzai and Sharzai. “We” also knew family and tribal relations and customs would be factors. In fact, Lieutenant General John Mulholland (who was a colonel at the time) shared a discussion he had had with the Northern Alliance, during which he asked an Afghan, “How do Americans compare with the former Soviet forces?” The Afghan, an ardent follower of the recently deceased leader of the Northern Alliance, Ahmad Shah Masood, thought a moment, then replied, “well, you are not drunk, and you don’t attack our women, and you will dismount and go after Taliban and Al-Qaeda in the mountains, but at the end of the day you are still an outsider, and if you stay too long, you will be considered an invader.” The message was not lost on any of us.

Moreover, our knowledge and assessments regarding the cultural milieu in which we operated were conveyed to our higher chain of command. Unfortunately, however, somewhere between the operational forces on the ground and the senior decision-makers in our nation’s capital, these observations and insights on the complex nature of the Afghan fight were lost, which resulted in senior leaders at the highest level not being fully appraised or fully appreciative of the dynamics of the human terrain.

One would be remiss not to ask: “how do we overcome this factor?” Human nature is such that there is a tendency to address that which we know, to identify problems for which we have a solution and to brief that which we are prepared to discuss. As such, part of the solution is to raise an appreciation for the human domain to such a level that our senior decision-makers will ask the

hard questions and demand the hard answers in order to be better able to assess the viability of a proposed course of action.

Notably, the most vexing problem we will always face with regard to counter-insurgencies and other types of irregular wars is “how do we balance time?” How do we prioritize actions to maximize outcomes while not over-staying our welcome in host nations? Additionally, on the other side of the coin, how do we convey the need to stay longer when our respective populations and/or civilian leaders send the signal that “time is up?”

SOF provide a good option that helps alleviate issues on either side of the coin. The cultural knowledge possessed and refined by SOF decreases both “risk to force and risk to mission.” By mitigating risk, SOF afford senior leadership a choice of forces that are designed to execute complex missions in high-risk environments, a fact which conversely leads to a force whose employment, oft times supported by conventional forces and enablers, encompasses less risk to a nation due to the skill of SOF to mitigate high levels of risk. Arguably, a prime ingredient of that ability to mitigate risk is a cultural understanding of the human terrain, underscored by a willingness to learn and continue to assess the ground truth.

Additionally, SOF execute missions with less of a signature/footprint compared to general purpose forces in terms of overall presence, emissions, logistics and a sustainment tail. As such, the cultural “risk” assumed by a host nation by the presence of a small formation of foreign SOF is significantly less than that which would accompany the presence of a larger foreign manoeuvre force. In short, by mitigating risks, including risks to force, mission, national will, the host nation and national prestige, SOF provide governments a geo-strategic edge which may buy more time to successfully execute a mission and to set the stage for sustained or future strategic success.

In addition to the inherent requirement of SOF to act as sensors of the operating environment for senior leadership, a secondary reason to fully understand and appreciate the human dynamics present in current and future operating environments is that SOF are expected to be able to respond at a moment's notice. As such, they should do everything possible to afford themselves that "edge" that will increase the probability of mission success. SOF connectivity and the associated ability to tap into all resources to fully appreciate the problems faced are just smart business. Moreover, the modern enemy is not stupid. Despite our best efforts, our adversaries will introduce completely unexpected future threats. To mitigate these threats, the response will likely need to be unorthodox, agile, flexible and almost instantaneous. It requires a force that is not constrained by executing along conventional paths, a force that embraces unconventional solutions to asymmetric problems. SOF, with their aptitude for working effectively in the human domain, represent the force of choice to deal with these types of threats.

The human domain should remain at the forefront of analysis of the 21st century operating environment. As with all complex problems, we will be better assured success if we can build a diverse network to address all dimensions of the human domain. In fact, it will require a willingness for experts from multiple disciplines to craft options for dealing in this domain. If there is one thing a study of history should reveal, it is that we have a greater chance of success in dealing with, and accurately addressing, the inherent challenges associated with the friendly, neutral, or enemy human domain if we look at the problem set from many angles.

Recently, the US DoD has been involved in a hearty discussion on the "human terrain," and this past year there have been numerous writings, discussions, and doctrinal papers published on the criticality of the human domain. The United Kingdom (UK), as well, has published articles on the same subject and included outstanding insight and discussions on the human domain and

human terrain in their Joint Doctrine Publication 4, *Understanding*, published in December 2010. Of significant importance is the observation in *Understanding* that, “Commanders and their immediate personal staff must aim to create a command climate within their headquarters that is conducive to the development of understanding,” which they define as an “ability to place knowledge in its wider context to provide us with options for decision-making.”¹

Notably, in October 2009, Canada published perspectives on the human domain in the *Integrated Capstone Concept* (ICC). The document states, “the term domain is defined by Webster as a ‘field of thought.’ The *Oxford Concise Dictionary* defines domain as ‘sphere of control or influence.’ Together, these definitions form the basis for using the term domain in the ICC to describe the expanded strategic environment as being comprised of the land, maritime, air, space, cyberspace, and human domains.”²

Through these descriptions, one can see why the human domain should be considered both a domain and all-encompassing. The reason to identify it as a domain is to provide focus on it. If we fall into broad generalities and allude to the human domain as all encompassing, the debate, intellectual rigor, and academic and institutional discussions will likely be lacking. As a consequence we may miss the insights that will continue to come from healthy dialogue and possibly fervent disagreement. Additionally, we may miss the absolute imperative to elevate discussions of the multiple factors affecting the human domain, and therefore we will do our senior decision-makers a gross disservice by simply not addressing it.

First a set of assumptions must be addressed. Primary of which is the premise that the 21st century post-modern security environment will be significantly influenced by non-state action, even at times less than by state-on-state action. The messy environment of non-state actors is one we would like to avoid because our strategic and diplomatic educational venues, and the

preponderance of our war colleges, embrace applied problem solving in traditional state-on-state case studies, where diplomacy and conventional armed forces allow for comfortable solutions with “rational” decision-makers.

Consequently, in the 21st century we are faced with a security environment that is a challenge to our traditional ways of thinking. If the last decade is to serve as the cornerstone for this new era in defence, the US defense forces are now in an environment that sees an intertwining of the law of armed conflict and international criminal tribunals. As such, evidence-based operations will increasingly become the norm and the normal coercion allowed by the elements of national power could be negated by the lack of a normal “state” belligerent. For example, while some nations firmly believe we are still fighting a war on terrorists and violent extremists with the conduct of military operations, other nations believe we are conducting law enforcement actions. To put it in perspective, nations focused on the law enforcement aspect want us to behave as if it were the end of the Second World War, where the focus was on prosecuting individuals for war crimes and tracking down those still not captured. One of today’s challenges, however, is that there has not been a full cessation of hostilities, nor an end to the threat to our citizens and infrastructure, both abroad and at home. Consequently, the need for continued action is still there or is created every time our citizens and/or our infrastructure are threatened.

We are in a population-centric fight and stability of our own nations are dependent on belief and confidence that governments and armed forces will keep them safe or respond quickly when threatened. As such, we must derive solutions or recommended courses of action that address both the threat and the threat perceptions of our own and of foreign populations. Simultaneously, that very immediate response must take into account the long-term effect – the strategic effect – on populations where action will occur.

For example, in 2001, we had to realign a Special Forces operational detachment from their original linkage with one element of anti-Taliban forces to another linkage after the Afghan element they were teamed with wanted an airstrike called in on a rival force that was being identified as Taliban. Luckily, we were able to determine that the airstrike was being viewed as a kinetic solution to avoiding paying a debt rather than the destruction of enemy combatants. Had there not been an understanding of culture, as well as relations at the human level, we could have very well executed a blue-on-green strike based on a clever resolution of a festering grudge that would have altered the tentative balance between family, tribal, and international forces in a way that was not favourable to our cause.

With a situation of this type being a probable component of many 21st century operations, we need to prepare ourselves better to deal with a possible coalition based on the premise that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend?” One must also be careful to remember, however, that “friends” are comprised of players with shifting alliances and competing values. Notably, 21st century state-on-state (or, if you prefer, government-on-government) conflict resolution follows a different set of rules than the 21st century post-modern global/non-border-confined environment, which is messy and could have belligerents flipping sides with no “loyalty” to a cause. In short, to better appreciate and understand this operating environment, we must appreciate and understand various perspectives on the human domain.

Admiral Bill McRaven, Commander, US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) defines the human domain as “that totality of physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior.”³ The US Army’s *Capstone Concept* (ACC), TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0, published in 2012, defines the human domain as “encompass[ing] the totality of the physical, cultural, social, and psychological environments that influence human behavior.”⁴

Providing greater depth to these brief definitions, the Canadian Armed Forces' ICC includes the analysis that "The ultimate target for the elements of power and influence has always been the human domain. What is new is the capability to communicate ideas globally, with words and powerful images, in near real-time, to create a strategic influence."⁵ The document elaborates, noting that "capabilities to influence individuals and groups have dramatically increased. Enabling technology provides individual actors the ability to shape and influence large audiences globally with propaganda and misinformation. Such means were previously limited to state actors and the mass media."⁶ One need only look at the threat to forces that developed after a Florida preacher burned the Koran in an event that went "viral" on the internet for a vivid example.

Notably, the ICC does seem a bit contradictory but this very contradiction is in itself insightful and underscores the fact that the human domain is both a separate and an all-encompassing entity. Indeed, it is noted that the human domain transcends all domains and, in fact, is the foundation and focus of effects, a point which is made in the ICC with the observation that "the human is central; the physical domains (maritime, land, air, and space) surround the human." Paradoxically it is noted that, "the human domain is a separate domain where elements of national power and influence are exercised to create a strategic effect." Importantly, the document concludes that "failure in the human domain, regardless of the level of success in the remainder of the strategic environment, could result in national strategic failure."⁷

This very justifiable concern for national strategic failure deserves greater attention. There is a danger in not learning from the lessons observed. Lieutenant General Mike Flynn, currently Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, emphasized this point in an interview published in *Defense One*. In the interview, General Flynn was asked: "With the Afghan war winding down and defense budgets being slashed, do you worry that some of the important

lessons from this decade of conflict will be lost as bureaucracies reassert themselves in the inevitable fight for scarce resources?" He replied: "I don't worry about people in the field or forward-deployed military organizations forgetting those lessons. What I do worry about is Washington D.C., because bureaucracies in this town act in funny ways. There's this tendency to view Washington as at 'the center' of things, with everything else happening out there on 'the edge.' But the edge is where really important things are happening, which means we need to change the mindset in Washington."⁸

Truisms of any conflict are that "the enemy gets a vote," and that "no plan survives first contact with the enemy," but what does that mean about the way we view the 21st century operational environment? How do we, or more precisely, how should we, account for the "human domain?" These questions span the spectrum of military operations, from pre-crisis, through potentially kinetic operations. Notably, success could be the non-kinetic capture of a nefarious actor, through post event, a term selected to emphasize that we should not automatically default to assuming peacetime operations will follow an operational endeavour, because we must understand that the just conducted operation has changed the environment. It has altered the calculus and variables in the human domain, thereby presenting another problem set to which we must adjust.

Although we have learned much over the past twelve years, neither the Afghan nor the Iraqi operations should be viewed as the single blueprint for future operations. SOF must look to current and evolving capabilities in order to provide options. Arguably, the key capability is our ability to grasp the significance of the human domain.

Notably, intelligent, deliberate and in-depth discussions are required to ensure an understanding of the significance and consequences of the human domain. Additionally, our operations will

continue to be executed in the human domain and the fact that we are raising both understanding and awareness of this essential concept is critical to success in future operations.

For example, in 2000, while attending the Naval War College, I wrote a paper arguing for the inclusion of “morale” in the US list of principles of war. In doing research for that paper, I found that the analysis applied to war a century ago has a bearing on our arguments for including the human domain as a domain today. When the US adopted “principles of war” in the 1920s, the world was still reeling from the “war to end all wars” that had resulted in millions of casualties. The realization that these losses could not again be borne affected a great study of war in the short term, and would define the operational and national strategies of the next world war. It was assumed that the “World War had been fought inefficiently and thus inconclusively because it had not been fought ‘scientifically’ enough.” To counter this notion of “science,” I argued that “...perhaps most importantly, adoption of morale as the 10th principle will serve to constantly require consideration of its attributes in the consciousness of national and military leadership, the experienced warrior, and the green recruit.”⁹

This same reality exists today. There is a need for a forcing function to require “consideration of attributes of a concept.” We know that at times the “intuitively obvious” may not be so to others and we thus sometimes require a forcing function to get our point across. That forcing function in this case is the codification and requirement to address the human terrain in every developed course of action.

A critical aspect of addressing the human domain is to expand our network into potential operating environments. The US military provides options based on access and placement. At the start of operations in Afghanistan, we looked for a forward operating base. Perhaps as much as by luck as by intent, we had personnel

conducting language immersion training in Uzbekistan, and their placement, knowledge of the strategic national players and familiarity with the host nation situation proved to be invaluable. That placement should be the norm, rather than the exception. Nonetheless, it is unreasonable to expect any one nation to have access everywhere, so that leads to the necessity to have the trust between forces, diplomatic missions and national entities that will allow sharing of everything from knowledge to platforms to relations to assets.

In my “End of Tour Report” as the Commander of the NATO Special Operations Headquarters (NSHQ) I wrote, “in today’s age of information technology, and with the global reach it affords, the NSHQ has identified BICES networking via web-based applications as both a significant enabler and an operational example of the connected forces initiative. We have learned that our initial assumptions did not fully compensate for the significant communications infrastructure and expertise that we need resident in the NSHQ-therefore a key growth area is in our J6.”¹⁰ When I penned those words, I did not go into full detail and background on all we had learned, but I did note that “we remain focused on continuing to transform SOF; on codifying and expanding information sharing protocols; and on ensuring we have necessary agility in authorities and governance. Additionally, we continue to emphasize that the authorities which allow success in today’s operations must be continued and serve as the foundation for future operations. And we enabled better-enhanced connectivity through an agreed-upon set of standards-which does not challenge individual nations’ right to develop unique capabilities, a unique signature, or a unique mode of operating.”¹¹

From this collaborative understanding, we can better ensure that our elected leaders understand the geo-strategic environment and have unrestricted access to all of the information available. They must have insight into cultural understanding and garner an appreciation for the lost opportunity and potential negative

outcomes, if they do not take this understanding into consideration. Even the best of intentions, can be bad in the “zero sum game” of human relations.

For example, a former ambassador to a south African nation, shared a story with me of where a good intention potentially had negative consequences. One should always be particularly cognizant of this danger as we know we have enemies who are clever enough, skilled enough and who possess the necessary resources to exploit any cultural mistake, no matter how innocently it may be initiated. In this particular instance, as a result of a famine the US sent an aid package which included food to an affected nation. Corn was a major part of that aid package, and since the population ate corn regularly, the aid initiative appeared to be in order. But one key cultural factor was overlooked in the zealous desire to deliver aid. The US had sent yellow corn, which is a major staple in American diets, however, in this particular nation the population ate white corn and fed their livestock yellow corn. As such, the message incorrectly received by the famine-struck population was not that the US wanted to assist with aid, but rather that the US considered the population to be on the same level as livestock. This is just one example of a very good intention gone bad by an inadvertent and unintended cultural miscue.

We have acknowledged the importance of cultural identity and norms in the past, and must continue to do so. This continuation requires study and understanding, and a leadership that will allow latitude with regard to our own rules. That same knowledge of cultural identity that drove us to grow beards to deal on an “equal level” in a society that valued that symbol of maturity and experience, should allow us to avoid unintended cultural insults. This practice will only be affective, however, if we have the knowledge and understanding to do so, and the same command climate called for in the UK doctrine *Understanding*.

In addition to adopting doctrine on the human domain and including the human domain in our operational planning and mission preparation, we need to amend our professional military education courses at all levels. One opportunity to consider as a venue to increase this understanding of the human domain is an initiative undertaken by the NSHQ, and loftily titled “Catalyst for Change – SOF Adaptability to 21st Century Operations.” The title suggests the ultimate fusion of multiple entities to best consider population-centric issues. In the proposed solution, academic and professional military mentoring is brought into the classroom to enable and expanded understanding by those operators at the team level – captains and senior non-commissioned officers – who will take their experiences back into the field. From a strategic perspective, they will have been introduced to concepts that are normally saved until attendance at intermediate and senior professional educational courses. Additionally, the relations formed from this shared experience in a classroom/field study environment will begin to build the networking amongst these SOF officers and non-commissioned officers that will be beneficial for years to come.

Certainly, there is always room for improvement, however. In an ideal world, this model would include all elements, meaning the entire interagency, and academia, and business should be included. While not possible now, we should take this as a challenge and achieve a comprehensive networking environment in the future.

In sum, one must ask, “how do we exploit knowledge so that we build friends, strengthen partners, keep neutrals at least neutral and at best supporters, and weaken our enemies?” The lesson observed, and one which all entities of a government must learn, is that we must go farther than we have already gone. We must adopt a whole of government and a whole of nation approach to better understanding and better operating in the human domain.

NOTES

- 1 Joint Doctrine Publication (JDP) 04 *Understanding*, The Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre [United Kingdom] Ministry of Defence, Shrivenham, SWINDON, Wiltshire, 1 December 2010, 3-14.
- 2 Chief of Force Development, *Integrated Capstone Concept* (ICC), (National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, ON: 20 October 2009), 67.
- 3 Claudette Roulo “McRaven: Success in Human Domain Fundamental to Special Ops,” *American Forces Press Service*, Washington, 5 June 2013.
- 4 TRADOC Pam 525-3-0, Military Operations, *The U.S. Army Capstone Concept* (ACC), Department of the Army Headquarters, United States Army, Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Eustis, VA, 19 December 2012, 15.
- 5 *Integrated Capstone Concept* (ICC), 34.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid., 35.
- 8 Interview, “DIA Director Flynn on Why Special Ops Will Keep Us From War,” *Defense One*, James Kitfield, 28 October 2013.
- 9 Lt Col Frank J. Kisner, USAF, “Morale—The 10th Principle of War: Returning the Art to the Science of War” paper presented to Joint Military Operations Directorate, Naval War College, 16 May 2000, 2.
- 10 Lt Gen Frank J. Kisner, “End of Tour Report, Commander NATO Special Operations Headquarters,” 1 July 2013, 4.
- 11 Ibid., 5.

CHAPTER 4

BACK TO BASICS: OLD SCHOOL RULES

DR. EMILY SPENCER

Thousands of human lives are sacrificed to military buzzwords – assuredly not from evil intentions, but simply from lack of independent thought.

Colonel General Hans von Seeckt, 1935¹

There is, perhaps surprisingly, much debate about the contiguous nature of war. For example, in the post-Cold War era, new terminology emerged to describe the “new” security environment. Beginning in the 1990s, a revolution in military affairs was purported to be underway and buzzwords such as “hyper-war,” “full-spectrum conflict”² and “three-block war” emerged to describe the new operating environment. More recently, “whole-of-government approach,” “integrated approach” and “comprehensive operations” have been used to describe the necessary components for victory in this era of now “fourth-generation” warfare. Notably, having a plethora of buzzwords is not unique to any specific period as the epigraph written in 1935 by Colonel General Hans von Seeckt makes clear.

In fact, new jargon has appeared throughout history to describe some of the complexities involved in the conduct of war and this phenomenon is simply underscored when a victor of a previous conflict finds himself/herself challenged to come to grips with a new antagonist. The thought process, if you will, must go something along the lines of, “this can’t be war because we’re good at war and we’re not winning here.” Redefining a problem because

you cannot find a solution that is palatable, however, does not actually change the circumstances; rather, it simply perverts your point of view. As such, it is surprising that many still argue that the nature of war is changing. It seems more apt to argue, as renown strategist Professor Colin S. Gray has, that “[i]n all of its more important defining features, the nature of war is eternal.”³

Indeed, rather than creating a new lexicon, it is important to refocus on the basics of war in order to obtain viable solutions for the contemporary and future operating environments. War has existed, and always will exist, within the human domain and solutions will continue to occur “by,” “with” and “through” our own forces and those of partnered and allied nations. Moreover, special operations forces (SOF) operating in small teams and possessing heightened skills for acting in the human domain will continue to be of vital strategic importance in the future operating environment.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF WAR

Understanding the contiguous nature of war is important for several reasons. First, while the character of war may differ from conflict to conflict and reflect new technologies and changing perceptions of morality, appreciating that the basic nature of war is immutable enables the focus to remain on solving the problem rather than simply renaming/redefining it. Second, when a common thread can be detected, the utility of past experiences can be brought to the fore and history can serve as a guide from which to pull lessons. Additionally, while the future operating environment will always remain a prediction and not a prescription of things to come, focusing on the contiguous nature of war can allow for more insight into future scenarios. Fourth, root-causes of conflict can be more easily determined when one explores the foundational pillars of war rather than being caught up in the cacophony of new buzzwords that often accompany new conflicts. Finally, this

understanding helps to remove the sense of “exceptionalism” that is often associated with the belligerent who is not getting their way – winning is seen as the natural state whereas losing is seen as a one-off and often associated with reasons beyond state control. In short, no one enters conflict with the expectation of defeat. As such, understanding the contiguous nature of war is important because it forces you to be solution driven and allows you to use past experience to help predict and shape future outcomes.

There are two main aspects regarding the nature of war that should always be central to the analysis of any conflict. First, war, defined as “a violent clash of interests between organized groups characterized by the use of force” in the US Army *Counter-insurgency Handbook*,⁴ while often seen as existing in the military sphere should never be divorced from the political, social and cultural contexts in which it exists. Indeed, victory and defeat are determined at the political level and not necessarily on the battlefield. Second, as Gray aptly notes, “War is about the peace it will shape.”⁵ Belligerents do not engage in conflict as an end in itself. Indeed, the act of war is not nearly as important as the peace that is determined by the conflict.

Regardless of the terminology used to describe the particulars of a specific type of war, these two tenets hold true. For example, wars can be categorized as total or limited. They may also be described as conventional, unconventional, irregular, asymmetric, insurgencies, counter-insurgencies, proxy, urban, guerrilla or covert, just to mention a few. Furthermore, they may be wars of attrition or annihilation. Moreover, the classification of war on one side may not match that of the opponent. For instance, one side’s limited war might be someone else’s total war (e.g. Vietnam). Notably, however, while each of these sub-categorizations can be useful for identifying details about specific conflicts, the utility gained by in-depth analysis of a “type” of war can be lost if the actual nature of war is obscured by the fine detail of a particular conflict. After all, it should never be forgotten that a war is fought for a

specific, desired outcome, or more accurately, peace. No nation fights for the sake of fighting in and of itself. As such, one should always recall that wars are won or lost in the political arena, and the political, social, cultural and military contexts in which they are fought cannot be divorced from one another. Additionally, as wars are about achieving a desired peace, they are not simply about tactical victories. Arguably, much of the Coalition efforts in Afghanistan from c. 2006-2009 appeared to be bereft of this understanding.

Viewed in this manner, the human nature of war is immutable. War is clearly a process that is created, sustained and endured by people. Consequently, it makes sense that solutions should be people driven. In particular, wars will continue to be fought “by,” “with” and “through” our own forces and those of partnered and allied nations with the goal of achieving a desired peace.

THE HUMAN DOMAIN: “BY, WITH, THROUGH”

The concept of “by, with, through” is not new and, in fact, makes intuitive sense for how conflicts should be fought and, ultimately, prevented.⁶ Clearly, achieving a desired peace at minimal cost to your own national assets is preferable to winning at a high cost, politically, socially, economically and militarily. As such, if the fighting can be done by someone else’s forces, thus minimizing costs to your own military and ultimately your political, social and economic costs as well, then it seems like an obviously good decision. Additionally, if the conflict can be avoided through military assistance and stabilization operations prior to a crisis erupting, then that is even better yet. Notably, in order to be able achieve your desired peace “through” a foreign military, actions are generally done “by” your own forces first and then after training and mentoring “with” your own forces and partnered nation forces. Finally, once the level of proficiency is achieved within the partnered force, the ultimate goal is for the partnered nation forces to

be able to conduct operations on their own in order to maintain the “desired peace”.

The issue thus becomes one of how to effectively conduct “by, with, through” operations. While the idea seems simple enough, the application of the theory is often challenging given the complexity of human nature and the multiple dynamics that are continuously at play. Nonetheless, some key principles can be distilled from both common sense and historical examples. Specifically:

1. *Do not forget or ignore the political context.* One should never lose sight of the overall strategic objective of the mission. In the case of “by, with, through” operations that is to have the partnered nation capable of conducting its own operations, preferably in concordance with your strategic intent. Consequently, relationship building, training and education should always be of primary focus. Moreover, it is important to remember that the partnered nation is a sovereign nation with their own political reality to face. As such, they remain in charge as they face their own domestic concerns and external threats. Ultimately you are there to empower them, not to take-over for the partnered nation or attempt to clone your own state of reality. In order to do so, you need to train according to the partnered nation’s means and ensure that they have the ability to carry-on following your country’s departure from the region. In essence, train to their reality. Ensure they achieve a proficiency that meets their domestic and external security requirements, which should further stability and security and help to develop good governance in the region.

2. *Be adaptable.* Theory and practice are often worlds apart. Indeed, the best plans and ambitions may not survive contact with the training audience. The key to providing valuable training is the realization that you are there to

work with the partnered nation or training audience and, more often than not, they will determine the schedule. Additionally, you need to adapt to the partnered nation's cultural expectations in order to be most effective in teaching and educating the partnered force. For instance, it is important to realize that your schedule is not always a valid blueprint for success. Not all cultures are accustomed to, or accepting of, the Western industrialized tempo of activity, much less that of a SOF level of activity. Impatience and trying to force others to work at your accepted rhythm can be counterproductive and create alienation and bad feelings. Clearly, this type of negative atmosphere will harm the teaching environment. By focusing on the overall goal of empowering partnered nation forces and adapting to their cultural expectations in order to do so, rather than keeping to your own schedule and desire to impart as much tactical knowledge as you can as quickly as possible, you are more likely to advance your country's goal of empowering local forces. The fact of the matter is that not all countries have the same resources as North American SOF. Moreover, their organizational culture will often be dramatically different. As a result, try to learn as much as possible about the training audience and adapt to their needs rather than forcing them to try to adapt to yours. "By, with, through" missions are about empowering others and imparting knowledge and technical ability. It is more effective to connect with your audience members than to force the audience to figure out how they can connect and synchronize with you.

3. *Create common ground/goals.* It is important to make sure that everyone (e.g. militaries, Other Governmental Departments (OGDs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Allies and Partners) remains focused on achieving the same goals. Unity of effort is far more important than unity of command. While people may differ in their opinion

as to how to achieve the goal, making sure that everyone is aligned in terms of the desired end-state (unity of effort) serves to encourage cooperation and understanding. Moreover, focusing on the ultimate goal of the mission – the ability for a nation to maintain stability and security within their borders – ensures that you do not lose focus on the mission’s objectives. While the military component must focus on security and defence matters, that is not to say that military assistance teams cannot help out in other areas as well. As such, coordination prior to engagement with all stakeholders, (i.e. OGDs, NGOs, Allies, Partnered nations) is critical. Also, focus the training on a goal that is both achievable and required of the partnered nation’s forces (e.g. counter-terrorism (CT), law enforcement, counter-insurgency, theory sessions on the rule of law, law of armed conflict, etc.). In essence, develop the capacity within partnered nations to conduct missions that will safeguard the state and further stability and good governance.

4. *Build trust and good personal relationships.* Trust is the cornerstone to good relationships. Trust is enhanced when the person one is interacting with feels you have integrity, are honest and have their best interests at heart. Trust is not forged quickly and instead takes time to develop. By continuously being open, honest and genuine in your interaction, you will develop good personal relationships built on credibility, mutual goals, a common understanding and trust. Maintaining some degree of individual consistency/overlap from one rotation to the next will help the group gain credibility based on the trust of known individuals. Trust is also forged through shared hardships and experiences. As such, it is ideal to train with the partnered nation rather than simply acting as instructors, observers or mentors. Show you can do what you preach. Also, demonstrate that you have

much to learn from them as well. Ultimately, you want to be able to demonstrate the capability and simultaneously develop the capacity by engaging with the partnered forces in training and on operations. Admiral William McRaven, Commander US Special Operations Command, was clear when he reminded audiences that “trust cannot be surged.” It is built over time and there are no short-cuts. Both Canadian and American operators concur with this statement arguing that common goals and extended interactions with partnered forces contribute greatly to establishing long-lasting trusting relationships.⁷

5. *Listen and appreciate context.* Being a good listener does not just mean hearing the words that are spoken. Rather, you need to appreciate the context in which they are being said and understand underlying meanings and assumptions. It is best to reaffirm what you have heard to make sure that you are understanding things correctly and appreciating the nuance of the conversation. Actively make sure that you are taking away the right points and messages from the conversation and vice versa. Failure to do so can have grave consequences. For example, throughout the counter-insurgency operation in Afghanistan, Americans were detaining certain individuals and questioning them. In the case of Afghan teenage boys, which represented a high target group since many of the insurgents in Afghanistan are young males, an Afghan elder warned coalition members that these boys needed to be “home by a certain time.” The Americans understood what “home by a certain time” meant, specifically before dark, but they did not pay much attention to the comment. While questioning could last for hours, and often only ended in the middle of the night, the Afghan teenagers were always offered a ride home – which apparently few, if any, ever took – so the Americans thought they had done their due diligence. What the American’s did not understand, however, was

that in Afghanistan, while the sexual assault of young men is not uncommon, if a young man is suspected of having been molested, he could lose all the social status that he had accumulated and often be disowned by his family. Returning home after dark, with no one to account for their whereabouts during their absence, many of the young men who had been detained could end up being shunned by their families. With few places to turn, joining the insurgency could seem like a good, if not solitary, option. Notably, it took a decade before the significance of these actions was fully understood by the Americans. They had made a conscious effort to minimize the number of insurgents in Afghanistan but, in this case, they lacked the knowledge and/or empathy to recognize that what the Afghan elder was telling them was important.⁸

6. *Do not judge – treat people as equals.* Generally when we judge others we place ourselves in a position of superiority. This sense of being better than the people you are interacting with is a huge detriment to building good relationships. Rather, even if everyone is different, you should remind yourself that you are all equal. While people may adhere to different beliefs and values than you do, that does not make them any less important or valid. Treating people as equals also encourages the establishment of trust in the relationship. Make an effort to demonstrate skills and actively participate in training rather than standing away, appearing aloof and perhaps superior. Be very conscious of military protocol and paying compliments. Avoid appearing to be in judgement of others. For example, in some cultures the simple act of taking notes in front of the training audience may be seen as offensive with the purpose being of recording data to use for later negative judgment. Instead, share your experiences, including your shortcomings, thereby allowing your partners to see you as a human and as an equal.

7. *Use critical thinking to discover root causes.* When faced with a problem, you should always question what is at the core of the issue. Continuously ask why and how when exploring issues. Do not be satisfied with the first response and instead dig deeper so you can determine what is causing the symptoms and thus come up with the real problem so that you can determine a good solution. If you do not receive the desired result with the first attempted solution, then explore further to find out what the real issue is that is causing the problem. Never assume that your perspective is definitive. Perhaps there is a fundamental misunderstanding about the purpose of the task that needs to be clarified.

8. *Have a long-term focus – do not just think about accomplishments made in a single rotation; build on previous rotations and empower others to build on your rotation.* As mentioned, building good, trusting relationships is not a fast or easy process. It can be further aggravated by changing personnel during consecutive rotations. In an ideal world, the same individuals would grow the relationships. Nonetheless, even if you are replacing a key individual in a rotation, you should not have to recreate all the relationships he/she formed from scratch. Overlap your rotation if possible or always ensure that a portion of your team overlaps with the next team and work together until you can establish credibility of your own. Build on the relationships that are already in place. Make building a network of contacts, with a consolidated, detailed databank, a key component of the mission. As such, in times of crisis, you can have a number of already established contacts.

9. *Empower the people with whom you are working.* Ultimately, the goal of “by, with, through” operations is to have the partnered nation be able to control their environment. As such, your role is largely one of training and empowering

them to do so. Even if their way of doing things is not the same as yours, you need to focus on the overall goal of achieving stability in the region. In many cases, a twenty percent solution performed by indigenous forces is better than a hundred per cent solution performed by foreign forces. This same logic applies to training. For instance, by using the partnered nation SOF as the primary instructor cadre, more credibility is accrued by the partnered forces and there is more buy-in by the training audience. Ensure that you support their officers and senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and make them the centre of attention and success. Be respectful. Pay appropriate compliments and ensure you follow military protocol. By building them up in the eyes of their subordinates and superiors you are building trust and credibility that will pay dividends.

10. *Engage a wider range of local partners.* In “by, with, through” operations, the military is but one small piece of a complex puzzle. Often, you will need to engage with members of other governmental departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local populations, including police, municipal politicians, government workers, grocers, maintenance people and labourers just to mention a few. It is important to remember that all of these people contribute to a solution. Act as a coordinator and conduit of information and action when possible. Support the process of stability and governance as much as possible. Encourage the security forces you are working with to be part of the larger solution as well. The more each of them is engaged and encouraged to work toward a common end-state, the faster the goal can be reached and the longer lasting it will be. Good relationships are key in assuring this congruence of effort.

In short, when we engage personnel in “by, with, through” missions, we are asking them to be at a minimum psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, historians, political scientists, economists, trade specialists and kinetic specialists. It is certainly a tall order, even for the most highly skilled and trained personnel. Nonetheless, it is necessary to build multi-disciplinary warrior-diplomats in order to succeed in today’s operating environment and the projected future operating environment.

SOF, and particularly Special Forces (SF), by virtue of their selection, and the training and education that they receive throughout their careers are particularly well-suited to conducting “by, with, through” missions. In addition to excellent kinetic ability, “by, with, through” missions rely on “softer” skill-sets so that SOF/SF members can educate and train partnered forces. These softer skill-sets include not only an understanding and familiarity with different elements and structures within the partnered nation but, most importantly, also demand that individuals have the ability to interact effectively with potentially diverse groups of people. As such, the environment is particularly well-suited to small teams of resourceful, adaptive, collaborative and solution focused individuals. In essence, SOF in general and SF in particular. A former American military advisor in Afghanistan observed, “[US] Army Special Forces have the unique skills and doctrine that allow it to carry out missions that require interaction with indigenous cultures.”⁹ Additionally, while perhaps slightly oversimplified, a retired US Air Force senior NCO captured another interesting point about the US Army SF when he stated that “the primary mission of the [US] Army Special Forces is to teach.” He explained, “they do their teaching right in the middle of combat missions. They go right into combat situations with military members of friendly developing nations and teach them technical fighting and military skills, as well as helping them resolve human rights issues during combat operations.”¹⁰

CHAPTER 4

Certainly, these soft-skills are, and will continue to be, in high demand in the contemporary and future operating environments. Notably, Admiral McRaven remarked, “The ‘dead of night’ direct-action operations will be fewer in number, while the more touchy-feely missions ‘by, through and with’ partner nations will increase.”¹¹

As such, it is no longer simply SF who are seeking to be masters in this domain. For example, Rear Admiral Sean A. Pybus, Commander of Navy Special Warfare Command stated that he wanted “to change SEAL training and emphasize ‘brain over bicep.’”¹² Major General Mark Clark, Commander of Marine Corps Special Operations Command also wants his Command to be prepared. He noted, “when you think of SOF you think of direct action, but it really is a ying and yang of direct action and indirect action. ... We want to push that line more to the right where it is more indirect.”¹³

These types of small footprint engagements within the human domain have always been the purview of SOF. With the likelihood of more such engagements taking place in the foreseeable future, it makes sense that training and educating for these skill-sets is once again brought to the fore, and not just for SF. In this process, it is important to remember that this shift does not signal a new way of doing things but simply a return to a traditional SOF, specifically SF, role.

Wars will always exist within the human domain and the desired peace will ultimately be determined at the political level. SOF, working in small teams and engaging effectively within the human domain, will continue to provide governments with a cost effective, small footprint option for achieving a desired peace, particularly through the concept of “by, with, through” operations, and often before the conflict actually begins. As such, we should not waste time on redefining conflicts and rewriting doctrine. We should instead focus on being good at the basics.

NOTES

1 Colonel General Hans von Seeckt, cited in James S. Corum, *Fighting the War on Terror: A Counterinsurgency Strategy* (St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2007), 51.

2 Corum, *Fighting the War on Terror*, 52.

3 Colin S. Gray, "How has War Changed Since the End of the Cold War?," *Parameters* (Spring 2005): 23.

4 Department of the Army, FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, (Washington D.C., GPO, 2006), I-1.

5 Gray, "How has War Changed Since the End of the Cold War?," 21. Notably, Gray's article provides an excellent analysis on the nature of war.

6 For a review of the history of "by, with, through," see Colonel Bernd Horn and Dr. Bill Knarr, "'By, With, Through': A Historical Success Story," Chapter 1 in this volume.

7 See Emily Spencer, "Ground Truths on Military Assistance: Perspectives from the Frontline," in this volume.

8 David C. Ellis, "'Home by a Certain Time': Ontology We do Not Know but Must" draft paper distributed to the author.

9 Potter cited in Stew Magnuson "Special Operations Missions to Require New Doctrine (Updated), *National Defense*, <<http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/archive/2013/May/Pages/SpecialOperationsMissionstoRequireNewDoctrine.aspx>>, accessed 26 March 2014.

10 Rob Powers, "U.S. Military Special Operations Forces" <<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/jointservices/a/specialops.htm>>, accessed 8 April 2014. Notably, while teaching may be a core responsibility for US SF, their actual mission set is broader: "The United States Army Special Forces have five primary missions: unconventional warfare (the original and most important mission of Special Forces), foreign internal defense,

C H A P T E R 4

special reconnaissance, direct action, and counter-terrorism. Other duties include combat search and rescue (CSAR), counter-narcotics, counter-proliferation, hostage rescue, humanitarian assistance, humanitarian demining, information operations, peacekeeping, psychological operations, security assistance, and manhunts." "Army Special Forces: Mission and History," <<http://www.military.com/special-operations/army-special-forces-missions-and-history.html>>, accessed 8 April 2014.

11 Admiral William H. McRaven cited in Magnuson "Special Operations Missions to Require New Doctrine."

12 Rear Admiral Sean A. Pybus cited in *ibid.*

13 Major General Mark Clark cited in *ibid.*

CHAPTER 5

POLITICAL GUIDANCE FOR “BY, WITH, THROUGH” MISSIONS

GREG WITOL

As the policy advisor for Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) my role is to be a resource primarily to the Commander, but also to the rest of the Command, about how CANSOFCOM’s activities should fit into the larger framework of governance. In that context, with regard to “by, with, through” missions, the following three questions are particularly intriguing. They are:

1. The important moral issues that must be confronted when choosing partners;
2. What responsibilities we bear for the misdeeds of foreign partners; and
3. The legal and policy constraints that affect the selection of partners.

Notably, while “partnering” can include both training activities and the conduct of joint kinetic operations (or even a combination of the two), this chapter will for the most part discuss training activities since that is most relevant to CANSOFCOM’s current operations.

Though I am not an academic, an operator, or an ethicist, I have the perspective of someone who advises those who “do” on the framework policies which govern CANSOFCOM’s foreign interactions. Some of these are clearly laid out by the chain of command,

particularly regarding participation in international conferences or exercises. For the most part, these are not particularly controversial and authorities are delegated down from the Minister of National Defence. What are hazier are the policies which govern more deliberate or persistent engagements – particularly if they involve capacity building or the expenditure of Canadian Armed Forces or Government of Canada resources to develop the capacities of others. These policies originate from overall government direction, extend through our Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) to the Department of National Defence (DND), and should guide the actual interactions. However, this “chain of direction” can only provide so much detail. It falls upon those with the detailed knowledge – operators, staff planners, and commanders – to guide all of this from the beginning.

Training foreign forces always carries some risk which must be offset by the expected benefits that will accrue from the training. Developing the capacity of a foreign nation to disrupt terrorist or criminal elements on its own territory, before they can become a threat to Canadian interests is – in the abstract – something that most governments would prefer. But this positive result must be balanced against potential negative results. Capacity-building missions will almost by definition take place in difficult, morally-ambiguous places. The conduct of the host nation, and the forces that we train, reflect back on the host nation population, the special operations forces (SOF) reputation, and our own country’s image as a whole.

It is not sufficient to expect that the larger strategic guidance will provide the detailed direction about choice of partners. Governments, by and large, want to do the right thing. But, they have numerous competing interests in terms of attention, resources and reputation. It is incumbent upon the SOF community, when presenting engagement options, to be aware of these competing elements when offering up training partner options.

The overall direction, the “grand strategy” if you will, should reflect the larger national interest and the overarching policy goals that governments want to attain. Larger guidance should note that we see a security or national interest advantage to our capacity building. For example, we train counter-terrorism so that host nation forces can defeat, or at least contain, violent extremist organizations in their own region; and we train anti-crime to prevent illegal activities from spilling their borders. Clearly, in almost all cases, our host-nation forces come from troubled, insecure and often corrupt regimes. It is for this reason that broad guidance usually cannot suffice on its own to authorize a mission.

Governments will want to know more information, particularly how their broad strategic direction will be operationalized, what limits will be in place (both in terms of resources and the use of force) and how inherent risks can be minimized. The deployment of armed forces abroad remains in the government’s decision space and they will want to preserve that space. Ultimately, the responsibility falls on them.

Our choice of partners implies government support for the practices and policies of the host-nation government or military, in a way that international development assistance does not. Staff officers normally work through options to present their commanders with alternatives that can mitigate, if never completely remove, risky choices. There will always be some risk but it should be minimized. That same principle must apply to the advice and operationalization that CANSOF provide to government. The short-term and often imprecise benefits to our national security or national interests must be weighed against the long-term reputation of the “national brand.”

Nonetheless, while a capacity building mission can (and indeed should) be seen as a vote of confidence in the host nation, local populations often have a very realistic impression of just how much foreign trainers can accomplish. They may indeed see the

benevolent (if self-interested) motives that guide us to take on these capacity building missions. They may not blame the trainers if the host-nation forces undertake human rights abuses, or continue to demonstrate corruption; however, they may. That must also be a part of the balance of risk and benefit.

So let us break down the decision-making process to see where the ethical constraints should be placed:

1. Government provides big picture direction – “here’s a pot of money to address security challenges in region X”;
2. Coordinating agency (e.g. DFATD) provides more detailed direction to implementing departments;
3. Implementing department (e.g. DND) places this direction within other defence diplomacy priorities and interests; and
4. Operators look at how best to implement this direction and are guided by headquarters staff.

At each level there is greater fidelity and while the responsibility still sits at the top, the level of detail and knowledge about specifics must be greater the further down the chain you go.

Governments rely on the knowledge and experience that comes from professionals. It is therefore incumbent upon planners to consider all of the direction and guidance when choosing training partners and individual units. Sometimes this information will be clearly provided, as in “provide training to country Y.” But, just as often, the proposal will be part of a much broader scheme. “Target violent extremist organizations” is a very broad direction, for example.

As we move down the “chain of direction” each level has a greater understanding of the practicalities on the ground. But if this

knowledge is not filtered through the larger government goals, then we infringe upon a decision space that is not ours to take. That expertise must address the big picture, service, departmental and national interests, and be cognizant of resources expended.

The SOF community has a “force of last resort” ethos. CANSOFCOM’s own motto “We will find a way” exemplifies this ethos. And in counter-terrorism, hostage-rescue operations, or other “no fail” missions, it is essential. Training partners, the “indirect approach” and global engagement, however, require close consideration. Ensuring the right balance between expected results versus anticipated resource costs, potential risks and even lost opportunities for other engagement options need to be considered.

This process, even when moving quickly in governmental terms, can seem interminably slow for a culture raised on a “4 hour notice-to-move” cycle. And yet, it may be that the answer to some problems is “don’t just do something, stand there.” Faithful implementation of government policy can be slow, burdensome and involve nugatory work. But achieving that goal of an “all-informed net” and preserving government decision space for the conduct of global engagement are both moral and professional imperatives.

Now, none of this is to say that CANSOFCOM’s recent efforts have not met this goal. Indeed, waiting and preserving that government decision space has resulted in many frustrated e-mails sent my way. But getting our foreign engagements right, in the long term, can be just as important as responding to long-term, if indirect, threats.

The realities of government will almost always require that specialists and experts provide their best advice, based on “big hand, small map” strategic guidance. Recommendations that flow from this strategic guidance need to both answer the specifics of the government’s intentions, and also to take into account and clearly

CHAPTER 5

enunciate the potential pitfalls and risks of the chosen action. It is with both sides of this equation that deployment authorities are respected and, most importantly, the credibility of operators and planners is maintained.

CHAPTER 6

NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERS: STRATEGIC UTILITY AND RISK

DR. RICHARD RUBRIGHT

The belief that non-Western peoples should adopt Western values, institutions, and culture is immoral because of what would be necessary to bring it about.

Samuel Huntington¹

This chapter is based upon thoughts and observations following the December 2013 CANSOFCOM Symposium in Kingston, Ontario. The panel centred on working with non-traditional partners as part of a Global SOF Network (GSN) and the way ahead for network members. While various views were presented by panel members, the subject matter is so broad and diverse it could spawn entire research projects and independent works. As a small contribution, the purpose of this chapter is to examine an inherent tension between the strategic utility of a partner and the risks associated in working with partners. This tension will cause uncertainty in policy-makers and represents some fundamental challenges to US strategic cultural norms. Yet, with an assumption that the GSN will be reinforced and expanded in the coming years, the tension will be unavoidable and should be examined prior to challenges rather than later, which may serve to exacerbate issues.

It is first most helpful to unpack the title for clarification of terms and assumptions. It is somewhat difficult to define what a “Non-traditional Partner” actually means. During the conference the subject of Private Military Corporations (PMCs) was brought up as possible non-traditional partners for the GSN, yet it was also

pointed out that PMCs and contractors have been used by the US Department of Defense for decades.² Does non-traditional imply entities which have not been co-opted into strategic efforts, or is the threshold a degree of use without regard to historical engagement? For this work it simply means organizations not commonly considered to be integral to normal military operations. So, while SOF has worked with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), within this context they have not traditionally been a part of normal military efforts until relatively recently.³ This definition lacks a desired degree of rigour, but rather, in order to be more helpful, offers broad leeway to both the author as well as interpretations by the reader.

“Strategic Utility” has an inevitable context to, and idiosyncrasies of, a specific state. No two states can find exactly the same strategic utility in anything as their political goals will differ even if just slightly. While non-state actors are concerned with strategy and strategic utility, this work is concerned with the GSN which will be state-based. As such, strategic utility is a notion which the reader should apply based upon their own strategic culture and understanding. While, clearly, some organizations, such as Al-Qaeda, are not viable partners offering strategic utility to the United States, others may be slightly nefarious and yet at least tolerable to some degree, as we will see later. For this chapter, strategic utility will be primarily contextualized through a US strategic cultural lens. Partly, this makes the concept more manageable, but it also makes the effort less perilous by negating cultural interpretations by the author. Importantly, strategic utility is not based upon the utility a partner offers to the GSN. There can be no coherent strategic utility within this context as the GSN is an organizational structure devoid of political objectives and therefore strategic meaning. Rather, strategic utility can only make sense vis-à-vis the nodal participants and their individual or collective policy goals. In essence, strategy furthers policies of a state, which in turn uses the GSN as a means to an end. The GSN in and of itself has no policy goals.

While “risks” may seem fairly straightforward, it is as loaded and complex as the meaning behind strategic utility. Risks within this context are primarily political in nature, representing a dichotomy in political purpose/perspective within nodal states of the GSN and between states participating in the GSN. In short, there will be dissenting political platforms within many GSN participants which will always find contention, and possibly fault, with their potential allies and internal contending political parties. Therefore, actions taken by any GSN nodal participant will embody political risks. Likewise, generally normative behaviour of states within the GSN may break down dependent on the threat to a GSN participant, and existential threats in particular. Standards of behaviour through which the United States judges allies could have a negative consequence on the level of co-operation the US receives from fellow GSN participants and vice versa. As with strategic utility, the author is primarily concerned with the issue of risks within a US context for similar reasons stated above.

The tension between strategic utility and risk is rooted in politics and resultant exercised military power. Fundamentally, it is a strategic problem of bridging political goals with military power at an acceptable cost for a specific attained benefit. Yet, as noted above, because the tension is political and particular to the strategic culture of the participating state within the GSN, the friction and complexity of any GSN endeavour will be profoundly difficult to accurately predict. It is therefore prudent to examine previous military efforts to better understand the challenges of working with non-traditional partners in the future, their strategic utility and the attendant risks.

STRATEGIC UTILITY AND NORMS IN TIME

An interesting aspect of US strategic culture is both its moral consistency and its evolution in normative behaviour. This paradox is counterintuitive, yet, should be fairly evident. There has always been exceptionality to the American consciousness.⁴ Often the

hypocrisy made evident through the moralistic leanings of the nation can be both inspiring and simultaneously strange when examined historically. The issue of slavery stands poignantly as such an example. A reviled institution both presently and, to a degree, historically to a righteous struggle for emancipation of profound proportion, a massive contest over the very conception of liberty and freedom upon which the United States based its right to self-determination. Yet, such a noble cause was followed by a hundred years of flagrant violation of the moralistic principles of equality through Jim Crow laws and other inequalities before the law.⁵ The point here is not to engage in revisionist history and ignore the central role of states' rights in the American Civil War. Rather, it serves only to highlight the sometimes schizophrenic disconnect between American political ideals and the realities of the world those ideals must inhabit.

A similar disconnect exists between the American conception of appropriate conduct of armed conflict and the realities of those conflicts. Consider the period after the Spanish American War in which the US subdued the Philippine effort for independence. A conflict which was successful through the brutal measures of summary executions, torture and the depopulation of many areas, all conducted by the US military.⁶ The political goal at the time was the pacification of the island chain and brutal measures were condoned.⁷ After the conflict the harsh measures were very quickly rejected by much of the American population, but far more importantly, by political opponents of the war, and to US colonial ambitions, appealing to the moral self-conception of an exceptionalist nation.

The real irony of the strategy and tactics used by much of the US military at the time was that they were the same tactics of Spanish brutality that were used to justify and initiate the conflict.⁸ Further, many of the tactics were employed by and learned from indigenous Filipino ethnic groups that collaborated with the US military.⁹ Never before had the US military worked with

indigenous Filipino groups; they were not traditional partners. They were effective surrogates and allies as they knew local customs, languages and environments. Could the Filipino surrogates be classified as non-traditional partners? With the above guideline the answer would be yes, even though co-opting indigenous American Indian tribes to fight other hostile tribes was well established in US military history.¹⁰

The tension between the strategic utility of the harsh tactics employed in the Philippines and the risk those tactics generated was a domestic concern for the United States. Given normative behaviour at the time, other colonial actors from Europe were not going to be outraged or demand war crime proceedings to review the conduct of the US military. To the colonial powers, the measures used were normative in their context and the strategic utility evident. Rather, as the United States struggled to define its place as a world power, and as a possible colonial power, a political debate about the appropriate role of the United States in world affairs was taking place. As such, the conduct of the US military was seen as a direct representation of the cost to national character which Manifest Destiny of colonial ambitions would entail. In short, domestic political context determined, albeit after the fact, the strategic utility of the colonial endeavour and behaviour of the US military.¹¹ It was clear that future colonial ambitions represented risk within the domestic political context; a risk that was subsequently judged to be too extreme to continue with Manifest Destiny beyond US borders.

A more modern example to the inherent tension between strategic utility and risk can be seen in the manhunt to capture or kill former drug lord Pablo Escobar. Following the death of University of Maryland basketball star Len Bias from a cocaine overdose there was a new emphasis on combating drugs and cocaine in particular.¹² The ensuing manhunt would take years and see involvement of US Special Operations Forces (SOF). While the hunt would be successful in its finality with Escobar's death in

Medellin, Colombia, to a large degree it would be accomplished through studiously ignoring the actions of the paramilitary/vigilante organization Los Pepes.¹³

In the hunt for Pablo Escobar it became clear that the much of the police force was corrupt, politicians had been bought off, the judiciary paid for or thoroughly intimidated to the point that the rule of law had broken down and the likelihood of ever catching, trying and incarcerating Escobar, in a real jail, was almost zero. The United States was deeply committed to catching or killing Escobar for his role in cocaine trafficking, as well as his role in orchestrating the bombing of an Avianca Flight 203 which resulted in the deaths of 107 people including two US citizens in November 1989.¹⁴ In essence, the issue moved from one of criminality and law enforcement to one being an issue of national security in which the application of military power was justified.¹⁵ At this point the strategic utility of Colombian law enforcement allowed it to become a non-traditional partner. This is not to imply that US entities like the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had not previously worked with or partnered with Colombian law enforcement, but rather, Colombian law enforcement was now strategically linked to US political objectives and the US military was authorized to help attain those objectives.

The US military in general does not make for good law enforcement and is specifically prohibited from operating in such a capacity inside the United States under normal conditions.¹⁶ Likely, there was no widespread appreciable understanding of the political risks associated with the hunt for Pablo Escobar. In a simple calculation, the US would use its power to help Colombia hunt down and kill or capture Pablo Escobar and the issue would be settled. This potentially shortsighted strategic understanding of the cocaine trade made the effort a fool's errand if the strategic calculus was to stop the flow of drugs. Yet, it can also be classified as a shrewd strategic move if the goal was to put drug kingpins on notice that taking control of sovereign states, blowing up airliners and killing

US citizens would not be tolerated. In short, Pablo Escobar's ambition and mania could be turned to a deterrent effect. It will never be known for sure which strategic calculus was in play, but the stage was set for a non-traditional partner to become a liability and therefore present a degree of risk while simultaneously offering strategic utility.

As the hunt progressed it became apparent that Pablo Escobar would not be easy to capture and was running an intolerable campaign of terror that included the killing of police, judges, politicians and criminal rivals. It became clear to some in Colombia that the rule of law and the niceties by which western democratic nations operate were not going to get the job accomplished. From this morass sprung the shadowy vigilante group Los Pepes, which in turn used the same brutal tactics of torture, extrajudicial killings, and threats to Pablo Escobar's associates and family to systematically tear down the Medellin Cartel and eventually wear down Escobar.¹⁷ Los Pepes was studiously being ignored by US officials who understood the risk which the organization posed to the US effort if an explicit connection were ever made. While a direct link between Los Pepes and US military and agencies is extremely doubtful, there is evidence that US support was used by Colombian partners to help Los Pepes further the effectiveness of their extralegal operations.¹⁸

The examples of US military action in the Philippines and US support to Colombian efforts to kill Pablo Escobar are just two examples of a normative trend in US behaviour. As a rule, the United States has grown less willing to accept and allow the US military to act in ways that violate our moralistic self-conception. This is especially true as one political party is always able to critique the party controlling the executive branch of government and, therefore, the actions of the US military. Due to domestic political structure and processes the tension between strategic utility of a partner and the political risks of the partner acting in ways that western democratic tradition deems immoral could be present

in endeavours undertaken by the GSN. Further, as the normative trend continues aided by technologic global awareness of US military and allied partner actions, the political risks associated with the use of military power will continue and likely increase.

RISKS

Historical examples of non-traditional partners to guide future endeavours is a bit paradoxical when thinking of a way ahead in the Global SOF network. History does show that partnering is a valid way to be more effective in a foreign environment. The examples are legion, from the US experience in the Philippines to the collaboration with Awakening Councils in Iraq. However, as the United States moves forward as part of a GSN, strategic utility and risks must be contextualized far beyond the American lens. Therefore, there exists not only a tension between strategic utility and risks associated with partnerships and internal political processes, there is also a relative tension of risk between partner nations vis-à-vis their individual national interest discriminators.

From the US perspective this is a difficult notion to come to grips with. A part of US strategic culture is the notion that other nations should have similar perspectives and political end-states to those of the United States. This is not necessarily because other nations are expected to support the United States in general as an exceptionalist and enlightened nation, but is rather a view that other nation's self-interests coincide with America's as defined through an American perspective. Consider the following assessment by Michael Howard when describing how the United States considered the rest of the world as it emerged as a world leader from pre-Second World War isolation:

It would be a framework of a new world of peace under law. The successive declarations to which American statesmen and their allies had set their hands, from the Atlantic Charter to the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe, were

seen not as vague statements of intent but as morally binding obligations on all parties concerned, pledging them to the creation of a new world order: that world of which liberals had dreamed for two hundred years, a world of freedom of speech and assembly and religion, of freedom of movement and trade...Neither commerce nor politics were zero-sum games, and what was good for Manchester, or Detroit, was almost by definition good for mankind.¹⁹

Howard's categorization of American ideological drive is accurate and historically self-evident, and it directly affects US strategic culture. Many western-oriented liberal democracies have developed the same moralistic and ideological underpinnings, offering a tolerably likeminded approach to appropriate behaviours and strategic outlooks. These similarities, combined with decades of co-operation through NATO, make collaboration with liberal democracies more likely even though the United States and Europe have experienced a divergence in strategic cultures over the past two decades.²⁰ However, concerning the GSN, such collaboration, while helpful, may not be as important as GSN participation with countries of differing strategic cultures and outlooks. After all, most under-governed spaces and threat networks do not reside or find their primary support populations in western liberal democracies.

The GSN is not just about longtime partners, mostly comfortable collaborating and working together to confront future threats to world stability. Rather, the partnership and trust building must take place between western democracies and nations that have not traditionally been part of an extensive security co-operative. These nations, like all nations, have specific national interests, societal norms and cultural peculiarities resulting in specific and unique strategic cultures. It is in these environments that US military and political flexibility will be challenged. The Colombian example above is unique in both time and context. Yet, it also represents a now proven, extralegal method for conducting

man-hunting operations while partnering with the United States. It was an open and legal effort to track down and kill or capture a fugitive, while simultaneously allowing an extralegal shadow organization to perform the effective yet dirty tasks that helped facilitate success. It is not inconceivable for such a process to re-occur in the future. How would the United States react today if Los Pepes and its actions were streamed live on the internet, with pictures of grotesquely tortured victims disseminated widely and available to any political or social group with an axe to grind? Could the United States as a nation accept a tacit alliance in the face of widespread knowledge of the group rather than a small and underreported story of the main stream press in the early 1990s? Likely, the risks today are higher due to greater awareness and US self-conception.

Part of Howard's description above is a central theme that the United States sees other countries having their own self-interest lay with emulation of American values and ideas.²¹ As such, politicians and policy-makers may well be correct. Yet, that does not mean, necessarily, that other countries facing problems of existential proportions will not behave in ways contrary to the normative views of western democracies. Nor is judgement of nations particularly helpful given the historical behaviours of western democracies which used harsh methods to secure their borders and position, and now allow them to be and feel secure. To illustrate the normative trend discussed in the first section, in conjunction with changing normative behaviour of the US military and the relative danger of future risks of potential partner nations, consider the following: the massacre of 173 Piegan American Indian women and children in Montana by the US military in the 1870 Marias Massacre is one of many similar events of the time but did not result in an investigation even though there was consternation.²² By 1900, the massacre of a Filipino village was an accepted act of war, and only later condemned as behaviour unfitting of US military values. By 1968, the massacre of 300 inhabitants of the Vietnamese village of My Lai would result in the

officer in charge, Second Lieutenant William Calley, Jr., receiving a conviction and prison sentence, but not the enlisted soldiers under his command.²³ By 2012, in the case of Staff Sergeant Robert Bales, the execution of Afghan villagers led to the conviction and incarceration of an enlisted soldier.²⁴ Arguably, the cherry-picking of historically relevant incidents ignores the numerous other incidents in which killings and punishments did not follow; such things happen in war. However, the chain of events demonstrates the changing nature in how warfare is perceived in western democracies in general and the United States in particular.

It follows then that risks posed by future members of the GSN can be judged with current normative behaviour in mind, but not with an historical lens. Historically, accepted behaviours are not in sync with current political correctness. Yet, even speculating on future risks associated with possible partner action using a current context of normative behaviour may be misguided. If the trend illustrated above continues, then acceptable behaviours may, in fact, be more restrictive based upon evolving idealistic, moralistic or legalistic constraints. As such, it would be too perilous to attempt any predictive set of norms which may help identify the future parameters of risk associated with a partner. Likewise, it should be fairly evident that some unforeseen risk must be manifest given the said normative trends. As such, a new approach to risk could be beneficial for actors within the GSN but would fundamentally challenge US strategic cultural norms.

NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERS

If the historical normative trend is going to continue to involve escalating idealistic, moralistic and legalistic constraints on military action, then there will be a twofold effect on partnering within the GSN. Firstly, the GSN will be of limited effectiveness without a collective acceptance of relative normative behaviour to maximize the efficiency of the network. This is unlikely to occur due to the above description of the United States as an exceptionalist nation

which acts to project its value systems. Without an acceptance of relative cultural behaviour the network will be challenged, quite correctly, as an extension of US cultural norms and not a true partnership between equals. This kind of difficulty has already been seen over the last decade as military formations find their designation as units with a history of human rights abuses to be detrimental to receiving military assistance.²⁵ Partly because individuals whose behaviours are being questioned are in many cases no longer in the unit, but also as an affront to the unit itself by a third party (United States) with no sovereign control within Colombia. It will always be difficult to build trust when arrogantly dictating values and ethics to others who perceive problems from completely different cultural perspectives.

Relativity of cultural and normative behaviours of other state participants will be difficult or impossible for the United States to paradigmatically come to grips with because it challenges American self-conception. With the stated GSN goal of "defeating threat networks"²⁶ it must be assumed that the threat network will be defined by some political entity. That political entity and designation must include some involvement by state actors. It is quite unlikely that the United Nations, International Committee of the Red Cross or any NGO will define which specific threat network must be destroyed. Such non-state entities may influence the perception of certain threat networks through lobbying, advocacy and awareness, but they will not be a direct designator of a threat network with the attendant ability to employ force against it. So if nation states remain the backbone of the GSN, then which non-traditional partners are likely candidates to enhance strategic utility? And far more importantly, what is the role of nation states within the GSN accepting the inclusion or use of non-traditional partners by another nodal actor with varying degrees of acceptable normative behaviour?

Relativity of cultural norms is not exclusive to the nation state and could have a profound impact on the GSN. For example, if a

GSN member were to attempt to co-operate with a non-traditional partner – notionally an international banking firm – the state actor would have to understand that the banking firm has its own organizational culture, its own interests and its own agenda. The pursuit of profit may coincide with a state political objective. The banking firm may be willing to co-operate in closing accounts, abiding by sanctions or creating shells for the intelligence community, but then again they may not. The banking firm may choose to circumvent the state efforts as illustrated by HSBC laundering Iranian funds in December, 2012 in pursuit of profits.²⁷ Likewise, non-state international actors like NGOs may want the same end-state of a defeated threat network, but due to organizational culture of the NGO, may differ greatly on the accepted practices to achieve that end state. Just as states have risks associated with action, usually political risks, other organizational cultures of non-traditional partners may associate risk in different ways. The international banking firm may associate action as representing risk to profit, while an NGO may associate action as representing risk to access in other geographical locations if they are seen to be a partial tool of state goals. This should illustrate that the tension between strategic utility and risk is complex when several nodal states are involved, but it gets far more convoluted as more non-traditional partners are added, each with potentially profoundly different goals and organizational cultures.

Secondly, non-traditional partners will cause an inherent tension for the United States (and every other participatory state) between acting upon a national interest discriminator and the need to maintain the GSN as a viable strategic tool for policy-makers. To illustrate this tension, consider NATO as an organization, and NATO as representing a function from a geopolitical perspective of the United States. NATO cannot, and should not, be seen as a stagnant unchanging entity existing in a vacuum. The context of the alliance provides meaning and function of the alliance, but only at a given point in history. NATO of 1970 acting as a collective security organization to deter communist aggression is very

different from NATO in 2014 acting as a group of similarly oriented western democracies, effectively sponsored by the United States financially, and without a clear geopolitical purpose. In 1970 there was no doubt of NATO's role and its purpose. Yet, today an argument can be made that it exists more out of organizational inertia than out of true necessity due to an existential threat. Is it really in the United States' best interest to continue to bear the majority of financial responsibility of the alliance? Or does the message of unity serve a global effect worth the financial costs? On whichever side of this debate one may fall, the fact is that a policy of support to the alliance continues, and perhaps it is a policy that is not rooted in US national interest.

The GSN could evolve along the same lines as NATO. While there is a clear need, and a clear will of some states to participate in an alliance to engage threat networks, at which point will the GSN develop the inertial character of NATO? This is important because once the GSN starts to be supported as an organization for its representational aspects, rather than its strategic utility, then partnering becomes a matter of diplomacy rather than one of strategic utility. It is at this point that the organization will take on a life of its own. This is not to say it is a negative event. Just as NATO's continued evolution is not necessarily a negative outcome. After all it is not known if NATO will again be needed. Likewise, there is no way to tell if GSN will not be needed one decade, yet be needed the one following that. In short, if they continue as organizations, then they can be utilized in the advent of a crisis without the need to reinvent the organizational wheel.

Yet, the possible divergence of the organization in terms of strategic utility with the need to simply support the organization's existence can become problematic when non-traditional partners are added. In a theoretical example of a NGO that is working to bring clean water to areas without a potable source, the GSN may be able to partner with such an NGO as part of a counter-insurgency effort. Yet, what happens when the threat network in

the area has been neutralized? Does the NGO continue to partner with the GSN? Does the GSN owe continued support to the NGO's objectives? At what point does the GSN become an organization that furthers the non-traditional partner's objectives and is it sustainable? As stated previously, each non-traditional partner organization will have its own organizational culture. When the GSN partners with such organizations it runs the risk, however small, of morphing into an entity that, for the United States, is less interested in US national interests. NATO serves as a cautionary tale, what was a tool of strategic utility can become an occasional tool of strategic utility while simultaneously being a jobs program, a diplomatic organization, a point of tension between partners if not allies, and a financial drain for the United States.²⁸ Non-traditional partners will want organizational support from the GSN, just as state partners will, and in time this may exacerbate divergence of US national interests with what may become the GSN's interests.

CONCLUSION

Partnering in the GSN between national states as nodal actors is complicated with varied strategic cultures, political objectives, strategic utility and potential risks. Non-traditional partners offer opportunities to broaden the support and effectiveness of the GSN, but they are much like nation states, yet perhaps even more varied and dissimilar. This means they bring a level of complexity that exceeds state participants. This does not mean they have no use, should not be utilized, or will be detrimental. It simply means that the complexity at the political and strategic cultural levels should be appreciated and thought through.

The issue of non-traditional partners becomes even more difficult to contextualize due to US strategic culture and the continuing historic trend of increased constraints on the US military and with whom the US co-operates. Nefarious actors and groups are potential non-traditional partners, if there is the political will and understanding of harsh realities to work with such groups. Short

term partners of convenience are not necessarily bad, but they are risky. The political risks of partnering for effective results may be less attractive than partnering with “good guys” even if that means failure to achieve the political objective; an ironic twist of domestic US politics, but reflective of US cultural norms.

As the United States moves forward as a participant and sponsor of the GSN, policy-makers and military professionals should appreciate the complexity of the task, the opportunities which non-traditional partners present, and the attendant tension between strategic utility and risk.

NOTES

1 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 310.

2 Dr. Nick Gardner, CANSOFOCOM Conference, Kingston, Ontario, 4 December 2013.

3 “Non-Governmental Organizations and the US Military”, <http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu/library/publications/bibliography/NGO_Pathfinder_March2010.pdf>. While there has been collaboration between the US military there is recognition that improvements in relations and better understand needs to be fostered in the future as NGOs become more important in whole of government efforts. Accessed 2 February 2014.

4 John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security and the American Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 26.

5 “Jim Crow Laws” <http://www.nps.gov/malu/forteachers/jim_crow_laws.htm>, While in a historical context slavery and Jim Crow

CHAPTER 6

were considered separate issues and comparing them as paradoxical would not be accurate for the time period, within today's conceptions they represent a logical disconnect. This highlights the everchanging nature of perspective within the American experience and further illustrates why generalities about American culture are so perilous. Accessed 5 January 2014.

6 Gregg Jones, *Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines, and the Rise and Fall of America's Imperial Dream* (New York: New American Library, 2012), 206-207, 215.

7 Mark Moyar, *A Question of Command* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 75.

8 Gregg Jones, *Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines, and the Rise and Fall of America's Imperial Dream* (New York: New American Library, 2012), 2.

9 *Ibid.*, 215.

10 Denis P. Ryan (Edited by), *A Salute to Courage: The American Revolution as Seen Through Wartime Writings of Officers of the Continental Army and Navy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979) 138-139. US co-operation with American Indian Tribes far predates the American Revolution. However the American Revolution provided considerable opportunities and need to use proxy Indian tribes by both the British and Colonial Army.

11 Gregg Jones, *Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines, and the Rise and Fall of America's Imperial Dream* (New York: New American Library, 2012), 352-353.

12 "Colombian Paramilitaries and the United States: Unraveling the Pepes Tangled Web" <<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/cron/>>. The War on Drugs has a long history in the United States but the death of Len Bias focused the media, and therefore politicians, specifically on cocaine. Prior to the attention cocaine was not considered a problem on the same level as it would be after. Accessed 15 February 2014.

CHAPTER 6

13 “Thirty Years of America’s Drug War” <<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB243/>>, accessed 19 February 2014.

14 “Drug Trafficker Convicted of Blowing Up Jetliner” Available at <<http://www.nytimes.com/1994/12/20/nyregion/drug-trafficker-convicted-of-blowing-up-jetliner.html>>. The person actually responsible for the bombing was Dandeny Munoz-Mosquera, a hit man for the Medellín drug cartel headed by Pablo Escobar. Accessed 12 February 2014.

15 Mark Bowden, *Killing Pablo: The Hunt for the World’s Greatest Outlaw* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), 81.

16 “Posse Comitatus Act”, <http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/Posse_Comitatus_Act.html>. Under certain conditions the United States may use the military in a law enforcement role. However, these situations are extremely rare and require expressed authority by the United States Constitution or through an act of Congress. Accessed 20 February 2014.

17 Bowden, *Killing Pablo*, 263.

18 *Ibid.*, 268.

19 Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1978), 117.

20 Robert Kagan, *Power and Weakness in American Power in the 21st Century* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2004), 135.

21 Colin Gray, *The Sheriff: America’s Defense of the New World Order* (Lexington, KY: The University of Press of Kentucky, 2004), 9.

22 “Blackfeet Remember Montana’s Greatest Indian Massacre” <http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/sunday/article_daca1094-4484-11e1-918e-001871e3ce6c.html>. The massacre did cause outrage as almost all of the dead were women, children and old men. Yet, it was celebrated in Montana at the time and there was no ensuing investigation or charges filed against the officer in charge, Major Eugene Baker, or his men. Accessed 12 February 2014.

CHAPTER 6

23 Gregory A. Daddis, *No Sure Victory: Measuring U.S. Army Effectiveness and Progress in the Vietnam War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 176.

24 “Army’s Robert Bales Gets Life, No Parole for Afghan Rampage – But was it Justice?” <<http://www.cnn.com/2013/08/23/justice/robert-bales-afghan-killings/>>, accessed 12 February 2014.

25 “Conditioning Security Assistance: Human Rights, End-Use Monitoring and the Government’s Inability to Curb the Paramilitary Threat” Available at <<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB69/part3.html>>, accessed 20 February 2014.

26 “USSOCOM, Special Operations Forces 2020: The Global SOF Network” <<https://sof.socom.mil/sites/opt/global/Readingroom/default.aspx>>, accessed 20 February 2014.

27 “HSBC to Pay \$1.92 Billion to Settle Charges of Money Laundering”, <http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2012/12/10/hsbc-said-to-near-1-9-billion-settlement-over-money-laundering/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0>, accessed 20 February 2014. It is likely that many other banks engage in similar behaviours out of interest in profits rather than taking sides in particular international political disputes. The interesting issue here is that when a bank behaves in such a manner it is attempting to act unilaterally.

28 Congressional Research Service, “NATO Common Funds Burden-sharing: Background and Current Issues” <<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30150.pdf>>. The report does make a case that the burden sharing aspect of NATO’s funding is not onerous on the US as a percentage of GDP. Yet with the absence of a viable strategic threat, and hence clear purpose, the overall question remains whether or not the monetary outlay is in the US national interest. Further the report makes clear that NATO’s purpose and the assets which member states bring to the table are varied.

CHAPTER 7

NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: FOUR BASKETS AND A CAUTION

DR. DAVID LAST

What are non-traditional partnerships for Special Operations Forces (SOF)? Why do we need them, and should we be worried if we get them?

Traditional partnerships for SOF in Canada involve the United States (US) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), other predominantly English-speaking countries, our own foreign ministry and development agencies, police and border security, and those involved in the management of major events. But the world has changed. The US is no longer the indispensable power and regional power configurations are more important. Diminishing American hegemony expands freedom of movement for global civil society, for corporate networks that transcend states, and for the interfaces between corporations and crime. Domestic political environments require more sophisticated SOF who have an understanding what political and bureaucratic leaders expect.

To remain effective, SOF need to track relevant knowledge of political, economic and social changes. In order to do so, four baskets of non-traditional partnerships are suggested: geographic partnerships with regional leaders; functional partnerships with civil society and corporations, and perhaps even those on margins of legality; strategic domestic partnerships; and knowledge partnerships. All of these partnerships come with a caution: it is easy to be affected by those we associate with or to come to mimic those we fight.

The sophistication and flexibility of SOF ensure that they will be the future of armed forces and police in a rising number of countries. Nonetheless, SOF must tread carefully in this new world of increased partnerships in order to assure that their integrity is not compromised in the process. Decline of violence owes a lot to effective control of government instruments of violence¹ and if SOF can slip these bonds through new partnerships, little will have been gained.

BACKGROUND

There are 194 members of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and about 228 states and territories on the ISO9000 standardized lists. The median population of UN member states is eight million. By most indicators, the US is one of about a dozen outliers. Half of all states have a population between 2 and 25 million, and only 12 states exceed 100 million. The majority of the world's states are much more like Canada than the US, although even Canada is in the high mid-spread of most indicators for size, wealth, education and state capacity. Without making any pretense to Canadian leadership, it makes sense to focus on the majority of the world's states, rather than a few outliers, if we think that the state and its tools are the main instruments of security.²

For Canada, and for most of the rest of the world possessing or thinking about SOF, it is easy to define traditional partnerships: they are generally summed up by "3D": defense, diplomacy and development. They may entail domestic co-operation with police and border services. They probably include coordination and securing of major events. For most Western or Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, traditional partnerships also mean working with the US and NATO in areas of common engagement – international peace support operations and, over the last decade, a few significant expeditionary wars.

For the majority of countries SOF are an amorphous category, ranging from special units like the Canadian Joint Incident Response

Unit (CJIRU) which deals with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats, to hostage rescue and special police response teams, battalions of better-than-average light infantry to even just fit soldiers with balaclavas and rubber boats. Arguably, any task force or unit that is called upon to prepare for or execute tasks not normally assigned to conventional forces might be deemed “special”. In this regard, the American designations of “Tiers” have little meaning for the majority of SOF around the world. Drawing this distinction does not diminish the significance of the “special”, however.

THE CONTEMPORARY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

By the time the Berlin wall had been rubble for a decade, the shape of the new international order had moved from the post-Cold War to something like a new normal. In a 1999 essay, “The Lonely Superpower,” Samuel Huntington noted that the US could not really claim to speak for the “international community” on most issues. If it was true in 1999, it was even more so with the ascension of President George W. Bush and the henchmen of the Project for a New American Century.

Interestingly, in the 1990s, Huntington referred to global power in terms of “uni-multipolarity”. From outside the US, however, the next decade looks like one of prolonged setbacks for American power. Two indecisive wars, erosion of international institutions in favour of unilateralism and pre-emptive action, major failures of the American-led financial system and loss of trust from being caught spying on friends has left the US looking a lot less like a hegemonic power. Having to shut down government and contend with malcontent isolationists has allowed some allies to suspect abdication on top of sliding power.

Ole Waeber describes the new strategic environment as 1 + 4 + 11 regions and accepts the spirit of Samuel Huntington’s 1999 characterization of uni-multipolarity.³ In his assertion, the US is still the

dominant power, but its reach is tempered by the local superiority, and wider interests, of three other major power blocs: Russia, China, and the European Union (EU). Most significantly, security is increasingly divided into regional security complexes whose boundaries are shaped by the ways in which actors construct security issues.⁴ While these regions are not immutable, the post-Cold War regions identified by Waever and his colleague Barry Buzan in 2003 seem reasonably durable for now.

While the US, Russia and China are still major powers, the fourth actor in the 1 + 4 formula is not a unitary actor. Indeed, the security resources of individual states in the EU are constrained, so all of the old and new NATO members fall in with the majority of states and have little in common with the top three states. Even the United Kingdom (UK) and France, as members of the Security Council, no longer have global reach. Meanwhile, the emerging powers – Brazil, India, South Africa, Indonesia, and maybe Nigeria – are all regionally centred, with little hope of global reach, and often with more severe internal conflicts and constraints than the top three and the EU.

WHY FORM NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS?

In this evolving strategic environment, why should SOF now consider new and non-traditional partnerships? The most important reason is that our understanding of security itself has been changing since the end of the Second World War.⁵ It is widening to include non-military aspects and is therefore increasingly focused on political, economic and social goods that cannot be secured by military force alone. Secondly, it is deepening beyond the concept of national security, to include both human security below the state-level and international security above the state-level.

Government objectives in the international system reflect this evolution, whether it is the internationalist agenda of Former Prime Minister Paul Martin's Liberals, the trade-focused economic

agenda of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservatives, or analogous developments in other countries. Domestic government structures and power-bases are changing in Canada, and comparable transitions are going on in other countries. For example, in Canada, the majority Conservative government may represent fundamental and long-lasting changes to Canada's domestic political consensus.⁶

Inside government, the Management Accountability Framework (MAF) and the flood of new policies, frameworks and guidelines since 2009 has shifted influence significantly from the Privy Council Office (PCO) to the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS), combined with a longer-term drift towards greater control by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).⁷ There is always potential for tension between appointed advisors with a coordinating function, like the National Security Advisor, and Cabinet Ministers with financial authority and accountability.

Against both the international environment and the changing domestic landscapes, American-led global networks have limited currency. First, they sometimes fail to account for increasingly salient regional security concerns. Second, they inevitably privilege American interests, which may be viewed with increasing suspicion following American unilateralism and decline. Former US President George Bush's ill-conceived League of Democracies proposal had less traction than Russia's Cooperative Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).⁸ American leadership can still be instrumental, as AFRICOM's role has shown in building the African Union's Peace and Security Architecture. It seems to be most effective in an enabling rather than a directing mode, however.

Given the evolving nature of the contemporary operating environment, in order to deal with evolving domestic and international pressures, SOF, from the majority of the world's countries, should consider re-thinking both their strategic and tactical partnerships.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BY SOF?

Thinking about partnerships for the future should be in the context of the emerging tasks for the future. A list of SOF tasks for major powers with no intention of relinquishing global reach is summarized in Table 7.1. These tasks are likely relevant for other nations' SOF as well. All these tasks underscore the traditional list of partnerships for SOF. Moreover, a comparable range of tasks was investigated in Canada in a study sponsored by the Asymmetrical Threat Working Group in 2003-2004. In addition to identifying tasks, this study sought to determine how much support there was for particular tasks amongst politicians, opinion-leaders and decision-makers in government.

FUTURE SOF TASKS	RELEVANCE TO MAJORITY STATES
Strategic services	Only with international organizations
Global scouts and ambassadors	Yes
Interagency facilitators and Operators	Yes
Ground truth (reconnaissance)	Yes
Institution building (formerly FIDAD)	Yes
Information Operations	Yes
Counter SOF	Maybe
Coalition support	Yes

TABLE 7.1. VISIONING SOF FUTURE TASKS.⁹

Researcher Stephanie Mullen explored the perceived importance of certain Canadian Special Operations Forces (CANSOF) tasks with parliamentarians of four major parties (Liberal, Conservative, New Democratic, and Bloc Quebecois) and listed them in order of diminishing support in two columns.¹⁰ (See Figure 7.1.) Several observations are worth elaboration. First, support for non-kinetic operations was stronger than for kinetic operations. Second, politicians, opinion-leaders and senior bureaucrats alike were more comfortable with tasks that had international support or

authorization than operations conducted unilaterally or in coalitions against opposition. Third, consequence management was generally more enthusiastically received than pre-emption.

Roles and tasks are evolving, but the political preference for remaining within the norms of international society is well established and likely to remain a factor not only for Canada, but also for the majority of the world's states. Rules that constrain the behaviour of others are generally a good idea. The injunction to "do to others as you would have them do to you," applies to states as well as people.

Limiting the variety of permissible or desirable special operations in accordance with international norms suggests that the range of partnerships, which is theoretically wide open, may also be constrained. Even the largest states pay a cost when they break the norms of international society, for example by launching un-sanctioned wars or spying on their "friends". For the majority of states, this cost is prohibitive. On the other hand, there are rewards for playing well with neighbours. Co-operative players do well in iterative games and states cannot change their neighbours.¹¹

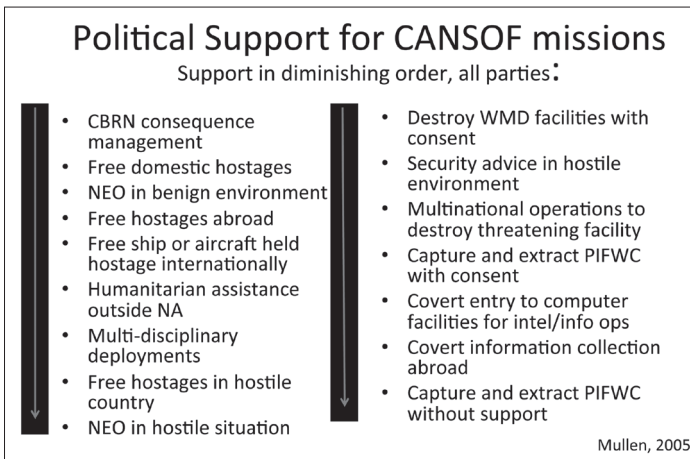


FIGURE 7.1. POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR CERTAIN CANSOF MISSIONS.¹²

FOUR BASKETS FOR NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Regardless of the evolution of missions, partnerships can be categorized in general terms as home and away, geographic and functional. Canada's traditional partners have been the US and NATO allies, and our close strategic twin – Australia – with New Zealand through The Technical Cooperation Program (TTCP), and America-Britain-Canada-Australia (ABCA) arrangements. As we look to the future, we have to think about the increasingly regional nature of security. Our first task for international operations will therefore be to identify the new strategic partners that may become increasingly significant within the various regions in which we might have to operate. This group represents the first basket. In the second basket, we find a diverse array of functional partners, representing emerging sectors that are not well represented in our thinking about how to influence the world around us. If we do not understand how to engage them, we may be in for some unpleasant shocks. In the third basket, we take an unconventional look at traditional partnerships in the domestic sphere. These are the basic political enablers that permit SOF to be deployed and used effectively.

First Basket – Geographic Partnerships with Regional Leaders

It is going to be increasingly important to cultivate strategic partnerships with states that are regional leaders. Developing a rapport between SOF of different nations may be one way of doing so while preparing for regional operations when it suits strategic interests. But which states are rising regional leaders?

If ongoing conflicts in Syria, Somalia, and across North Africa tell us anything, it is that the 1 + 4 cannot be relied upon to step in everywhere. Nonetheless, international organizations can work, if given enough time and support. The UN Special Envoy has

been an essential go-between in Syria and the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has been instrumental in the verification and destruction of Syria's chemical weapon capabilities and stockpiles. As the conflict in Syria risks spreading to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey, regional organizations including NATO and the Arab League have become increasingly active in monitoring, mediating and preparing for action.¹³ Regional organizations under Chapter 8 of the UN Charter, however, do not always coincide with the functional boundaries of security complexes.

A regional security complex can be described as a group of states whose security is defined in relation to one another. Although geography is fixed, security relationships are not. Since the end of the Cold War, an Asian security super-complex has been emerging under China's influence, much of it cooperative. Turkey may yet emerge as a regional hub for the Black Sea region, which is currently divided between Europe and the Post-Soviet security complexes. Ukraine is visibly torn between Moscow and Europe. Some scholarship suggests that there is room for stronger north-south ties within the Western Hemisphere,¹⁴ but other work suggests that both economic and political integration is moving faster within the South American regional security complex.¹⁵

It would be useful to have a short list of likely regional leaders, based on the concept of emerging regional security complexes. Size (population), wealth (Gross Domestic Product or GDP) and military strength (armed forces manpower) are all significant discriminators for regional leadership, and comparable data are available from the World Bank. However, the concept of intellectual capital may be more important in the long run. Intellectual capital tells us about the capacity of a country to generate new knowledge, which is certainly a major factor in political, economic, and social leadership. A good proxy for intellectual capital is the total number of citable documents produced by a country over a fixed period.¹⁶

CHAPTER 7

Using citable documents as a proxy for intellectual capital helps to identify regional leaders in knowledge networks. These tend to be more stable and effective countries with investments in higher education. In Table 7.2, all the states in the top quartile for each region on their measures of population, wealth (GDP) and citable documents are listed as probable regional leaders.¹⁷ Whatever the current status of countries like Iran or Pakistan, we can assume in the long-term that their full inclusion will be an important step towards regional security communities that function effectively.¹⁸

The top one or two in each region are the new leaders we should think about most seriously, but there may be second tier leaders whose effective governance or important resources may allow them to punch above their weight, as Israel does. Botswana and Singapore also come to mind.

Region	Leaders	Population (M)	GDP (\$M)	Citable Docs ¹⁹
Asian Super Complex	China	1,350.7	12,470,982	2,655,272
	Japan	127.6	4,487,301	1,734,289
	Korea, ROK	50.0	1,540,151	566,953
	Singapore	5.3	328,323	144,653
Middle East & North Africa (MEA)	Israel	7.9	252,013	215,590
	Iran	76.4	1,016,000	197,571
	Egypt	80.7	542,738	87,658
Post-Soviet (PSO)	Russia	143.5	3,373,166	579,814
	Ukraine	45.6	338,334	108,782
South Asia (SAS)	India	1,236.7	4,793,414	716,232
	Pakistan	179.2	517,873	55,915
Africa (West, Central, East, & Southern)	South Africa	51.2	585,625	118,747
	Nigeria	168.8	449,289	40,124
	Kenya	43.2	76,233	16,044
	Uganda	36.4	49,130	7,014
South America (SAM)	Brazil	198.7	2,365,779	446,892
	Argentina	41.1	755,300	114,659
	Chile	17.5	390,374	66,972
Buffers	Turkey	74.0	1,357,734	291,814

TABLE 7.2. IDENTIFYING REGIONAL LEADERS.

Second Basket – Functional Partnerships with Emerging Influence Agents

Just as the world's strategic geography has adjusted to the end of the post-Cold War period, so has the strategic landscape of its political economy. The end of bipolar confrontation in 1989 allowed the rapid expansion of a neo-liberal world order, but the decline of US dominance has left much of this expanded influence untouched. A global society and economy have been unbound, and will not recede without a major shock. This paper will touch on three functional areas that suggest non-traditional strategic partnerships for SOF: Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) networks as global civil society; Corporate networks as threats and enablers for national strategy; and the grey zones where legitimate business intersects with unregulated and criminal activity.

Beyond NGOs – Global Civil Society

SOF are accustomed to thinking of NGOs as tactical players, and have successfully worked with them in conflict zones and during natural disasters. Much has been written about the messy problems of coordination and cooperation, and we are still struggling to find solutions. Collectively, however, NGOs help to shape global civil society. Civil society can be understood as the sum of voices not controlled by governments.²⁰ At the global level, NGOs help to aggregate interests and articulate positions, but they are also important agents for collecting and managing information and directing it towards opinion-leaders and decision-makers.²¹

As new threats emerge, NGO networks may be important allies for majority countries in collecting and managing information, and mobilizing for action. In the past, NGOs mobilized against the corporate agenda reflected in the Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI), which would have had a disproportionate impact on smaller and poorer states.²² If we accept the importance of constructed understanding for collective action, then global civil

society embodied in NGOs may be crucial in managing emerging threats like climate change and survival migration.²³

SOF may run information operations to cooperate with, or attempt to shape, NGO engagement. NGOs may be the larger sea within which extremists swim, as the Black Bloc did during the “Battle for Seattle” in 1999. But for SOF, police, and intelligence services in smaller countries, looking for allies in NGOs is likely to be more fruitful than looking for enemies. After all, NGOs usually consist of middle class citizens of majority countries.

SOF handlers and national policy leaders should be cautious that the special capabilities of SOF are not mobilized for corporate interests in opposition to those of global civil society, which may be closer to representing the public interest. This caution brings us to the second non-traditional partnership.

Beyond the Private Sector – Corporate Networks

We are accustomed to thinking of private sector partners as contractors, but corporations are part of the strategic environment, whether they are working for us or against us. Most of the Fortune Global 500 engage private security companies and some deploy significant assets – armed ships and helicopters, armoured cars and paramilitary forces for security of personnel, assets and information, for example.²⁴ But if we focus on these assets, we miss the point. It is their political and economic activity, particularly in conjunction with state actors, which makes them significant players on the world stage.

Hegemonic powers like Britain in the 19th century and the US in the 20th century are champions of free trade because they dominate and benefit from it, but they also benefit from state-supported enterprise on their way up. In mercantilist tradition, the Hudson’s Bay Company and the East India Company were vehicles for subjugation, expropriation and incorporation of peripheral territories into the world capitalist system.²⁵

Major corporations can support states, but they can also threaten them, both from inside and outside the geographic boundaries of states. The smallest of the Fortune Global 500 is Ricoh, with revenues of \$23.2 billion. This revenue is larger than the GDP of 65 of the world's countries. In fact, there are more than 500 companies that can vie with states for wealth and power. But it is not just the size and pervasiveness of corporations that make them significant. They are important for their access to, and control of, human, financial, and intellectual capital, both as proxies for state action (whether they are state-owned or state-supported enterprises) and as potential threats to states through their actions, which might not be intentionally hostile to states' interests, but are no less devastating in their unintended consequences.

There are three sorts of corporate action that can threaten the majority of states. The first might be labeled predatory extraction: state-owned or supported corporations can act like predators, with consequences for both national and human security. Sometimes actions can be dismissed as normal market operations and domestic politics. For example, Brazilian based Vale bought Sudbury's Inco in 2006, allegedly saving it from disaster, but then reneged on many of its undertakings to preserve employment and, by 2012, it was described by opposition politicians as a "net drain". This chain of events may sound like normal market operation and normal politics but if one state invests public resources to build up assets or capabilities important for human and national security, and another state uses public resources to support a private company engaged in raiding, asset stripping, or eliminating competition, then we might be witnessing mercantilist style economic warfare.²⁶ It is not surprising then that there are accusations of state-sponsored spying, both by Brazil in Canada and by Canada in Brazil.²⁷ Indeed, part of the angst over the Wikileaks and the Eric Snowden disclosures is the revelation that a significant part of the information gathering appears to have had commercial rather than national security objectives.²⁸ We are still getting used to the implications of wider and deeper interpretations of security.

The second form is direct economic violence: with or without state support, companies can be involved in direct violence against citizens in foreign countries, through physical force or through market mechanisms. Canadian mining company HudBay is being taken to court in Canada for shootings in Guatemala, for example. It is alleged to have engaged paramilitary forces to intimidate locals and drive them off the land.²⁹ Somewhere on the continuum between the brute force alleged in Guatemala and the market operations of mining companies described above lies Bechtel's strategy for profit from water privatization in Bolivia, which threatened the lives and livelihoods of tens of thousands of Bolivians. It was referenced (or perhaps satirized) in the James Bond film "Quantum of Solace."

The third form of corporate action requires a network and can be described as predatory international finance. Banks and international financial institutions make decisions about investments, currency holdings, interest rates and access to finance. For instance, decisions of the Paris group of national banks holding the sovereign debt of Yugoslavia in 1990 helped to precipitate that country's crisis and civil war. More recently, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund are shaping the environment within which Greece, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and Italy must implement austerity programs, resulting in dramatic economic and social consequences.

Banking and financial decisions may not be predatory actions in themselves; they are efforts to resolve imbalances in productive capacity, taxation and public spending. They become predatory, or may be perceived as such, however, when some states consistently benefit at the expense of others. Combining a sense of injustice with the sort of economic dislocation experienced in Weimar Germany and the resources available to small groups in the 21st century provides motive, means and opportunity for disruptive counter-attacks.

We should not assume that any country is immune to financial manipulation. Author James Rickards describes a long history of currency wars which have had a major impact on the balance of power over time. Rickards approaches the topic from the perspective of a Wall Street operator.³⁰ Similarly, William Clark provides a perspective on the Iraq war as means to prevent Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) moving towards the Euro as an oil transaction currency, thereby representing a different sort of currency war.³¹ According to Rickards, the present currency war involves a struggle to stave off deflation through quantitative easing, at the risk of hyperinflation. The battleground in this scenario is the value of the US dollar, as we live in a global trading environment grounded on the US dollar. In 2009, the US Warfare Analysis Laboratory gamed a global financial war using currencies and capital markets, without any kinetic involvement. In his analysis, Rickards described the potential for sovereign wealth funds to operate through front companies such as trusts, managed accounts and hedge funds to exert a malign influence on target companies: stealing technology; sabotaging new projects; stifling competition; engaging in bid rigging; and manipulating markets.³²

In each of these three scenarios involving corporate or financial networks, it is not necessary for hostile intent to be present in order to cause enormous damage to human and national security. The self-interest or the competitive actions of states, national and international banks, and private corporations and financial institutions alone can generate threats, particularly to smaller states, which are representative of the majority of the world. In a competitive environment, states and corporate actors alike will follow norms and rules when it is in their interests to do so, and will stray from those rules if there are no mechanisms for enforcement. This last point underscores the importance of SOF partnerships.

There may be a role for both kinetic and non-kinetic actions in response to direct financial and economic threats. Both national and international laws can be brought to bear, but may be hampered

by jurisdiction, barriers to extradition, and powerful protecting states. When a smaller state has a clear case in law, then expropriation of assets, forceful extradition and visible international trials with full disclosure of fact, combined with effective international information operations, could have a major demonstration effect for legitimate corporations and states. This consequence opens roles for SOF.

The grey zone, on the other hand, may require more kinetic force in the mix. One need only recall Peter Stuyvesant, Francis Drake and the role of state-sponsored privateers in bringing down Spain, the superpower of its day.

Beyond Criminals – Grey Sector Interfaces

Major international banks and corporations cannot stay out of the grey economy, even when they are good corporate citizens with the best of intentions. Grey (i.e. informal) and black (i.e. illegal) markets are inseparable from the legitimate global and domestic economies, although institutional models can estimate the dividing lines between them.³³

In the 1990s, the Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI) set an example of a bank on the edge of respectability, subsequently found to be deeply involved in money laundering and organized crime. Regulators were able to shut it down, despite its operations in 73 countries. A decade later, periodically being caught as victims or perpetrators of money laundering is simply a hazard of the industry. Banks like HSBC protect against it by setting aside contingency funds to pay legal fees and fines that can regularly amount to hundreds of millions of dollars.³⁴

When major industries rely on raw materials supplied from conflict zones, they inevitably become involved in the grey economy of looting linked to the financing of civil wars and protracted conflict. Columbine tantalite (Coltan) is the classic case – a high value

mineral essential in the manufacture of cell-phones and consumer electronics, available primarily from China and central southern Africa. In this case, the line between the legitimate, taxed, and regulated international economy and the shadowy sources of supply in the Congo is difficult to define, despite extensive investigation by the UN with a view to understanding the sources of support for protracted conflict. Tracking the supply chain from Nokia back to the militias of the Congo was an arduous and hazardous task. It requires the strategic reconnaissance skills of SOF, as much as the acumen of bureaucrats and bankers, in order to understand and influence the process.

Since the UN Report of the Expert Panel on the Congo³⁵ a great deal has been written about managing the resource dimensions of civil conflicts.³⁶ A regular theme is the involvement of local military and paramilitary forces in profitable but illegal activities: oil bunkering in Nigeria; gem smuggling in Myanmar; or looting tropical timber in Indonesia and West Africa. All these activities are enabled by protracted conflict, weak states, and corrupt governments, which also impede investment, development, and human and national security. These are not challenges for which conventional forces either inside or outside the affected countries are equipped, but might be tasks for new types of SOF, mixing long-term engagement, development strategies and robust law enforcement.

Naylor makes the point that money derived from legal and illegal activities is indistinguishable.³⁷ Economic historian Michael Woodiwiss describes legitimate corporations as the most damaging transgressors of law and norms – effectively, the most organized of criminal enterprises.³⁸ Much of the time, in many countries, these activities are profitable for big shareholders (including pension funds) and beneficial for consumers. Costs are hidden or borne by those without a voice in the international economy, at least in the short term. But a widening and deepening understanding of security now encompasses new problems. Consider illegal

dumping of toxic waste off the coast of Africa, which destroys local fishing and stimulates a pirate economy, affecting the safety of international sea-lanes.³⁹ As economic and environmental problems get worse, SOF tasks may migrate from dealing with symptoms like piracy and civil war to dealing with causes or accelerants like corporate transgressions and environmental damage.

In a world less dominated by major powers, there is more scope for regional leadership to manage international norms and law. We can imagine smaller states developing specialized capabilities to constrain the actions of major players skirting the law. However wealthy and powerful corporate networks are, states retain a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, and might be held blameless in exercising it, if they can demonstrate transgressions by organized crime or paint an activity as terrorism. Thus a country frustrated by external actors supporting insurgency or civil war might employ SOF, perhaps with allies, to reach back into the financial chain, extradite or seize indicted business leaders or criminals and put them on trial under emergency legislation. If a strong case can be made, we might even imagine appeals to the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice to bolster a state's demands for international co-operation to address its human and national security problems.

On the other hand, we would expect that the interests affected by any such use of force would counter-attack with both legal and coercive means. We therefore have the prospect of SOF and counter-SOF actions to collect and exploit evidence, arrest witnesses, conduct actions to discredit opposition and carry out international information and disinformation operations. Partnerships in the grey sector could be messy and confusing, and will carry considerable political and organizational risks. Political risks at home and abroad go hand in hand with organizational risks of contamination and corruption.

Third Basket – Rethinking Domestic Partnerships at a Strategic Level

The new partnerships that have been discussed cannot occur in a political vacuum. Whether the SOF of the future are working with NGOs in global civil society, with or against corporate networks or in the murky world between legitimate business and organized crime, they cannot succeed without clear lines of authority and strategic decision-making. Neither is a natural feature of capital cities. In this regard, smaller countries may have an advantage over the huge political ecosystems of Washington, Moscow, Beijing, or those of the EU (Brussels, Strasbourg, Berlin, Paris, London and more). Nonetheless, this advantage of scale requires sophistication in assessing and developing the partnerships that will permit employment and sustain resources. Will SOF have the resources to be effective and the authority to operate under clear direction when the time comes? If they are not useful and utilized, then they will eventually fade away. What new partners might be useful? It is possible that central agencies and political authorities will become more directly involved in partnership with SOF.

Ottawa insider Glen Milne's concept of a policy marketplace helps to make sense of the alliances and relationships that determine policy and resource allocation in a capital city.⁴⁰ Although this example is specific to Ottawa, it might be generalized for other capitals in majority countries. The message is to know your own side.

At the centre of the marketplace is executive authority. In the Canadian case, Cabinet is divided into cabinet committees (which generally change with each new government) and supported by central agencies: the Privy Council Office (PCO), Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Inter-Governmental Affairs, Finance, Treasury Board and Auditor General. The PCO and PMO in particular are engaged in managing the inter-departmental process, and arbitrating between departments and agencies and their many stakeholders.

All decisions and budgetary outcomes are affected by the weight of legislated commitments, past decisions, and the gradual, sedimentary consolidation of understanding and practice, which are mediated by this policy marketplace. The marketplace is in turn influenced to varying degrees by the cloud of interests and pressures that surround it: the media; the voluntary sector; provinces and cities; pollsters; constituents; advocates; members of the public; and so on. This concept of a marketplace is illustrated in Figure 7.2. The real world, of course, is more complicated.

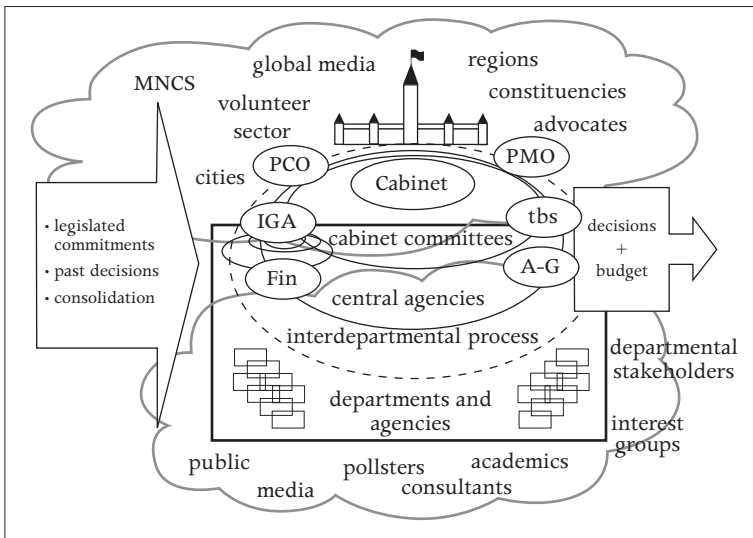


FIGURE 7.2. THE DOMESTIC POLICY MARKETPLACE (OTTAWA).⁴¹

In a 2003 study sponsored by the Asymmetrical Threat Working Group, researchers explored domestic links and crisis decision-making as it evolved immediately after 9/11, and described the central role of the Committee of Affected Deputy Ministers and Cabinet committees.⁴² The important lesson for any SOF strategist is that the policy marketplace changes with every new government, and often evolves within a stable government as a majority begins to exercise power and as particular ministers or central agencies exert more influence. Strategic reconnaissance in one's

own capital is therefore an essential SOF skill. If a command cycle is only two years long, then we can assume some stability for the policy marketplace during a command cycle. But if leaders go away and return to headquarters duties a decade later, they must assume that their strategic environment has changed, and may have changed dramatically if there have been changes in government or shifts in party status.

Exploring the environment for domestic partnerships should begin with the legislative framework. This framework will not change quickly or without notice. A better indicator (in the Canadian context) is the universe of policies, frameworks and guidelines that emerge from central agencies. Since 2008 hundreds of policies have been archived or rescinded and scores more have been put in place. This growth is not just a function of changing government. The foundation framework for Treasury Board Policies promulgated in 2008 established a long trajectory for making policies more coherent yet inevitably more centralized. A walk through the labyrinth of documents affecting all civil servants helps the strategic thinkers of the security sector to understand where they fit in the larger world of governance priorities and how to approach other public servants whose worlds are constrained by legislation and rules of which the guardian services may be (blissfully) ignorant.

The 2011 values and ethics code for the public service makes it clear that the first responsibility of the public servant is to the elected government (democratic values) and not to the public directly. Governments make policy and public servants implement it loyally and impartially. The foundation framework specifies the sequence of ethics, frameworks, policies, directives, standards and guidelines that govern the public service. It is easy to lose sight of the existence, and evolution, of this weight of documentary constraint, but the consequence of ignoring it is to misunderstand the environment of one's allies in the public service. For strategic planners, a quick overview of at least the titles of the hundreds of policy documents, including those that have been archived or

CHAPTER 7

rescinded, helps to understand the bureaucratic battle space in Ottawa. Table 7.3 gives a sense of the order of magnitude of this environment.

Security is mentioned in 22 of these documents, and the Policy on Government Security (PGS) references 25 pieces of legislation, and 37 policies, directives and standards. It requires more than a cursory glance to understand that the security addressed by the policy is not identical to security as understood by the armed forces or even the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). According to the PGS, “Government security is the assurance that information, assets and services are protected against compromise and individuals are protected against workplace violence.” Eleven government departments are listed as lead agencies, responsible between them for 84 common tasks. The Department of National Defence (DND) is responsible for only two: military intelligence; and security of foreign military personnel. The policy is inward looking, toward the assets, information and business continuity within departments, rather than to external shocks or problems that might impede their operation. This inward focus is reinforced by the compliance incentives for deputy heads; they cannot be held responsible for ice storms and terrorist attacks, but they can be held accountable for appointing fire marshals and business continuity planners. In a bureaucratic environment, workplace health and safety takes priority over operational response.

	CURRENT	ARCHIVED	RESCINDED
Frameworks	8	2	1
Policies	73	163	122
Standards	56	50	26
Directives	75	36	10
Guidelines	56	15	9
Other	1	53	35
Totals	269	319	203

**TABLE 7.3. 2013 SUMMARY OF GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
POLICY DOCUMENTS.**⁴³

Two general trends in the policy environment are worth noting. First, the Ottawa policy world appears to be evolving towards greater systematic coherence. Many of the titles archived or rescinded since 2009 were one-of-a-kind policies or directives on subjects like Real Property management (six separate policies), smoking in the work place and petty cash. In contrast, the new policies, standards and directives fit in broad, comprehensive categories such as the foundation framework, compliance, risk-management, human resources, financial management, assets and services management accountability. The policy world should thus become easier to navigate but also (perhaps) more comprehensively constraining.

The second trend is towards greater centralization and control of information and decision-making. This change is the bureaucratic equivalent of the micromanagement that becomes possible if every soldier has a camera on his helmet, and every General has a lawyer on his shoulder; in short, better information (or the illusion of complete information) encourages top-down control. In the traditional model of ministerial accountability, public servants impartially administered policies and Ministers took the fall if something went wrong. In *Breaking the Bargain*, D.J. Savoie describes the increasing distance between political policy and bureaucratic implementation: when things go wrong, politicians have begun to hold policy blameless and blame the bureaucrats for its implementation.⁴⁴ In a subsequent book, *Whatever Happened to the Music Teacher?*, Savoie describes a decline in numbers of front-line workers interacting with the public and an increase in senior policy advisors, creating an ever-greater demand for information and tighter cycles for decision-making and information management by senior bureaucrats working with politicians.⁴⁵

For SOF planners, these trends have implications for the all-important partnership with the powers in the capital city. They must know the environment, understand the organizational culture, and recognize the shifting balance between central agencies

and politicians. They should assess carefully whom to invite to those demonstrations of capability and prestigious insider briefings. But there is a caution here, too. Seduction works both ways and ambitious colonels working with unscrupulous governments are not good for democracy.

Fourth Basket: Knowledge Partnerships

Within military forces, knowledge is the most important discriminator separating the “special” from the “conventional”. Artillery barrages, commando raids and preventing nuclear weapons development require different sorts of knowledge. Each must be acquired, cultivated and applied over a long trajectory with a great deal of uncertainty, and not all knowledge can be acquired or cultivated at the same time. For example, when you suddenly need to know what the beaches are like on the South Sandwich Islands, you may have to rely on a penguin researcher rather than a military geographer. The majority of the world’s countries have to rely on talented amateurs for anything that is not conventional and, there are fewer conventional problems in the line-up. Knowledge partnerships, then, are the fourth basket of non-traditional partnerships required for effective SOF.

Here we must pause to consider how knowledge is generated, preserved and transmitted. Historians Ian McNeely and Lisa Wolverton describe six historical institutions – libraries, monasteries, universities, the Republic of Letters, the academic disciplines and the laboratory – concluding that the disciplines (hence universities) and the laboratory dominate the production of new knowledge today.⁴⁶ Libraries are still important in preserving and organizing it, just as teaching and practice (courses, schools, colleges, universities and professional associations) are necessary for transmitting and validating knowledge. Even the Republic of Letters has a modern equivalent in the blogospheres and list serves of the Internet.

Libraries in the Government of Canada have suffered recently.⁴⁷ As ministries focus their librarians' attention more on decision support than archiving information, budgets are being cut and knowledge is getting lost. Google is not a solution that sustains organized knowledge.⁴⁸ Other solutions are being attempted. In Ottawa, the Security and Intelligence Library Committee (SILC) provides a network for professional librarians to help manage and protect both classified and open-source knowledge, making it accessible to the security and intelligence community. The Canada School of the Public Service has a mandate to transmit specialized knowledge relevant to the security community (as defined by the Policy on Government Security), but relies on others to develop the content for those courses. In the realm of interdepartmental security knowledge, then, there may be both a mandate gap and a structural gap. The mandates of individual organizations are defined in ways that do not overlap to produce new knowledge and the structures to link them (such as web 2.0 platforms) are consciously prevented from doing so in the name of security.⁴⁹

Mandate and coordination problems are challenges for professionals and amateurs alike, the latter doing what they love, rather than what they are paid for. We are all amateurs in some field, though we may not all be talented. The challenge for building SOF knowledge partnerships is to find and cultivate the talented amateurs thereby developing specialized knowledge that might one day be essential.

Online platforms for collecting and sharing information might help to build knowledge networks, but they are also likely to fall short of expectations. People are reluctant to share sensitive information with people they do not know, so there is a tendency for networks like OnGarde to be diminished shadows of the personal networks that seed and sustain them. As individuals leave, or fail to participate, the network is less useful to others.⁵⁰ Additionally, the tendency of younger employees to use social media more is counteracted by the caution of older-generation managers

and rules-based systems, such as the Treasury Board Policy on Web 2.0. Personal networking and face-to-face communication are therefore essential concomitants to greater reliance on social networks. It makes no sense to establish course-delivery mechanisms without linking them to content-generation and it makes no sense to rely on social networking for sensitive communication without mechanisms to enhance interpersonal communication that supports and sustains them. These functions are mutually supporting or unsustainable.

These conclusions lead us to an unpopular conclusion for budget managers. Conferences, workshops, seminars, courses, travel, liaison, publications, and all the peripheral activities of education, training and operations are actually essential for building and sustaining the knowledge partnerships that will contribute to SOF in the future. The good news is that these intellectual and social activities are relatively free of the hazards associated with the other three baskets of new partnerships.

CAUTION: DARK AGES AHEAD?

More countries will develop SOF, if only because purely conventional armies, navies, and air forces have limited utility for the majority of the world's countries. Even if they remain "conventional," these forces will increasingly behave more like SOF in order to meet their governments' security needs. To do so, they will need to engage in the same sort of non-traditional partnerships that will be demanded of western SOF.

Like any organizational culture, that of SOF has positive and negative aspects. Creativity and innovation, resisting convention, an ends-before-means focus and independent action are just some of the positive values associated with SOF. But taking advantage of non-traditional partnerships can open SOF culture to dangers that do not necessarily face the more pedestrian, rule-bound and carefully controlled conventional forces' culture.

Risks are evident even when organizations themselves are exemplary. American SOF helped develop Guatemalan army counter-insurgency during their civil war from 1993 to 1996. US SOF developed highly effective teams for taking the fight to the hills where the insurgency was based. Yet, the campaign was associated with an increase in extra-legal violence, more human rights abuses and an escalation in the Civil War. Contrast this situation with the British role in Sierra Leone after 2000 in which the British Short Term Training Teams concentrated on drill, discipline, hygiene, unit administration and pension reform. Control of forces, in addition to application of force, created the conditions for successful de-escalation in Sierra Leone. In Guatemala, SOF gave the army the tactics, techniques and procedures that allowed the violence to escalate. Moreover, veterans of the Guatemalan Civil War now in private security companies are implicated in the charges being brought against Canadian mining company HudBay.⁵¹ Occupying the interstitial zone between military and paramilitary functions, formal and informal application of force, SOF skills are particularly prone to being adopted by business and crime organizations, in the margins of a less-governed international order. New geographic and functional partnerships therefore carry new risks.

Non-traditional domestic partnerships are also fraught with potential dangers for democracies. Traditional management of major events and cooperation on border and hinterland security have had their share of missteps. These problems have rarely involved misapplication of force. They have involved the inappropriate sharing or use of information, however, which diminishes trust in public institutions. Social trust and confidence in government are strongly related in representative democracies and have been under assault for several decades, although survey evidence points to fluctuations in trust of public servants in OECD countries rather than to a consistent decline.⁵²

A more direct relationship between SOF strategists, central agencies and political authorities opens up potential damage of three

kinds. First, political leaders may be tempted to use intelligence and security forces more extensively and coercively in domestic settings. The political left might be tempted to right corporate depredations and the political right might be tempted to work more closely with business against its threats and competitors. A recent history of political policing in Canada suggests that Canada's security apparatus has always been more focused on internal than external enemies. Each new threat or circumstance from the Fenian raids to 9/11 has ratcheted up the level of domestic surveillance and interference.⁵³ New SOF functional partnerships would create new capabilities in an environment that is already difficult to monitor.

The second form of damage might be to the consensus or agreement between society, government and security forces about the legitimate forms of military, police and intelligence action. Rebecca Schiff's concordance model of civil-military relations suggests that security forces stay out of government when there is agreement on the core issues of policy, funding, roles and status. But greater direct involvement of unconventional security forces at a political or central agency level could erode this consensus.⁵⁴ Even the historically political policing described by Reg Whitaker and his colleagues is deeply troubling for many Canadians. The Maher Arar case and the Military Police Complaints Commission handling of the BC Civil Liberties Complaint against the Canadian Armed Forces have both generated friction within government and between society and security forces.

The third threat is the most insidious and rises in direct proportion to the effectiveness of the new functional and domestic partnerships, in any of the world's majority countries. Working closely with political leaders, central agencies, and international corporations and on the edges of organized crime will produce a new generation of SOF leaders. They will know more about the levers of power, the secrets of the powerful and the manipulation of wealth than any previous generation of military leaders, and they

will have more integrated connections with police, intelligence and direction action capabilities than any other branch of government. Exercising this power in the service of their governments, they will be as dangerous in their neighbourhoods, and perhaps globally, as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has been for half a century.⁵⁵ Their targets will not be the governments of more powerful states, but may be their own governments, and our companies and citizens, just as we might contemplate the use of SOF to support our interests. We must ask ourselves if this is an arms race we want to start. Is the world made safer by better SOF or by better constraints on force and conventions for managing disputes? Wikileaks and the Snowden revelations have taught us that eventually the truth will come out. When it does, will we want to live by the rules we have established for others to follow?

CONCLUSION

The world has settled into a new pattern since the end of the Cold War and bipolarity has shifted to uni-multipolarity – one America, plus four major powers (including the US), plus regional groupings with significant leaders in each. Indecisive wars, financial failures, loss of trust and erosion of international institutions have left western states more embattled than they might have been in a more collaborative world. SOF (in the widest construction of the term) might be increasingly important for the majority of the world's countries precisely because of the setbacks to American power and leadership. To be really useful, SOF will need new and non-traditional partnerships – with regional leaders, in the functional areas of global civil society, with corporate and criminal enterprise, with domestic leadership and in knowledge networks. Unfortunately most of these new partnerships carry serious risks for the democratic control of the application of force. Ultimately, successful non-traditional partnerships will depend upon the right oversight and control measures, and upon the character of SOF leaders.

NOTES

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- 4 B. Buzan and O. Waever, *Regions and Powers: the Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
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- 9 Lieutenant-Colonel Scott Moore, "Special Operations Forces: Visioning for the Future," in Bernd Horn, Paul de B. Taillon and David Last, eds., *Force of Choice: Perspectives on Special Operations* (Montreal: MQUP, 2004), 169, 197.
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CHAPTER 7

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- 16 The independent organization SCImago produces journal and country rankings based on data accumulated since 1996 using the widely known Google PageRanktm algorithm. It correlates strongly to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and also to other indicators of size and power.
- 17 I have grouped Buzan and Waever's four sub-Saharan African regions as a single regional security complex, because of the progress of the African Peace and Security Architecture under the African Union (with support from NATO and US AFRICOM). David Last, David Emelifeowu and Louis Osemwegie, *Security Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Prospects for Regional Human Security Communities*. Discussion Paper for CIGI Africa Initiative, 2012.
- 18 I have not included all the regions, nor the traditional partners Europe, the US and Australia. Numbers that are grayed out are below the top group of global data for that indicator, showing perhaps less strength as potential regional leaders.
- 19 <<http://www.scimagojr.com>>, accessed 17 October 2013.

CHAPTER 7

- 20 L.M. Salamon, S. W. Sokolowski and R. List, *Global civil society: An overview* (Center for Civil Society Studies, Institute for Policy Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, 2003).
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CHAPTER 8

CHOOSING PARTNERS AND THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CONSEQUENCE¹

DR. MARK MOYAR

The discourse on military assistance often touches on the sensitivities of who should, or indeed can, be assisted. For the special operations forces (SOF) community, this issue of how risk aversion within governments affects SOF efforts to select partners is very much a reality. Every partnership with a foreign force carries some degree of risk, for even highly professional forces have committed criminal actions on occasion. In the current global environment, US, Canadian, and other NATO SOF find themselves increasingly working with partners in underdeveloped nations because extremist groups gravitate towards weak and insecure states. Policymakers have placed a high priority on working with partners in those states and have made them a high priority for SOF. In the aftermath of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, NATO countries view the building of partner capacity in these countries as a less expensive and less politically divisive option than sending NATO forces to conduct operations themselves.

Unsurprisingly, the world's weakest and most insecure states tend to have some of the most problematic security forces. They are typically short on resources, training, and education. They are often ill-disciplined, making them highly prone to mistreat prisoners or civilians. Their judicial and detention systems are likely to be ineffective at keeping bad actors off the streets, which makes them more likely to carry out extrajudicial killings. As instruments of chiefs of state and other powerful figures, they may become entangled in struggles for control of the state or its resources.

Furthermore, the levels of pay for government employees are generally low in these countries, which encourages involvement in corruption. In some cases, what Westerners call corruption is a socially acceptable practice, further complicating the moral dilemmas that allies confront.

At times, Western policy-makers are not fully aware of the risks inherent in security assistance, and hence are not sufficiently cautious before committing to new partnerships. At lower levels of government, on the other hand, individuals are more likely to be aware of the risks, though communicating those risks to higher authorities may be very difficult if not impossible. Knowledge of the risks may make these individuals more likely to object to security partnerships. Nevertheless, sensitivity to risk varies widely at all organizational levels.

Risk aversion is generally the most important factor in determining official attitudes towards a partnership. A certain sensitivity to risk is prudent as some constraints may be warranted. A complete disregard for risk can be an invitation for disaster, however, as high levels of risk aversion can lead officials to impose inordinate constraints on a partnership or to avoid it altogether.

Levels of risk aversion tend to be higher in large organizations than in small ones. Large organizations are usually more regimented, since it is easier to run a large organization through standardization. Large, regimented organizations attract people with certain personality types into their leadership ranks. Those individuals tend to prefer structure over ambiguity and they tend to prefer risk-aversion over risk-taking. Small organizations are more likely to attract leaders who are willing to think outside the box, tackle ambiguous problems and take risks.²

While SOF have historically operated in small groups and continue to do so, they have come increasingly under the umbrellas of large bureaucracies. These bureaucracies may include conventional

military headquarters, special operations headquarters, inter-agency joint task forces, defense departments or ministries and/or civilian diplomatic organizations. While most SOF operators are prepared to take risks, they often are subject to restrictions imposed by higher echelons of authority. For today's SOF operators, managing this disparity in risk tolerance can be one of the most important tasks in building partner capacity.

The risk assessments conducted by higher headquarters have at times yielded valid reasons to restrict or prohibit partnerships. Senior military officers or diplomats have identified severe risks to policy objectives stemming from engagement with a particular partner, which in some cases involved the risk of poor behaviour by that unit. In addition, some higher headquarters that manage large portfolios have sensibly determined that too much SOF attention to building partner capacity would create undue risks in other areas, such as unilateral operations.

Some observers, however, have viewed risk-limiting directives as unnecessary impediments. In certain cases, these observers may not have been aware of valid reasons for the decisions of higher headquarters, as higher headquarters do not always provide full explanations for the restrictions they impose. But in other cases, the decision-makers may be at fault. Those imposing limitations often have less familiarity with local circumstances and in some cases have never been to the country, and the levels of risk aversion at higher headquarters have at times been unnecessarily high.

SOF must also contend with official rules and regulations that can constrain or preclude partnerships. In the case of the United States, partnerships with foreign forces are regulated by the Leahy laws of 1997, which have been one of the most contentious issues when the United States chooses its partners. Written in an effort to deny American taxpayer funds to morally reprehensible security forces, the Leahy legislation stipulates that "No assistance shall be furnished under this Act or the Arms Export Control Act to any

unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights." The term "gross violation of human rights" is defined as follows: "torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges and trial, causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction and clandestine detention of those persons, and other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, or the security of person." The provisions of the legislation can be waived for DoD funding in the case of extraordinary circumstances, and certain types of foreign assistance are exempt from the legislation, but most US security assistance is subject to the Leahy laws.³

Individuals or units that are candidates for US assistance must be submitted to the State Department for "Leahy vetting." State Department officials scan a variety of databases and other sources for incriminating information to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to disqualify an individual or unit. Since the enactment of the Leahy laws numerous individuals and security units have been banned from receiving SOF training and other US assistance because of Leahy vetting.

The admissibility of evidence in the vetting process has been the subject of much of the controversy. The legislation does not require that the "credible" information meet the standards of evidence that would apply in a US court of law. While the information has been ironclad in some cases, in other cases its accuracy has been difficult to establish. Some critics of Leahy vetting have complained that Leahy vetters are too willing to accept evidence from media stories, web postings or hearsay. In addition, they have noted that enemies of the partner government may fabricate human rights allegations for publicity purposes or to undermine foreign support for the security forces. According to a September 2013 GAO report, the process for assessing evidence used in Leahy vetting has been inconsistent because of inadequate monitoring and training.⁴

The Leahy laws and other efforts to withhold aid based on human rights records have generated a certain amount of resentment in foreign countries. The idea of a foreign country standing in moral judgement over the security forces of another country has often been perceived as an insult. Some nations that have been the targets of Leahy vetting have their own procedures for weeding out human rights violators and are offended by the notion that other nations presume to have better standards. A number of partner nations have also complained that the United States applies stricter standards to them than to other countries. Indonesia, for instance, has objected that it faces tougher standards than close US allies such as Israel and the Philippines.⁵ Another difficult problem stemming from prohibitions against partnership is the question of how far guilt extends. While few would dispute the validity of holding individual commanders accountable for their actions, it is much more difficult to determine whether and how to hold groups accountable. The United States has withheld assistance to entire units because of transgressions that occurred under commanders who were no longer present, in some cases for actions that occurred years in the past.⁶ While the Leahy legislation authorizes restoration of assistance to a unit if the recipient government undertakes remedial action, a recent US government study found that State and Defense Department officials could recall no case in which remedial action sufficed to restore support to a unit that had failed Leahy vetting previously.⁷ In March 2013, USSOCOM Commander Admiral William McRaven noted that that US policy often boiled down to “poison person, poison unit.”⁸

The question of the morality of holding entire groups accountable leads to the question of the practical impact of holding groups accountable. One can argue that withdrawing assistance from a whole organization will set an example that will discourage misbehavior by others. On the other hand, it could be argued that units guilty of abuses should be helped rather than punished. Generally, when a US or Canadian police organization is found to have committed an offense, a few individuals may be punished, but the

entire organization is not. Nor is the organization stripped of assistance from external sources. The most likely reaction from higher authorities would be to provide further education and training to that organization in order to prevent future infractions.

In Latin America and Africa, the United States has repeatedly found itself unable to provide training and education to large units and even whole countries because of human rights concerns. While sweeping bans eliminate the risk of American-supported forces participating in illicit behaviour, they also deprive security forces of badly needed training and education. With countries, as with organizations and units, the bad ones are the ones most in need of assistance. "We're always going to comply with Leahy vetting," remarked Vice Admiral Charles J. Leidig Jr., the military deputy of US Africa Command, "but the conundrum it presents us is that the nations whose militaries have had human rights violations perhaps are the ones that need US engagement the most."⁹

Experience has shown that training and education by highly professional military personnel has been an effective means of instilling respect for human rights in partner governments. Host nations are usually receptive to training and education, whereas they often feel aggrieved when diplomatic pressure or the withholding of aid are employed by foreign donors because of matters pertaining to human rights. While training and education often take years to bear fruit and their outcomes cannot be quantified precisely, they have been among the most effective ways for external actors to affect human rights practices.¹⁰

Policy guidance on security assistance also underscores a number of potential issues. Oftentimes policy-makers provide guidance that is vague on certain issues. While the lack of specificity may afford freedom of action that could be helpful in adapting to local circumstances, it also imposes greater risks on SOF working at

the lower level. If the partner forces were to engage in criminal activity or otherwise misbehave, blame could be cast at SOF while the policy-makers could be absolved for not having directed engagement with a particular unit. Thus SOF would be punished for exercising initiative, which would inhibit innovation and discourage risk-taking. In addition, policy guidance can at times be so lengthy or complicated as to inhibit understanding of its central points.

The military can request more specific and clear guidance in order to alleviate this problem. At the same time, however, asking for guidance may result in undue constraints. A further complication is that requesting greater specificity from policy-makers may be unproductive because policy-makers may not have sufficient knowledge to enable them to be more specific.

In wartime environments, SOF typically face fewer constraints in selecting partners owing to the exigencies of the situation and the difficulty of providing external oversight. In Afghanistan, SOF have chosen communities and individuals for the Village Stability Operations (VSO) program without putting them through the process of Leahy vetting. Local SOF commanders, who are typically company grade officers, must do the vetting themselves, using their own judgement and moral compass when making these decisions. Oftentimes, coalition intelligence organizations have been unable to provide relevant information on candidates for the VSO program, owing to preoccupation with enemy forces, thereby compelling the SOF assigned to VSO to do most of the human terrain analysis themselves. Notably, three months is considered the minimum amount of time required for human terrain analysis prior to selecting Afghans for VSO if the empowerment of malign actors is to be avoided.¹¹

That timeframe has been compressed from time to time in the interest of building Afghan police units more quickly. The results have often been decidedly negative, with the local police forces being grossly ineffective or oppressive. Afghan and international human rights groups have identified and publicized some of the worst cases, to the detriment of the moral authority of the Afghan government.¹² This experience is worth keeping in mind in future endeavours as pressure from policy-makers for rapid force generation is a recurring theme in the history of capacity building.

Coalition SOF have worked alongside the Afghan Local Police (ALP) for extended periods to give the Afghans protection and on-the-job training. It was critical for making the Afghans more militarily competent and more disciplined. When Afghan militias were formed without foreign oversight, they often became predatory. According to SOF operators, mentorship of two years has been required to ensure that the ALP acquired the capabilities to be self-sufficient. Unfortunately, restrictions on troop numbers and time have not always permitted mentorship of that duration. During 2013, aggressive transition plans set by policy-makers required SOF to leave at rates faster than anticipated, which prevented some ALP units from receiving a full two years of mentorship. Difficult decisions had to be made on which units could continue and which had to be disbanded, demanding detailed assessment of the human terrain and the ALP leadership.¹³ Here, too, the dangers of rapid force generation should be borne in mind.

SOF usually work in tandem with other arms of government when seeking to help partner nations avoid criminal behaviour. Conventional forces often work with the same nations as SOF, particularly in enabler functions. Civil agencies help poor nations develop judicial institutions that can deal effectively with detainees and penal institutions that keep bad actors in jail, both of which are necessary to convince security forces that detaining individuals is worth their time. Coordination and collaboration with these

non-SOF entities is therefore a critical part of most partnership engagements.

Additionally, policy-makers' emphasis on precision counterterrorism can lead to inattention to the broader capabilities of security forces. A nation's forces may be considered good if they can eliminate a few terrorists without regard for human rights offenses or other problems that could cause instability in the long run. In addition, the killing of a few high-value targets could, in the absence of other actions, cause more damage to public opinion than to the terrorists. This problem points to the broader issue of which partner units should be trained.

Training a small number of elite troops is relatively easy for SOF to accomplish, but small elite forces are generally incapable of achieving broad outcomes in countries with large populations. While eliminating terrorist leaders may contribute to short-term security objectives, it may be ineffective or even counterproductive in terms of the security of the entire nation. To have broad effects, it is most often necessary to provide assistance to general-purpose military forces or police forces. In places such as Colombia and Iraq, the elimination of high-value targets failed to defeat insurgents or bring stability. Only when the government gained the ability to secure large amounts of its territory could it put the enemy on its heels.

Complex moral questions are resistant to the development of consensus. Nevertheless, the issues raised here provide insights that should help SOF professionals when confronted with difficult choices of foreign partners.

NOTES

1 This chapter is based on a conference panel that addressed issues surrounding the choice of foreign partners and the moral problems that can arise when selecting and working with those partners. The speakers were a mixture of Canadians and Americans who brought diverse experiences and expertise to the table. Some had served or were serving currently in the armed forces, while others had long experience on the civilian side of government. They drew upon decades of engagement with foreign partners across the globe. This chapter addresses the key points they raised, but it is written from the perspective of the panel chair and should not be construed as representing the opinions of any of the other panel participants or of the US or Canadian defence departments.

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3 Nina M. Serafino et al., "'Leahy Law' Human Rights Provisions and Security Assistance: Issue Overview," Congressional Research Service, January 29, 2014.

4 United States Government Accountability Office, "Human Rights: Additional Guidance, Monitoring, and Training Could Improve Implementation of the Leahy Laws," September 2013.

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6 Emily Cadei, "Foreign Militaries, Domestic Tension," *CQ Weekly*, (December 16, 2013).

7 Government Accountability Office, "Human Rights," 6-7.

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10 Derek S. Reveron, *Exporting Security: International Engagement, Security Cooperation, and the Changing Face of the U.S. Military* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

11 Mark Moyar, *Village Stability Operations and the Afghan Local Police* (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2014).

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CHAPTER 9

CHOOSING PARTNERS: THREE PARADOXES FOR SOF IN FOREIGN INTERNAL DEFENCE MISSIONS

DR. M.A. HENNESSY

Special operations forces (SOF) are not prone to being operationally deployed into well governed states untroubled by internal political violence. Were that true, there would be little moral complexity regarding their deployments. Foreign Internal Defence (FID) missions¹, as indeed any mission where third party military forces are deployed to support a regime challenged by armed violence, or anticipating such instability, will face many challenges. FID is just one way of categorizing missions where SOF forces may find themselves deployed to assist a host government. Some of these missions may be rather straightforward foreign military assistance missions in a low threat environment. However, a number of these may involve deploying SOF forces in support of a government experiencing armed violence aimed at overthrowing the existing regime, or clearing the government from control of a specific area or region of the country. FID, as a title for a category, underplays the reality that the situation on the ground faced by SOF forces will have all of the hallmarks of wide-spread unconventional war, that is a war without fronts undertaken by blocks of the indigenous population variously organized, armed and motivated to challenge the status quo. Such campaigns may not fit the definition of inter-state war, but these intra-state struggles are a form of war. Though jurists and political scientists may debate the term war, war is sufficiently robust a term to capture the many streams of activity of state led security operations against an internal armed political foe.² Notably, such wars are much more than

military activities. Indeed, they test the full spectrum of state and national capabilities and institutions.

War has always had certain totalistic impulses associated with it. While the host nation may feel a strong pull in that direction it is ironic that the nation deploying the SOF forces has already chosen an option that indicates a limited commitment. Only deploying SOF forces is a sign of limited political commitment tied to the hope of a limited military commitment. This political nexus is the first paradox. On the one hand the fact the commitment was political clears away some moral issues for the military forces. Yet, while western SOF forces do not generally have the option of committing forces to any particular fray, they are often held to moral account. The choice for war is not theirs. Senior commanders may be asked to suggest possible deployment options but the decision to execute is not theirs. On the other hand, absolved of that ultimate responsibility, SOF forces nevertheless remain accountable for their actions, particularly those that could undermine the political commitment.

There are several facets to this problem. The accountability chain is legal and moral. It is also much wider than just to the formal chain of command or political leadership. In the current operating environment, those SOF forces, whether rightly or wrongly, are held accountable by such entities as the inviting host government (assuming there is such), the court of international public opinion (or what passes for such), and naturally from other allies or "coalition partners" (co-deployed or not) and, arguably most importantly, their domestic parties (political or otherwise).

All this accountability adds to the complexity of war. In reality commanders will undoubtedly have or seek room for flexibility in the use of their forces. For example, whom amongst the "ally" do they really work with? What amount of trust is extended? Who controls operational tasks? How is information shared? How is the "battle space" defined? The political decision to be there is

made by others but interaction with the host nation and its many civil and military sinews will fall largely to the military forces on the ground and, admittedly, may be mediated by other players from their own or other nations. Such mediation, or more correctly inter-mediation, may generally be the norm. Full command discretion may rest only in discreet tactical events. In other words “shoot - don’t shoot missions” may have the greatest moral clarity for the combatants, but may hardly be the locus of all efforts or strategic purpose for being in the war arena. Simply being there may be the greater point and actions may need to be avoided in order to ensure lasting political support for the mission.

Scrutiny can be avoided somewhat by the use of covert deployments, but even they cannot avoid the accountability and legal responsibilities to the government. Guilt by association is no small problem and is explored more extensively below. Current international law clearly speaks to issues of luring, kidnapping, abduction and targeted killing. The latter may actually have strategic efficacy but it is also a legal minefield. Command responsibility is only a part of the picture. To return to the first paradox the simple appearance of co-perpetration of some violent acts will complicate allied relations, and more tellingly undercut or challenge national political support for the entire effort.³

It can be a fine line. Nevertheless, and in essence, if SOF forces do not have the choice of either ally or foe, but have commitments for one combatant and similarly commitments against the other made by others, then their “manoeuvre space” is restricted and being lured into situations where the methods to obtain short term tactical gains may undercut long term support for their mission need to be avoided.

The political decision to support a “friend” with a limited commitment of boots on the ground may be made with a very unclear estimation of what costs the supplier nation is really willing to accept. These decisions may not have been weighed fully

beforehand – indeed, recent history might suggest that to be a norm. Surely the nature of the foe will have been a factor, but in internal war it is often difficult to define all those who may be defined as the “foe”. Where do they come from? How are they supported? Staffs will have gone through the simple questions applicable to any campaign, but in the internal war arena there may be no simple answers.⁴

The mechanics of armed insurrection are not well examined and in each case will differ in particulars. But the task of building forces of some size willing to risk life and limb, to support them with weapons, food, shelter and training is no small task. Internal wars in nations where there has been mass conscription, such as the Ukraine, may see large numbers of individuals already trained in the hard life of soldiering who can pick up arms, act in a disciplined manner, and melt away again into the general population. In states with no such legacy a much longer formation process will have had to be undertaken, often before erupting like a cancer on the surface of a body.

Countering the various social, political, psychological and other factors which mobilize portions of the population to persist in armed conflict against the ruling political order is unlikely to be conceived or managed as a SOF task. Proxy wars fueled by third countries can only complicate the matter and it is not eased by states covering their tracks. Such externalities may not be well understood at the time of commitment.

A fuller understanding of the internal dynamics of the internal power struggle may only come with experience and local exposure. The scope, scale and complexity of that internal struggle may suggest to the SOF forces that a wider range of activities are essential to staunch the internal problems but these may be well beyond the range of actions possible or allowed – and almost certainly will push the bounds of the limited political commitments. For instance the source of the proxy campaign may remain

off limits. It may be off limits for a range of reasons: too risky; too escalatory; too diffuse; or just far more than anyone wants to tackle. Such limits can only keep the “internal war” wretched and protracted. The irony is that both those realities can undermine long term political support for the mission – long and indecisive campaigns are hard to champion.

That all internal wars tend to be protracted brings its own moral consequences for the SOF members present. Getting into the fight may be a political decision. Getting out of the fight is also one but for the forces on the ground the latter may be riven with difficulty and moral ambiguity. If forces have been on the ground training indigenous forces to fight it can be heart rending for those who have made an emotional commitment to the war to simply walk away. National political difficulties aside (which are likely to be considerable if walking away from other allies as well), the troops on the ground cannot escape the glare of their once proud partners as they prepare for departure. The abandonment of camp followers, facilitators, local agents, translators may be both a national issue and also a deeply personal one for certain SOF members. Will the process form a psychological scar? Difficult to quantify but, like any broken commitment, the pain will be greatest for those with the greatest emotional commitment. Some troops may feel particular pangs. Notably, this moral angle is rarely recognized up front in military planning.

The second major paradox is that presented by the “ally” being supported. The original Canadian constitution spoke to a state governed by the principles of Peace, Order and of Good Government (POGG). There is no particular need to export those concepts, but it is worth noting FID missions often occur in nations where each element is missing. Internal defence missions usually occur in nations with weak or failing political institutions, poor state finance, immature national banking or tax regimes, sharp social cleavages so that there are large swathes of the population with weak attachments to the ruling establishment, undeveloped educational and

health systems, and sometimes permeable ill-defined borders. In this hard scrapple schoolyard even the angels may have dirty faces, or blood on their hands. As such, the security mission must be contextualized within the larger problem of nation or state building, which will not be part of the “military mission” but obviously impinge it. This point is driven home by the title of one volume of the US Army’s official internal account of its experience in South Vietnam, *The Ally As Enemy*.⁵ To summarize, the Americans found the South Vietnamese a fickle ally, its leaders sending out peace feelers, or not responding with sufficient ardor to friendly or pointed suggestions by better knowing allied nations to reform their ways. Its forces were riven with corruption, careerism, an apparent unwillingness to commit to heavy combat, intelligence failures, desertion and many other organizational problems. Incidents of police publicly executing prisoners and similar incidents undercut domestic American support for their ally.

In the military sphere the South Vietnamese force rarely if ever enjoyed the firepower, manoeuverability, intelligence or airpower of their American ally, yet they were criticized for not fighting in the same manner. Rather a tall order, but that could not stem the criticism. This was certainly an invidious position to be criticized for being too independent or not independent enough. The South Vietnamese were not blind to these contradictions.⁶ In fact, no force of any host nation that was caught up in a similar situation would fail to see the contradiction. Foreign SOF and conventional forces need to plan for such ambiguous relations with their “allies” because these types of problems can seriously undercut trust, cooperation, and coordination of the military effort and undermine long term political support.

The third major paradox concerns the appropriate use of force, which I term the “lone survivor paradox”. Most readers will be aware of the book or movie of that title.⁷ The true story is one every serious SOF leader has had to imagine dealing with. In brief, it is a story of a US SEAL team in Afghanistan sent on a small direct

action mission to “neutralize a high value target”. En route to the subject village the team is discovered by several local shepherds. Rather than kill or kidnap the non-combatants (which consisted of two elderly men and a teenager) the team agreed to let them go and abort the mission. The released Afghans subsequently reported the presence of the Americans and the SEAL team was hunted to near extinction, except for a lone survivor – who survived to write about the tragedy that befell his team and the large rescue party sent after it. The team’s actions in which they demonstrated a clearly ethical concern for the lives of the shepherds to the point of jeopardizing their own are difficult to reproach. But need the team really ever have had to be placed in such a situation?

Even in high-intensity warfare SOF missions may encounter similar paradoxes. During the Second World War for instance careful consideration was given to scales of violence and retribution to occur behind enemy lines. On the island of Crete for instance Special Operations Executive (SOE) operatives and local partisans scaled back their activities because of ruthless German reprisals, in part because of the strategic decision the Allies could never sustain such a ruthless campaign of mass reprisals, for example it could not adopt a policy authorizing the summary execution of prisoners. Instead SOE agents were asked to record details of all such German activities and in so doing compiled a long catalogue of human cruelty. Not the stuff of Hollywood movies, but the pity of war. It was the poet ‘Robbie’ Burns who wrote “give us the grace to see ourselves as others see us.” It is no small challenge in the arena of war to seek to be seen on the side of the angels. Steady hands and calm resolve from all leaders within the SOF community are the only way to keep their actions above reproach. The strategic and operational restraining of forces optimized for strike action is a difficult paradox to manage.

As the Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz stated, all war tends to the extremes. But in “wars” where SOF forces are invited there is very wide discretion as to how they move along the spectrum

of extremes. Time favours the cheaper local forces. The allure of kinetic solutions for tier one SOF forces must be tempered with the considerations of the long view of sustaining a strategic commitment. But more is necessary than that too. They must also be tempered by the assessment of what is at risk for those strike forces. A token commitment to a peripheral campaign must be kept within that frame. Dogs may chafe at the collar but not every rabbit is worth the chase. What options are exercised must be informed by the cold calculus of *raison d'état* to actions proportional to the stakes in play and the higher national political will to see it through. Wise council is needed.

NOTES

1 On the origins of this concept see U.A. Johnson "Internal Defense and the Foreign Service" [US] *Foreign Service Journal* (July 1962): 20-23.

2 War can be defined as "a state of armed conflict between different nations or states, or different groups within a nation or state." Notably, many writers would choose some term other than war, believing such to be less inflammatory, or for what they might argue yields greater granularity or perhaps palatability. Nonetheless, the term "war" is used decidedly in the title because it speaks to the totality of effort possible in all internal power struggles, which fundamentally are political.

3 See for instance Article 28 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

4 For a brief overview of such campaigns see for instance, Michael A. Hennessy and John Rickard, *Wars Without Fronts. A Primer on Counterinsurgency* (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012).

C H A P T E R 9

5 A volume in the unpublished report: "A Study of Strategic Lessons Learned in Vietnam." 10 vols. BDM Corp 1980, a report for the US Army.

6 See for instance, Ngo Quong Truong, *Territorial Forces* (Washington DC: US Army Center for Military History, 1981).

7 Marcus Luttrell and Patrick Robinson, *Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team 10* (Hachette Digital: June 2007).

CHAPTER 10

HOW DO WE DETERMINE WHO DOES WHAT?: A PLANNER'S PERSPECTIVE

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ANDREW VIVIAN

The character of the combined operational planning environment has evolved considerably over the past decade. More significantly, this evolution has fundamentally changed the way that respective national security apparatuses seek and act on strategic opportunities. In the contemporary planning space, these two beliefs converge to shape a heuristic understanding of *how we determine who does what* in the combined operational planning context. To further explore this assertion, the following methodology will be employed. Firstly, two premises will be presented that underpin a practitioner's perception of the current planning space. Second, a heuristic pathway will be presented that answers the question, *how do we determine who does what* in a contemporary, networked environment.

The first premise is that our combined planning environment has evolved beyond our traditional understanding of multinational operations. (See Figure 10.1.) We have entered a new space that is categorically distinct from our conventional notions of multinational. In this new space, where we are presently engaged in operations, we operate as a member of a pseudo joint venture, whereby we leverage other nations unilateral military operations outside the construct of a purposed military coalition or alliance. We have sought out these kinds of arrangements primarily to share strengths, minimize risks and increase the competitive advantage of our forces at the operational and institutional levels. To our credit, we have done it while preserving our alignment with our

own nation’s distinct defence polices. In effect, the different tribes have found overlapping ground between our respective national defence mandates and converged at the operational and tactical levels to best leverage each other’s operational effects, global basing and theatre knowledge. By converging at the operational level, we have found a way to achieve more with less. We have found a way to increase the value proposition of our nationally mandated operations without the overhead of a formalized purpose-built alliance, integrated command structures, or assigning ownership of our network.

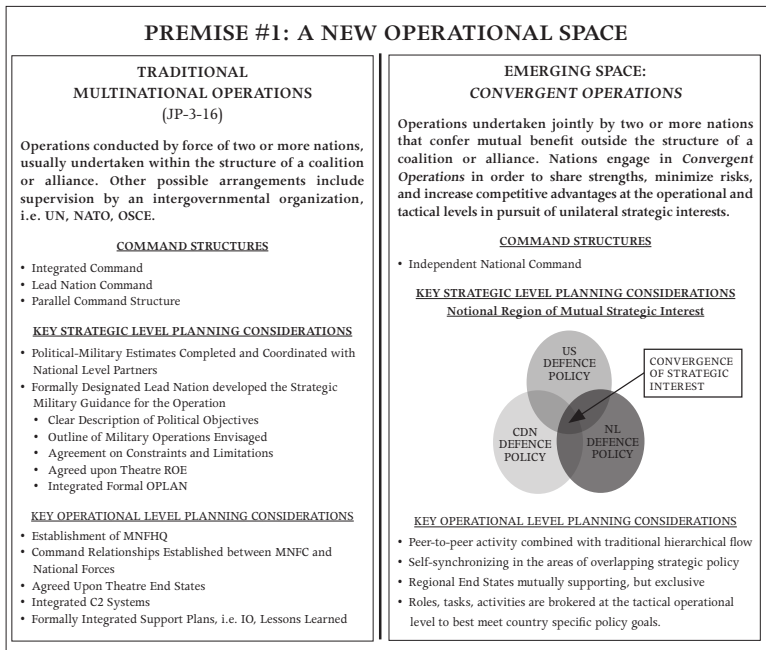


FIGURE 10.1. A NEW OPERATIONAL SPACE.

In this arena of convergent operations we have found a way to do what we can, where we can, how we can, all while maintaining alignment with our own respective national mandates. Not only does this chapter contend that the forum within which we determine “who does what” has evolved, it goes further to state that the way we seek strategic opportunities has co-evolved. This

evolution represents the second premise. (See Figure 10.2.) The past decade has seen rapid advancement in network technology coinciding with major multinational operations in the Middle East and Southwest Asia. Even though we are turning the page on these operations, the residual networks continue to persist in our respective headquarters. And as they were designed to do, these networks continue to flatten the hierarchical space between the operational and tactical nodes of different nations.

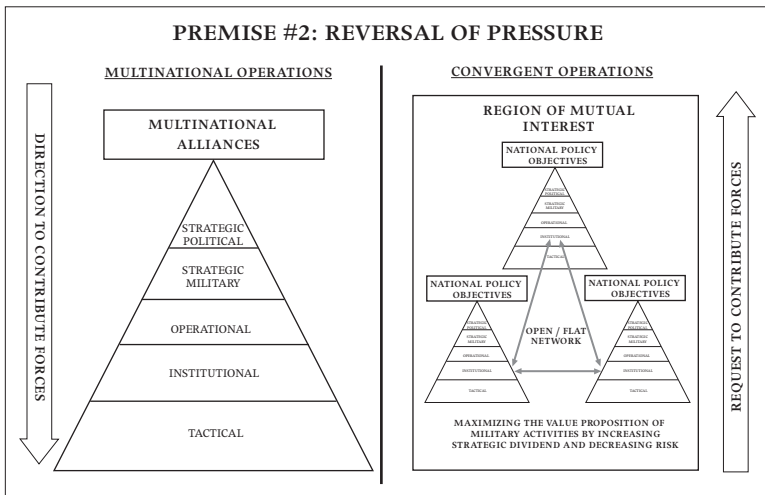


FIGURE 10.2. REVERSAL OF PRESSURE.

The persistence of this open network has given rise to conditions within which the special operations forces (SOF) tribes continue to collaborate to solve shared operational problems within their own respective national authorities. A collective knowledge and in-depth understanding of operational and military-strategic problems has become resident in this network, which continues to share threats and opportunities with unprecedented speed and accuracy.

These network characteristics are important because they challenge the way that strategic and operational opportunities present themselves. Instead of direction to contribute forces processed

downward to satisfy opportunistic strategic alliances, the operational network is presenting opportunities from the operational and tactical levels upwards. More and more, planners are planning in a space where we are presenting options up the chain-of-command in order to capitalize on a fleeting opportunity that was identified through the operational network.

This system presents a particular problem for policy-makers who are presented with opportunities in a way that is outside of the traditional, directive approval pathways. Hence the rise of the notion “getting ahead of policy.” Notably, this chapter is not advocating getting ahead of policy, but rather pointing out that armed with a real time “opportunity-sniffing-machine” in the form of our global SOF network, the operational level is now uniquely positioned to advise on the value proposition of strategic forces by providing low-risk, high-dividend options ahead of crises and, potentially, preventing a crisis all together.

Bringing these two ideas together, *determining who does what today*, is done in an emergent, unstructured space where strategic opportunities enter our national security policy apparatus from sources far below our national policy-makers in our national capitals. As a point of emphasis, this chapter is not challenging the subordination of the military to our policy-makers. It is pointing out that our persistent networks have created an emerging condition whereby our respective national security policies are now informed by the network vested in operational nodes.

A study of operational plans, briefings and orders for the formulation of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) capacity building missions between 2006 and 2013 confirms that there is no “magic formula” to determine who is doing what. On each occasion CANSOFCOM was dealing with different people with different cultures and different interests in different places. As such, this chapter cannot offer any repeatable algorithm or transferable code that can be applied to each case.

What this chapter can contribute to this discussion in terms of a way forward, however, is a heuristic pathway that represents the common steps taken to determine who's doing what in our emerging environment. (See Figure 10.3.)

- First, we need to establish who is interested in playing, i.e. the regional or in some cases the institutional players. Institutional players are highlighted because not all common ground will be operational. Some may be institutionally based on development or attainment of emerging military capabilities.
- Second, we need to come to the table with our respective plans that support our own nation's objectives. We need to understand each other's end states with respect our planned military activities. Moreover, we need to understand what each of us can bring to the table and how our countries will allow us to operate (i.e. national authorities).
- Third, we need to find the common ground among our strategies – the convergent space that will allow us to collaborate tactically and operationally yet pursue distinct national policies.
- Fourth, we need to overlay our operational strategies to determine where we are duplicating one another's efforts and identify the gaps that none of our plans address. In this step we may also find we share the same risks.
- Fifth, within our respective national authorities, we need to figure out how we can leverage each other to better achieve our own objectives. We may find ways to suggest a tweak to the force contribution that presents very little investment from us, but garners increased advantage to allied capabilities and achieves a greater aggregate strategic dividend.

- Sixth, we need to find ways to communicate these opportunities up the authoritative pathway such that they continue to respect our position below the level of policy makers. Although potentially a sensitive issue, it should be noted that it may take working with national policy makers to further refine the opportunities/approval pathways.

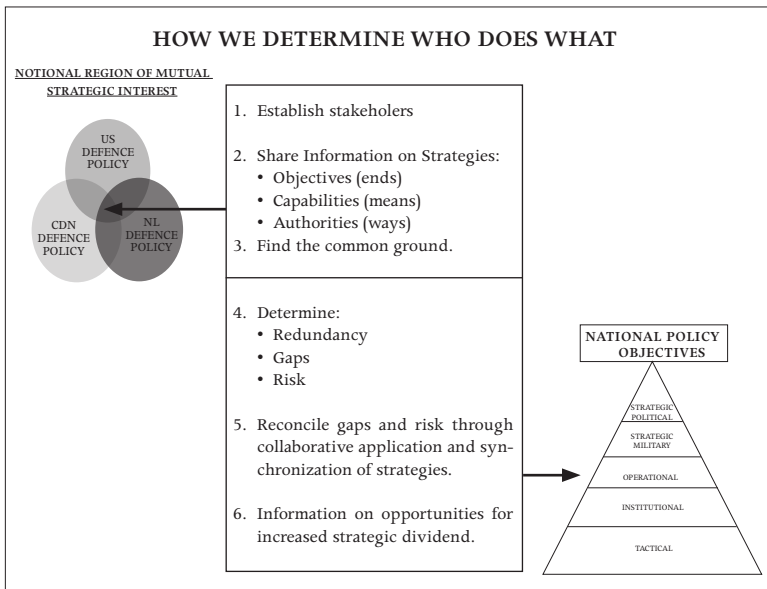


FIGURE 10.3. HOW WE DETERMINE WHO DOES WHAT.

Understanding and assessing change in a period of rapid evolution is a risky proposition. This situation is underscored in an environment as dynamic and unpredictable as the contemporary operational planning space. In recognition of that fact, this chapter has attempted to mitigate its own fading relevance by providing a principle based understanding of the present planning condition rather than a detailed diagnosis. Notably, the planning space continues to evolve and will continue to test the validity of this hypothesis.

CHAPTER 11

GROUND TRUTH ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FRONTLINES

DR. EMILY SPENCER

The strategic value of military assistance is not hard to understand. In fact, the theory is quite simple. In essence, military assistance helps nations to leverage their resources and expertise to build capability and relationships in, and with, at risk friendly states. This relationship is mutually beneficial for the receiving nation as well as the partnered nation. The receiving country gains access to training expertise and resources that will enable it to deal with its national security concerns on its own. In addition, the military assistance programs allow for the sharing of tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), and as other professional military education and training. This sharing enhances the capability of the receiving entity and also increases interoperability, which can translate into rapid coalition/partnered actions since the forces share TTPs and have a working knowledge of, and experience operating with, one another. The partnering nation also gains the opportunity to develop regional hubs, if not forward operating locations. This regional access provides the possibility of landing/transiting, basing, storing equipment and/or training in a specific geographical/terrain related environment. Additionally, the military assistance program provides an excellent foreign policy tool that allows access into regions of interest and may increase the rapidity of military or diplomatic action within those areas. Indeed, all of these benefits translate into enhanced military capability for both receiving and partnered nations.

Notably, success is dependent on the competence and skill of the teams deployed to actually deliver the training and translate the theory into effects on the ground. In essence, central to military assistance and the “By, With, Through” concept are well trained warrior-diplomats who are capable of providing technically proficient and expert training and, and who can also develop deep, lasting relationships and build networks based on trust that will withstand the test of time.

To build the necessary relationships that offer the best opportunity of gaining the maximum benefits for both the partnered and receiving nations entails deploying individuals who are at ease when working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. These individuals must:

1. Be Patient;
2. Be adaptable and be able to manage expectations;
3. Recognize that actions speak louder than words;
4. Appreciate that perception is more important than reality;
5. Remember that the message sent is not always the message that is received and it is the message that is received that is acted on;
6. See the world through the eyes of those with whom they are interacting;
7. Not judge the behaviours of others and, instead, observe, learn and try to understand;
8. Always be respectful;
9. Deal with frustrations privately; and
10. Not adhere to unrealistic standards.¹

These principles may appear simplistic and can elicit the criticism that they are “motherhood statements,” yet their application is more often than not problematic and many individuals fail miserably at putting them into practice, particularly in a training environment. Notably, the selected individuals must master the principles of working effectively with others, which takes time and self-discipline. Moreover, the difficulty applying basic principles of working with others is but one of the challenge facing teams deploying on military assistance missions.

In an effort to explore some of the challenges, as well as benefits to working with others four experienced American and Canadian special operations forces (SOF) operators shared thoughts on undertaking military assistance training missions as part of the “By, With, Through” SOF conference held at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston, Ontario.² Their collective experience covered missions in Afghanistan, South America, the Caribbean basin, as well as Africa.

The operators noted that challenges began as soon as preparation for missions commenced and future problems could be mitigated in this pre-deployment phase. The operators felt it was essential to spend the time up front and nail down all the expectations and basic requirements. Nonetheless, roadblocks could still occur and the operators were able to identify challenges as well as successes in past deployments. These experiences enabled the operators to be able to provide advice for those partaking in future missions.

The issue of training the deploying personnel prior to deployment was raised as a key component to mission success. Canadian Warrant Officer (WO) Jay Yeremiy insisted that any and all training was good. “All training prepares you to react,” he remarked “the challenge [on missions] is always finding simple solutions to complex problems.” Additionally he observed that training of any sort gives teams time to identify strengths and weaknesses and work on improving or mitigating any weak areas. Canadian Major (Maj)

Matt McCloskey agreed. He commented that critical to the success of a military assistance mission was ensuring that the respective Special Forces (SF) Team had not only the tactical proficiency but also the necessary language and cultural knowledge prior to deployment. In this regard, US Master Sergeant (MS) Chris Willis believed, “the ability to communicate one-on-one is huge [and] it can’t be underestimated.” He explained that teams were required to take a lot of time to prepare lessons and methods of instruction in order to get the communication piece right. Willis underlined that effective communication was a key to safety, as well as ensuring the passage of important information.

In addition, McCloskey believed that the senior non-commissioned corps (NCOs) should undertake professional development (PD) that would assist them with synchronizing the tactical level piece (i.e. actions on the ground) with the strategic piece (i.e. intended effect of mission with regard to national interest and policy objectives). Along the line of PD, US Chief Special Warfare Operator (CSWO) Sergio Lopez believed that those deploying on military assistance missions should attend university executive courses targeting such subjects as strategic negotiating. He explained that while engaged on such programs as Village Stability Operations (VSOs), a lot of time and effort is expended on negotiating. As such, he insisted that formal training and education, particularly if given the opportunity to work with academic and business professionals, would greatly enhance the ability and effectiveness of operators when negotiating in the field.

Importantly, it was noted that education regarding who you would be working with from your own national team was also important to receive prior to deploying. For example, WO Yeremiy identified the need to better understand the Other Government Departments (OGDs) in order to maximize the effectiveness of the military assistance mission. As most governments employ a comprehensive approach (or Whole of Government approach) to assisting at risk nations, the military teams seldom find themselves

in regions alone. As a result, knowledge of OGDs (i.e. who they are, what their programs are, how they operate) can allow for unity of effort in accomplishing objectives. There are often programs that the military assistance teams can tap into, which in turn can alleviate some of the pressures from the team itself.

In addition to receiving training and education prior to deployment, having realistic expectations about what your objectives are is also seen as being a valuable contributor to the overall success of the mission. Maj McCloskey insisted it was important to determine an end-state of training that actually correlates with the receiving nation's capabilities. He asserted it was important to demonstrate a capability using a very pragmatic approach to a tactical objective, something that the receiving nation could accomplish and do on their own. For example, he argued there was no value in trying to teach and practice night firing with night vision goggles if the receiving nation does not have the equipment to undertake this practice on their own and they do no collective training.

Having realistic expectations of training before deploying is also key in determining the proper equipment. MS Willis insisted that it was critical to undertake the host nation pre-deployment coordination by planning in place at least 120 days prior to the event with the host-nation embassy. He explained it was important to determine what type of training was being requested, so that the necessary equipment and munitions could be ordered. The danger of not undertaking this level of detail could create problems once the team deployed because if no special requests were submitted in sufficient time, the teams would deploy with "pre-packaged" training kits, which would include only the simple, cheapest, rudimentary ammunition." However, Willis also cautioned, "we need to tailor training to what we can afford and not exclusively to what they [training audience] want."

Another issue that needs to be addressed pre-deployment is, as WO Yeremiy remarked, one of introspection. He noted that it was

important for the training team to take an honest look at themselves to assess how they could best leverage their strengths and weaknesses in training others. He asserted that military assistance required individuals to be “warrior-diplomats.” Yeremiy believed that required a change in approach, one that meant individuals were required to see themselves as something other than a “gunfighter.”

Once deployed, the operators had a number of key observations. CSWO Lopez opined that it was vital to build on the basic training plan that was established pre-deployment. The key is to work out the plan by determining what it is you wish to achieve with the training audience – the end objective. Based on that aim, work backwards to determine the training blocks required. However, he was quick to warn about expectations, both theirs and your own. He explained that many of those units being trained only actual have a training opportunity as part of the military assistance program. As such, their skills are often very rudimentary and the training plan must be kept simple. WO Yeremiy agreed. He insisted you need to “keep it basic and make them stronger/better in accordance with the determined vision of what they need/can achieve within the program parameters.” As Maj McCloskey aptly noted, “What you think means nothing; what the host nation thinks is key.”

Additionally, having a local face to a solution was seen as beneficial. MS Willis stated that wherever possible the actual instruction should be done by the host nation’s SOF forces. For example, in Afghanistan, he noted it was important to give an “Afghan face on all we do.” By using the host nation’s SOF as the primary instructor cadre, more credibility is accrued by the host nation’s forces and there is more buy-in by the training audience. Willis counselled, “anytime you can take a step back – advise verse doing.” He added, “Progress them until they no longer need you.” In fact, this is a key step in transcending to the “through” phase of by, with, through.

Nonetheless, despite best efforts to mitigate issues, challenges still remained. MS Willis commented that teams will conduct missions in different regions of the globe, each with its own distinct challenges, methodologies and cultures. For example, he underlined that military assistance in South America is vastly different than in Afghanistan. Willis insisted that everyone, but especially senior leadership, “must take the time to understand cultural differences.”

CSWO Lopez raised perhaps the darkest side of military assistance. A major challenge that he noted was one of security. “Not knowing where their loyalty lies,” acknowledged Lopez, “the realization that you are not at home and must be wary of the security of your forces at all times during training,” was a substantial concern.

In light of this reality, the question of trust becomes a major theme in military assistance. Admiral William McRaven, Commander US Special Operations Command, astutely reminds all that “trust cannot be surged.” As such, trust is a commodity that must be built through time and personal commitment. Clearly, for military assistance missions to be effective trust becomes a key component of developing credibility and success.

The operators all had firm views on both the importance of building trust and how to accomplish it. CSWO Lopez felt it was key to “finding common ground and goals.” He insisted, it was important to build a repertoire and work towards a common goal. WO Yermiy pointed out that it was difficult to build trust during episodic visits and that trust could only be built with the commitment of time and many visits. For Yermiy building trust was also about putting some skin in the game. He explained, “in the short term you cannot be afraid to do something you’re asking them to do.” He opined, “you can’t be afraid to stick your neck out.” For example, Yermiy recounted that during mortar training a round became lodged in the tube. Of the 120 individuals undertaking the training no-one was willing to fix the problem because of fear.

As a result, Yeremiy and one of his teammates conducted the drill to demonstrate the proper way to clear the round. "Showing by example," asserted Yeremiy, "goes a long way."

Building trust had a practical element for MS Willis. He explained, "Never promise something you can't deliver and never over-extend yourself." He also cautioned to "coordinate and confirm before you commit." Maj McCloskey reinforced the themes expounded by Willis. He confirmed, "always under promise and over deliver." He also clarified, "demonstrate your world class capability by showing them you can do what you're teaching, that you're the real deal and that they can learn from you."

In assessing their own successes and failures, the operators had much insight. The operators all had views on how to determine if the training team is not connecting. WO Yeremiy rationalized, "once you see that they are mentally and/or physically topped out, don't stick with the program, you need to adjust." He insisted, "never push past saturation." MS Willis noted that indicators are often dependent on regions of the globe you may be working in. He clarified, "you know they are bought-in when they bring you intelligence or share knowledge of the local area." In addition, "if they include you in a brief and want your input," he assessed, "you have won." Conversely, Willis cautioned, "if you're in the corner your better change your approach." Other indicators raised by the operators included the no-brainer "you know you are failing when no-one shows up for the training or there is a dramatic lack of performance."

Notably, they identified several measures of success. Indicators included such measures as:

1. Performance on the final exercise – a physical example of what they can do;

CHAPTER 11

2. Transition from training cycle to operational cycle and assessing performance, or lack thereof, based on the actual situation. (It was noted, that if a shortcoming became evident, it was important to readjust the training immediately); and
3. In some regions, such as South America, relations and interaction outside of the normal training venue.

Additionally, the operators also had views on what they would do differently. Observations and counsel included:

1. It would be preferable to send a smaller persistent presence versus episodic visits by larger teams;
2. Ensure troop to task, specifically, deploy the “right person for the right job.” For example, “do not send a junior individual with no Spanish speaking skills to talk to a Colombian colonel about intelligence fusion”;
3. Marry-up language ability with qualification to the each respective training iteration to get buy-in from the training audience;
4. Manage assignments at the sub-unit level to ensure you maximize effectiveness;
5. Rush to think, do not rush to plan and execute;
6. Dissect every problem and determine what the root cause of failure is. Often teams do not fully understand the problem and rush to simple solutions to what are complex problems;
7. If you have a “false start,” recalibrate and start fresh;
8. Understand the environment your are operating in, as well as the “tactical situation”; and

9. Partner with nations who will affect change. Quality of partnership is preferable to quantity of partnerships.

Finally, the operators had advice for their peers who are about to undertake military training assistance missions. MS Willis insisted that it was paramount to get involved in coordination of activities as early as possible and never to wait until you hit the ground in the operational theatre. Maj McCloskey offered, “take all advice with a grain of salt as you will be faced with complex problems and things change on the ground quickly.” He warned, “priority and focus shift rapidly so you must stay adaptable.” CSWO Lopez kept it simple. He advised, “train hard, train smart and stay relevant.” He added, “do not get lost in new problems as they arise.” He stressed, “your greatest asset is the ability to think and problem solve.”

On the issue of military assistance missions themselves the operators felt there was great value. Maj McCloskey remarked that the missions were great professional development for the operators. He stated, “it increases training expertise and experience in general, specifically the ability to plan, deploy and work with others” (e.g. OGDs). MS Willis also saw value in military assistance missions. He noted that the missions allowed for access to receiving nations, which allowed you to develop relationships that would provide local/regional knowledge, as well as the ability to train in environments that cannot be replicated in Canada or the US.

The operators also saw larger national interest value in the missions. WO Yermiy pointed out that the relationships and networks developed through the engagement of military assistance provided the ability to gain, “ground truth from reliable sources, the ability to get believable (i.e. accurate, timely, up-to-date) information from those you trust, which allows you to potentially influence activities pre-conflict.” CSWO Lopez agreed. He explained that the collaboration increased your security (i.e. due to host nation

CHAPTER 11

increased capacity, as well as intelligence sharing) by protecting you as well as the host nation from potential threats.

In the end, the experienced SOF operators saw great personal, institutional and national value in conducting military assistance missions. The benefits were not without cost, however. Although the value and execution of military assistance is easily understood in conceptual terms, the difficulty comes in the execution. And, as with all SOF activities, success is reliant on the expertise, maturity and professionalism of the men and women on the ground.

NOTES

1 See Dr. Emily Spencer and Colonel Bernd Horn, *Working With Others: Simple Guidelines to Maximize Effectiveness* (Kingston: CANSOFCOM PDC, 2012).

2 The four SOF operators were: Chief Special Warfare Operator Sergio Lopez; Master Sergeant Chris Willis; Warrant Officer Jay Yeremiy and Major Matt McCloskey.

CHAPTER 12

“SOLDIERING ON THE MARGINS”: CANADIAN SOF MOVING TOWARD INTERDEPENDENT OPERATIONS¹

DR. HOWARD G. COOMBS

First, break down the wall that has more or less come between special operations forces and the other parts of our military, the wall that some people will try to build higher. Second, educate the rest of the military – spread a recognition and understanding of what you do, why you do it, and how important it is that you do it. Last, integrate your efforts into the full spectrum of our military capabilities.

Admiral William J. Crowe, United States Navy
Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff (1985-1989)

Address during the United States Special Operations
Command Activation Ceremony

1 June 1987²

This citation was provided during the opening of a presentation given by then-Colonel Michael Day, the second Commander of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM).³ The unclassified 2007 presentation, informally entitled “SOF 101,” was intended to discuss the still new Command and expose a military audience to Special Operations Forces (SOF) and their role within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). While doctrinally sound and reasoned, the challenges of integrating SOF that were contained in the presentation notes advised that operational security would allow only limited synchronization with joint force tactical operations in advance of special operations missions. The

slide also emphasized that SOF had “no ‘Magic SOF Dust’ to be sprinkled on a conventional battle-space. We [SOF] shape your [conventional forces] actions in advance and are of limited value in your decisive engagements.”⁴ The tone and concepts presented reflected the imperatives of the Cold War military doctrine, which created these initial ideas and continues to some extent today.

Nonetheless, the experience of the last decade and the exigencies of the 21st century security environment suggests that a new perspective is in order. In a complicated world that requires interdependent and coordinated activities from a multitude of military and non-military actors at levels from tactical to strategic, SOF and conventional forces still have the barriers between them similar to those alluded to in Admiral Crowe’s presentation given nearly a decade ago. This gulf is unacceptable, however.

Contemporary threats are difficult to detect, discern and destroy. They are increasingly transnational, ever-more powerful and, normally, non-state in nature. This trend has been developing for decades. American military theorist William Lind and his colleagues warned of the loss of state monopoly on conflict in the seminal 1989 *Marine Corps Gazette* article “The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation.” Additionally, futurists Alvin and Heidi Toffler opined in their 1993 *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century* that this changing context “is compelling military planners in many armies to look afresh at what they call ‘special operations’ or ‘special forces’ - the niche warriors of tomorrow.”⁵ In spite of this research, it took the destruction of the American Embassy in Nairobi (1998), bombing of the *USS Cole* (2000) and, finally, the attacks on New York and Washington (11 September 2001 or more colloquially “9/11”) to create changed western perceptions of defence and security requirements.

In Canada, along with this public recognition of the complex, chaotic security environment, the government acknowledged a military inheritance of decades of neglect and underfunding.

This legacy had created a lack of standing expeditionary force capabilities and structures from key enablers like intelligence, special operations, armour, artillery, aviation, air transport, and a concomitant need for upgraded equipment. Along with this deficit came an impetus for CAF structural transformation. These initiatives began in earnest with the appointment of General Rick Hillier as the Chief of the Defence Staff in 2005, as well as growing Canadian involvement in Afghanistan.⁶ Over this period public support for Canada's soldiers and these changes never wavered, although its support for the Afghan mission dwindled over time.⁷

SOF benefited from the recognition of this changing face of war with the creation of CANSOFCOM in 2006. Hillier had noted, "We intend on bringing JTF [Joint Task Force] 2, along with all the enablers that it would need, to conduct operations successfully into one organization...one commander, one organization"⁸ The new organization included: Joint Task Force 2 (JTF 2), focused on counter-terrorism; a Joint Nuclear Biological Chemical Defence Company later renamed Canadian Joint Incident Response Unit (CJIRU); 427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron; the Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR), giving a force capable of a broad range of missions; liaison officers with other nations; combat service support; training; and staff elements, as well as a small reserve.⁹

One could argue that the establishment of CANSOFOM came none too soon as it was engulfed in operations overseas immediately. As Canada became well enmeshed in the evolving counter-insurgency in Afghanistan, its military campaign was integrated to a large degree with civilian efforts. Former Commander of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces Command Lieutenant-General (Retired) Michel (Mike) Gauthier described its development and impact thus: "In late 2008/early 2009, just as the full weight of US leadership and ownership of the mission was beginning to emerge, Canadian WoG [whole of government] planning was beginning

to coalesce and the Canadian civilian presence was increased dramatically." Along with this engagement "an explicit government policy framework had been developed, with a clearly articulated set of objectives...which continue to guide Canada's broader engagement..."¹⁰ This policy framework was articulated within the recommendations of the "Manley Report."¹¹ It examined the Afghan mission and exposed shortcomings that needed to be addressed. These deficiencies ranged from logistics through strategic communications to manpower and equipment. The Report recommended a comprehensive focus on Afghan capacity building and specifically stated: "We believe that Canada's role in Afghanistan should give greater emphasis to diplomacy, reconstruction and governance and that the military mission should shift increasingly towards the training of the Afghan National Security Forces."¹²

This interdependent approach was something that had only existed in a nascent form during the peace keeping and enforcement operations of the late 20th century. In the crucible of the 21st century violence of Afghanistan, the whole of government approach emerged as a distinctly different shade in the way that Canadians conducted conflict. This difference was also reinforced by Hillier, who noted in 2006 that "...rebuilding failed states was not a security, governance or economic problem; it was all three, and had to be approached with that in mind."¹³

In hindsight, it is possible to see that today's whole of government construct evolved as part of an overall western response to the small wars of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The United States used the term "inter-agency" to describe their methods, while the United Kingdom developed the "joined-up" approach. During the first few years of this century the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) adopted a "comprehensive" approach and Canada had created a "whole of government" paradigm to more accurately capture the nuances of the multi-faceted effort that was needed to deal with the complicated problems of the modern security environment.

Canada at first coined the sobriquet “3D” or ideas of combined diplomacy, defence, and development efforts in order to stabilize conflict or post-conflict situations. From a Canadian perspective it built upon hard won knowledge during peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations that Canada participated in during 1990s. Afghanistan offered an unprecedented challenge to test these constructs, particularly for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Department of National Defence (DND), as well as a host of other departments, organizations and agencies. The Afghan mission context required the Canadian government to put together organizations that did not normally work with each other on such a scale to provide a coherent Canadian effort in conjunction with that of the international community.¹⁴

This union also meant that the sometimes conflicting imperatives of national policy and practices in conjunction with those of international partners – NATO and otherwise – but primarily that of the United States, had to be all taken into account. All this activity was in the context of an exceptionally fragile Afghan government and security apparatus. Afghanistan was an insurgency, the strength of which had been consistently underestimated by the international community, and which exposed shifting international and national views of both counter-insurgency and nation-building.¹⁵

Importantly, for the purposes of this discussion, SOF, as part of that whole of government construct – acting at times as a horizontal and vertical integrator across a disparate number of organizations, groups and individuals that may be united by nothing more than a common desire to achieve positive outcomes – were a part of the Canadian effort in Afghanistan.¹⁶ Their roles were primarily counter-terrorism, specific and general assistance to stability operations and capacity building within host nation security agencies.

Unfortunately, while SOF work well with many, they sometimes do not have a good relationship with the conventional forces from which its members originate. An example from the United States SOF perspective is contained in a recent book by special operations researcher Linda Robinson, *One Hundred Victories: Special Operations and The Future of American Warfare*. Notably, the incident described below illustrates a conflict that is not atypical between a conventional force and SOF commander:

Schweitzer [Brigadier-General Marty Schweitzer, Deputy Commander Operations Regional Command South] had no authority to issue orders to Hansell [Captain Brad Hansell, Commander Operational Detachment Alpha 7233 (Maiwand District, Kandahar Province)] or any other special operations team. This fact always galled the conventional commanders. The special operators had tried for years to placate them while maintaining autonomy.¹⁷

As in any disagreement there are two sides, however. In this description Robinson reinforces that control of these forces is retained centrally at the highest levels, in a similar fashion to aerospace power. This control permits the implementation of decentralized tactical activities that have strategic impact. In certain ways this model grew out of the linear, synchronous joint theatre architecture of the Cold War, when it was anticipated that within the Joint Operating Area multiple forces could be parsed out and controlled centrally by a Joint Task Force Commander. SOF, like the other components such as Maritime, Land and Air, would be assigned portions of the Joint Operating Area, with coordination being affected by the Joint Task Force Headquarters.

This model worked extremely well during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, as well as in the opening phases of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. However, as the joint battlespace became cluttered in both Afghanistan and Iraq, it was more non-linear and asynchronous than not, and

multiple friendly entities operated in the same area, mostly harmoniously, but at times with an apparent lack of information sharing or coordination that created disastrous results. For example, during a 2011 United States SOF-led night raid, Afghan President Hamid Karzai's cousin was mistakenly killed in the village of Karz, Dand District, Kandahar Province within the then-Canadian area of responsibility. Dand District had a population of about 450,000. The district was the southern gateway to Kandahar City considered the "key to the south" and, as such, was a strategic staging point for Taliban – and, thus, a strategically important region for both sides.

While the events surrounding the raid remain classified, it was not ever made clear whether the forces that were inserted into the area were fully aware of the human terrain. If that was a contributing factor to this event, it was an oversight that could easily have been rectified by prior interaction and coordination with the in-place conventional forces and the NATO-supported Afghan leadership and security forces. Nevertheless, as Day noted in his "SOF 101" brief, while the Joint Special Operations Task Force – at the highest levels – worked on a 96-hour planning cycle to conceptualize, put together and execute operations, only one to two hours' notice would be given to in-place tactical forces due to security concerns.¹⁸ Consequently, one can perceive that this lack of coordination would cause those conventional forces dealing with the impact of special operations missions a certain degree of angst concerning their SOF brothers-in-arms.

Whatever the cause, the impact of this misstep was enormous. The International Security Assistance Forces Commander, General David Petraeus, in the face of Afghan public outcry, had publicly apologized a week or so prior to this event for the deaths of a number of children mistakenly killed by NATO forces in Eastern Afghanistan. This apology was meant to publicly atone for a horrific mistake and to assuage President Karzai, whose very evident concern about civilian casualties and SOF night raids had

been widely reported. In one instant this apology was rendered meaningless.

Certainly the aftermath of this event diminished Karzai in the eyes of many Afghans. He was perceived as a leader who had no ability to secure the safety of his own family let alone protect the lives of his countrymen from NATO depredations. Furthermore, as local repercussion of the incident, the District Leader of Dand, *Haji* Ahmidullah Nazek, publicly noted that it was difficult to maintain credibility with his people if it was perceived that he had no influence on, or awareness of, the activities of NATO security forces within his district. Nazek, was a member of the new wave of Afghan leadership born at the end of the Soviet era. He was a *Kandahari* who had developed into adulthood during the turbulence of the 1990s and had great influence within the region. As such, his condemnation of the lack of coordination with regional Afghan authorities was significant. In short, the event was a public coup for the insurgent forces.¹⁹

This discussion leads to a candid discussion of 21st century SOF, in particular the relationship between SOF and conventional forces. The frictions between elite and conventional arms of militaries have been well-studied from a historical and current perspective. Canadian military historian Colonel Bernd Horn has written numerous pieces concerning this, at times abrasive, relationship in his histories of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion and the Canadian Airborne Regiment, as well as the situation in recent times. With regards to the latter point, Horn argues that the chasm between SOF and regular forces are due to a number of “constant themes.” These include: competition for the best people; dissimilar concepts of discipline and answerability; and differing military cultures and philosophies.²⁰

Whatever the foundation of this rift, both organizations – conventional and SOF – need to work through it and create solutions suitable for operations that are far more than integrated and are

instead interdependent. The nuances of current military activities require more than the combined model argued in 2007, which visualized SOF as one of the main pillars of Canadian whole of government operations.²¹ Resultantly, building on hard earned experience as operations in Afghanistan evolved, counter-insurgency practice during the last Canadian combat rotation in 2010-2011 reflected true interdependency between all environments and involved arms of government. Because of that, the actions of Canadian formation Task Force Kandahar (TFK) were aimed at defeating the insurgent and also the insurgency. The activities required to deal with both were not synonymous and required a mutually dependent whole of government effort. It was clearly understood that any military victory achieved against the insurgent needed to be quickly followed with permanent Afghan National Security Forces presence – both military and police – in addition to functioning governance, as well as reconstruction and development efforts linked to both provincial and national economies.²²

The TFK approach to counter-insurgency was more than the CLEAR-HOLD-BUILD approach first articulated in American doctrine in 2006.²³ It had been refined by successive rotations to a graduated DEFINE-SHAPE-CLEAR-HOLD-BUILD-ENABLE-TRANSITION. It was necessary to (1) define the problem, (2) shape the environment, (3) clear or separate the destructive influences from the population, (4) hold through the establishment of security, (5) build capacity using governance, reconstruction and development, (6) enable the local population, and (7) transition of control to host nation authorities. Due to the significant non-military component to activities across this spectrum, which increased as one moved towards TRANSITION, an integrated, whole of government team, with a common understanding of the issues and shared operating concepts to address them was necessary to succeed.²⁴

Interdependency across the various lines of effort, security, governance and development, was achieved at all levels by

enablers, like SOF and Influence Activities (IA) organizations, for example.²⁵ From observation, SOF acts in a similar fashion to Influence Activities (Civil Military Affairs, Information and Psychological Operations) to shape operations, act decisively or support ongoing operations.²⁶ It is part of the connective tissue of whole of government operations evidenced in the low intensity conflict that has been experienced over the last decade.

In an environment where distinctions between and within operations must be determined carefully and may vary greatly within the same area, all actors must try to attain a shared vision and outcomes. There is no leeway for uncoordinated action. For example, I watched the District Leader of Panjwai'i, Kandahar Province attempt to, at times successfully, use conventional and SOF commanders against each other for his own ends. Panjwai'i District had a population of approximately 80,000 people. This district was considered the the birthplace of the Taliban movement, which exerted a particularly strong influence upon the western portion of the district – near the border with Pakistan. It was an important region. The district leader, *Haji Fazluddin Agha*, had been a front commander in the fight against the Soviet Army during 1979-1989 – a member of the *mujahedeen*.²⁷ He was an intelligent and wily survivor of many years of conflict. Watching him manipulate Regional Command South conventional and SOF leaders into fighting over his attentions was a sight to behold and would be humorous if it had not had a negative impact on the holistic stability operations that needed to occur. This is only one example of the internal frictions that occurred between conventional forces nominally responsible for military operations and activities in the overall battlespace and SOF conducting village stability operations (VSO) in the same area.²⁸

Notably, a positive example of the value of SOF participating in operations was evidenced during attempts to attack the Governor's Palace, in Kandahar City, in May 2011.²⁹ Afghan National

Police special response teams, who had been mentored by SOF trainers, in conjunction with ISAF forces, quickly restored order. The NATO press release announced “Afghan National Security Forces responded calmly and capably and with limited ISAF assistance, were able to restore calm to the city.”³⁰ These Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), enabled by SOF, supported by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) conventional forces produced positive outcomes that reverberated from local through to international stakeholders.

These examples illustrate a number of the issues at play. In the Dand example, it can be perceived that SOF employed in the counter-terrorism role demand operational secrecy, but at the same time the lack of coordination, even if events go as planned, which was not the case described, can create issues for those conventional forces who normally provide security in that region. At the same time, the fractious relationship in Panjwai’i between capacity building and enabling SOF teams employed in VSO, and conventional commanders trying to create similar outcomes, leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, the ability of SOF to create positive results can be perceived unequivocally with the increase in the ability of the ANSF produced by SOF instructors and then utilized with great effect in Kandahar City.

Mitigating the types of issues identified in these selected events is important. SOF commander and operator, then Colonel Mike Rouleau, emphasized that, “CANSOFCOM must be, and be seen to be, a key contributing partner across the defence and security domains.”³¹ Rouleau supports this deduction by noting that SOF provide unique effects at all levels of conflict for all services, as well as other departments and agencies. Within this discussion, however, he cautions SOF should not over specialize, that there must be versatility of employment or an ability to be a “specialized SOF generalist.”³² Importantly, he concludes his discussion with the statement, “leaders must avoid being overly doctrinaire on the

issue of employing SOF. The fundamentals must be safeguarded but there is plenty of scope beyond doctrinal vital ground to employ SOF.”³³

And so, William Shakespeare once wrote “Aye, there’s the rub...”³⁴ Simply put, our current perspectives on the conventional force and SOF relationship are informed by doctrine. That doctrine is limiting when applied without taking into account all facets of the current and likely future security environment. Indeed, military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz warned:

...war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse carried on with other means. What remains peculiar to war is simply the peculiar nature of its means. War in general, and the commander in any specific instance, is entitled to require that the trend and designs of policy shall not be inconsistent with these means...*The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and the means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose* [emphasis added].³⁵

Missteps in the complex contemporary security environment have enormous consequences. It behooves all who operate in this setting to understand the objectives required for successful conclusions to whole of government activities and then ensure that operations are conducted interdependently to achieve those common purposes. These thoughts underpinned the need for continuing interdependent governmental capabilities imbued within the 2008 *Canada First* Defence Strategy, which was one of General Hillier’s last contributions to Canada’s defence debates prior to his retirement.³⁶

Neither these ideas nor the manner in which modern threats need be dealt with should appear new or revolutionary. The Tofflers argued in 1993 that “Those who dream of a more peaceful world

must put the old nightmares of 'nuclear winter' aside and begin thinking imaginatively, right now, about the politics, morality, and military realities of niche warfare in the twenty-first century."³⁷ In essence, "don't go to war with a lot of cold war baggage." The threats identified by the Tofflers and their colleagues are not those of the Cold War. They require the intellectual exercise demanded by Clausewitz – understanding the ends in order to effectively use means in a way that will achieve positive results. War and "not-war" has become a much more gradated effort and instead of massed forces with overlaid enablers we need to create true interdependent operations exploiting all capabilities. The stakes are too high and the penalties too unforgiving for conventional forces and SOF to not move beyond being prisoners of historical experience and doctrine in order to design and affect activities that will contribute to durable and lasting success in whole of government operations.

NOTES

1 This chapter is taken from Howard G. Coombs, "Soldiering on the Margins: Canadian Special Forces and Creating Interdependent Operations" presentation given at the Special Operations Conference "By, With, Through: A SOF Global Engagement Strategy," Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario, 2-4 December 2013. I would like to thank my daughter, Lindsay Coombs, for her invaluable assistance in preparing this chapter.

2 Cited in "CANSOFCOM," an unclassified presentation by then-Colonel D. Michael Day, Commander, Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, November 2007, slide 2.

C H A P T E R 1 2

3 At the time of writing Major-General Michael (Mike) Day, OMM, MSC, CD is Chief of Force Development, at the Canadian National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa.

4 Day, "CANSOFCOM," notes to slide 29.

5 See William S. Lind, Colonel Keith Nightengale, Captain John F. Schmitt, Colonel Joseph W. Sutton, and Lieutenant-Colonel Gary I. Wilson, "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation," *Marine Corps Gazette* Vol. 73, No. 10 (October 1989): 22-26; and Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century* (Boston and New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), 90.

6 These new structures were actualized in 2006 – one of the most significant changes was the greatly enhanced role played by special operations in the form of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM). As a result of the invaluable roles played by Canadian SOF in Afghanistan that command has remained intact in the latest round of restructuring, although several of the operational commands have been amalgamated into the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC); General Rick Hillier, *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War* (Toronto ON: HarperCollins Publishers Limited, 2009), 322-323; for discussion of Canadian SOF see Dr. Emily Spencer, *Special Operations Forces: Building Global Partnerships* (Kingston ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012); and General (Retired) Rick Hillier, the former Canadian Chief of Defence Staff from February 2005 to July 2008, and previous to that in 2004 Commander International Security and Assistance Forces Rotation V (ISAF V), did argue that with the shift to Kandahar in 2006 the security situation was much more tenuous with the attendant implications for the Canadian Forces. Hillier, *A Soldier First*, 343-344.

7 John Wright, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Ipsos Public Opinion Presentation to 33 CBG Commanders Spring Conference on May 28, 2011.

8 Chief of Defence Staff, 19 April 2005 cited in Day, "CANSOFCOM," slide 4.

9 *Ibid.*, slides 7-11.

CHAPTER 12

10 Citations contained in an e-mail from Lieutenant-General Mike Gauthier to Howard G. Coombs dated 10 October 2010.

11 The report of the “Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan” was known as the “Manley Report” after its chair, The Honourable John Manley. See Canada, “Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan” (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2008).

12 Ibid., 37.

13 Hillier, *A Soldier First*, 389.

14 Budget revisions by the Canadian government in 2013 announced the amalgamation of CIDA and DFAIT – somewhat akin to putting together the United States Agency for International Development and the Department of State. One could opine that this was the natural outcome arising from Canadian whole of government efforts in Afghanistan.

15 For discussions of Canadian perspectives concerning aspects of our whole of government involvement in Afghanistan see Andy Tamas, *Warriors and Nation Builders: Development and the Military in Afghanistan* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2009).

16 “...we will create mission success and strategic effect as an integrated force and through core service and formation competencies when our naval, land, air, and special operations forces support each other in operations. With our Defence team we will forge relationships and work with allies, other government departments, and international and non-governmental organizations.” Foreword to Canada, Department of National Defence, *B-GJ-005-300/FP-001 Canadian Forces Joint Publication (CFJP) 3.0 Operations* (2010), v.

17 Linda Robinson, *One Hundred Victories: Special Operations and The Future of American Warfare* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2013), 150.

18 Day, “CANSOFCOM”.

19 The discussion of the 2011 events in Dand were taken from Howard G. Coombs, "Whole of Government Operations in the Contemporary Security Environment," in Dr. Emily Spencer, ed., *Special Operations Forces: Building Global Partnerships* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012), 37-39; and Howard G. Coombs, "Afghanistan 2010-2011: Counterinsurgency through Whole of Government," *Canadian Military Journal* Vol. 13, No. 3 (Summer 2013): 20.

20 See Bernd Horn, "When Cultures Collide: *The Conventional Military/SOF Chasm*," in Colonel Bernd Horn and Major Tony Balasevicius, eds., *Casting Light on the Shadows: Canadian Perspectives on Special Operations* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 115-145.

21 Canada, Department of National Defence, Chief of Defence Staff, "Setting Our Course: The Way Ahead for Our Canadian Forces" (2006) cited in Coombs, "Soldiering on the Margins," slide 8.

22 See Howard G. Coombs and Brigadier-General Dean Milner, "Canada's Counter Insurgency in Afghanistan," *On Track* Vol. 15, No. 4 (Winter 2010), 23-27.

23 United States, Department of the Army, *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, forewords by General David H. Petraeus and Lt. General James F. Amos and by Lt. Colonel John A. Nagl, introduction by Sarah Sewall (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007): 174-184.

24 Coombs, "Afghanistan 2010-2011," 19.

25 Influence Activities (IA) are similar to the United States military concept of Military Information Support Operations (MISO). One significant difference between the Canada and United States is the command and control arrangements. Active duty MISO forces are subordinate to the Commander United States Special Operations Forces and reserve MISO forces are part of their respective services for training and during mobilization then assigned to the appropriate combatant command during deployment. In Canada IA is under control of the Army and resides within the Army reserve. United States, Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-13.2 Military Information Support Operations* (07 January 2010 Incorporating Change 120 December 2011),

CHAPTER 12

available at <https://jpsc.ndu.edu/schools_programs/jc2ios/io/student_readings/1C1_JP_3-13-2.pdf>, accessed 14 April 2014, xi-xii.

26 For greater exploration of Influence Activities and its role in counter-insurgency see Coombs, "Afghanistan 2010-2011," 21.

27 Afghans have assisted with the activities associated with establishing security and rebuilding their nation at great personal risk. In mid-January 2012, *Haji Fazluddin Agha* was killed along with members of his family and retinue by a suicide bomber. This discussion taken from *ibid.*, 20 and notes 19-20.

28 In areas that are threatened by insurgent or other destructive influences "VSO enable local security and re-establish or re-empower traditional local governance mechanisms that represent the populations, such as *shuras* and *jirgas* (decision-making councils), and that promote critical local development to improve the quality of life within village communities and districts. In theory and practice, SOF efforts at the village level expand to connect village clusters upward to local district centers, while national-level governance efforts connect downward to provincial centres and then to district-level centres." Colonels Ty Connett and Bob Cassidy, "Village Stability Operations: More than Village Defense," *Special Warfare Magazine* (July-September 2011), reproduced at <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/swmag/archive/SW2403/SW2403VillageStabilityOperations_MoreThanVillageDefense.html>, accessed 17 April 2014.

29 See Brian Hutchinson, "Assignment Kandahar: Weekend attacks in the city, with new updates" *National Post* (May 7, 2011, Last Updated: Aug 8 11:13 AM ET), available at <<http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/05/07/assignment-kandahar-saturday-attacks-on-the-city/>>, accessed 17 April 2014.

30 NATO, ISAF Joint Command – Afghanistan, "Afghan Forces Repel Failed Insurgent Attack in Kandahar," *Press Release 2011-05-S-021* (07 May 2011), <<http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/afghan-forces-repel-failed-insurgent-attack-in-kandahar.html>>, accessed 17 April 2014.

CHAPTER 12

31 Then-Colonel Mike Rouleau, *CANSOFCOM Professional Development Centre Monograph Series – Between Faith and Reality: A Pragmatic Sociological Examination of Canadian Special Operations Forces Command's Future Prospects* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2012), 59.

32 *Ibid.*, 59-61. Citation, 61.

33 *Ibid.*, 61.

34 William Shakespeare, "First Folio," *The Tragedie of Hamlet*, John Heminge and Henry Condell, eds. (Original material held at Waltham, Mass: Brandeis University), available at <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/image?img=1998.04.0773>>, accessed 14 April 2014, 265.

35 Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, trans. and eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 86-87.

36 Hillier, *A Soldier First*, 481; and also, Canada, Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper, "PM unveils Canada First Defence Strategy" (12 May 2008), available at <<http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=2095>>, accessed 20 March 2013.

37 Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-War* (London: Little Brown and Company, 1993), 97.

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C O N T R I B U T O R S

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C O N T R I B U T O R S

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C O N T R I B U T O R S

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GLOSSARY

9/11	11 September 2001
ABCA	America-Britain-Canada-Australia
ACC	US Army's Capstone Concept
AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANCOF	Afghan National Civil Order Police
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AQI	Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BC	British Columbia
BCCI	Bank of Commerce and Credit International
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CANSOF	Canadian Special Operations Forces
CANSOFCOM	Canadian Special Operations Forces Command
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
CCRA	Covert, Clandestine, and Related Activities
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group program
CJIRU	Canadian Joint Incidence Response Unit
CJSOTF-N	Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – North
COE	Contemporary Operating Environment
COI	Coordinator of Information
COIN	Counter-Insurgency

G L O S S A R Y

CORDS	Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support
CSOR	Canadian Special Operations Regiment
CSTO	Cooperative Security Treaty Organization
CSWO	Chief Special Warfare Operator
CT	Counter-Terrorism
CTOG	Counter-Terrorism Operational Group
DDMA	Defence, Diplomacy and Military Assistance
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DFATD	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development
DIOCC	District Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centres
DND	Department of National Defence
DOD	Department of Defense
EU	European Union
FARK	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia
FEC	Far East Command
FID	Foreign Internal Defense or Forward Internal Defence (depending on context)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GSN	Global SOF Network
IA	Influence Activities
ICC	<i>Integrated Capstone Concept</i>
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force

G L O S S A R Y

JDF	Jamaican Defence Force
JTF2	Joint Task Force Two
LDI	Local Defence Initiative
LEAs	Law Enforcement Agencies
MACV	Military Assistance Command Vietnam
MACVSOG	Military Advisory Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group
MAI	Multilateral Agreement on Investments
Maj	Major
MS	Master Sergeant
NA	Northern Alliance
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NDS	National Directorate of Security
NEO	Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSAM	National Security Action Memorandum
NSHQ	NATO SOF Headquarters
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OGDs	Other Government Departments
OGs	Operational Groups
OPCW	Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPLAN	Operational Plan
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PCO	Privy Council Office
PD	Professional Development

G L O S S A R Y

PGS	Policy on Government Security
PIFWIC	Persons Indicted for War Crimes
PIOCC	Provincial Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centres
PMCs	Private Military Corporations
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
POGG	Peace, Order and of Good Government
PRU	Provincial Reconnaissance Units
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEAL	Sea, Air, Land
SF	Special Forces
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SFG	Special Forces Group
SFODA	Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alphas
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces
SILC	Security and Intelligence Library Committee
SOCAFRICA	Special Operations Command – Africa
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
TBS	Treasury Board Secretariat
TF	Task Force
TFK	Task Force Kandahar
TTCP	The Technical Cooperation Program
TTPs	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States

G L O S S A R Y

USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VC	Viet Cong
VCI	Viet Cong infrastructure
VSO	Village Stability Operations
WMP	Weapons of Mass Production
WO	Warrant Officer
WoG	Whole of Government

INDEX

- 10th Mountain Division 23
- 10th Special Forces Group 11, 23
- 11 September 2001 (9/11) 20, 33 *notes*, 126, 134, 184
- 17th parallel 13
- 36th Commandos 24
- 427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron 185
-
- Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) 19
- Afghan Commandos 22
- Afghan Local Police (ALP) 23, 34 *notes*, 150, 153 *notes*
- Afghan National Army (ANA) 23
- Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) 21
- Afghan National Police (ANP) 23, 192
- Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) 22, 186, 191, 193
- Afghanistan iii, 1, 18, 20-23, 25, 33-35 *notes*, 47, 51, 60, 68, 72, 73, 76,
143, 149, 160, 173, 176, 177, 185-189, 191, 196-199 *notes*, 202, 204,
- Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) 24
- Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) 25, 26, 36 *notes*
- Al-Qaeda (AQ) 19, 20, 24, 25, 41, 52, 88
- Arar, Mahar 134
- Army Capstone Concept 64 *notes*
- Asymmetrical Threat Working Group 112, 126

I N D E X

- Blue-on-Green 57
- Bush, George 17, 109, 111
- “By, with, through” (concept) iv, v, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 18-20, 25, 68, 172
- Canadian Airborne Regiment 190, 201
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) iii, 58, 82, 134, 183, 185, 204
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) 187, **197 notes**
- Canadian Joint Incident Response Unit (CJIRU) 108, 109, 185
- Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) iii, iv, vi, **35 notes**, 81, 85, 87, 168, **181 notes**, 183, 185, 193, **195-197 notes**, **200 notes**, 201, 203, 204,
- Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR) 185
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) 10, 11, 16, 20, **30 notes**, **33 notes**, **34 notes**, 92, **141 notes**
- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) 40, 109
- China 9, 110, 115, 116, 123
- Churchill, Winston 6, **29 notes**
- Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) 14, **15**, **32 notes**
- Civilian Irregular Defense Group program (CIDG) 13, 14, **32 notes**
- Clausewitz, Carl von 1, 161, 194, 195, **200 notes**
- Coalition 22-26, **33 notes**, **34 notes**, 43, 45, 46, 48, 57, 68, 72, 112, 113, 149, 150, 156, 165, 166, 171
- Cold War 10, 11, 42, 65, **78 notes**, 109, 110, 115, 117, 184, 188, 195
- Colombia 16, 17, **32 notes**, 92, 93, 98, 151

I N D E X

- Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – North (CJSOTF-N) 23
- Contemporary operating environment (COE) 39, 40, 42, 109, 111, 203,
- Conventional Forces 48, 53, 109, 123, 132, 150, 160, 184, 189-190, 192, 193, 195
- Convergent Operations 166, 167
- Counter-terrorism (CT) 24-26, 44, 71, **79 notes**, 83, 85, 151, 185, 187, 193
- Counter Terrorism Operational Group (CTOG) 25
- Counter-Insurgency (COIN) 12, 13, 17, 21, 22, 27, **36 notes**, 53, 71, 72, 94, 100, 133, 185, 187, 191, **199 notes**
- “Covert, Clandestine, and Related Activities – Korea” organization (CCRAK) 11
- Defense Intelligence Agency 58
- Defence, Diplomacy and Military Assistance (DDMA) 48, 37
- Department of Defense (DoD) 16, 17, **34 notes**, **37 notes**, 51, 54, 88, 146, **198 notes**
- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) 187, **197 notes**
(*see also Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development*)
- Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) 82, 84
- Department of National Defence (DND) 82, 84, 128, 187, **197 notes**, **198 notes**, 204
- Detachment 101 8, 9
- District Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centers (DIOCC) 15
- Donovan, Major General William 8, 9
- Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) 92

I N D E X

- Eisenhower, General Dwight “Ike” 9
- Escobar, Pablo 91-93, **104 notes**
- Ethical constraints 84
- European Union (EU) 110, 125
- Fallujah 24, **35 notes**, 202
- Far East Command (FEC) 11
- Flynn, Lieutenant General Mike 58, **64 notes**
- Foreign Internal Defence (FID) 10, 27, **36 notes**, 37, 155, 159
- France 2-4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 26, **28 notes**, **36 notes**, 110
- Gates, Robert 2, **27 notes**
- Gauthier, Lieutenant-General Michel 185, **197 notes**
- Geneva Accords 1954 13
- Germany 9, 11, 120
- Global Engagement Strategy iii, iv, vi, **195 notes**
- Global SOF network 1, 2, 27, 39, 43, 45-47, 49, 94, 168
- Global SOF Network (GSN) 87-89, 94, 95, 97-101, **105 notes**,
- Goreham, Captain John 4
- Goreham’s Rangers 4, 5
- Government of Canada (GoC) iv, 82, 128, 131
- Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) 21
- Gray, Colin S. 66, 67, **78 notes**, **104 notes**
- Guerillas **28 notes**

I N D E X

- Hillier, General Rick 185, 186, 194, **196 notes**, **197 notes**, **200 notes**
- Ho Chi Minh 13
- Ho Chi Minh Trail 15, **32 notes**
- Horn, Colonel Bernd 1, **27 notes**, **28 notes**, **34 notes**, 39, **78 notes**, **136 notes**,
137 notes, **140 notes**, **181 notes**, 190, **198 notes**, 201
- Human Domain 51, 52, 54, 55, 57-60, 63, **64 notes**, 66, 68, 77
- Huntington, Samuel 87, **102 notes**, 109
- Indigenous forces 2, 4, 5, 12, 19, 27, 33, 75, 159
- Indochina (*see also Vietnam*) 12, 13
- Influence Activities (IA) 180, 192, **198 notes**, **199 notes**
- Integrated Capstone Concept (ICC) 55, 58, **64 notes**
- International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) 22, 47, 189, 193, **196 notes**,
199 notes
- Iraq 1, 20, 23-25, **34 notes**, 51, 59, 94, 115, 121, **139 notes**, 143, 151,
152 notes, 188, 202, 203
- Irregular warfare 5, 36
- Jamaican 25, **35 notes**
- Jamaican Defence Force (JDF) 25
- Jedburgh Teams 8, 10, **30 notes**
- Jemaah Islamiya 19
- Johnson, Lyndon 15, **162 notes**
- Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) iii, vi, **32 notes**, **34 notes**,
153 notes, 202, 203
- Joint Task Force 2 (JTF 2) 185

I N D E X

- Kandahar 20, 23, **34 notes**, 188, 189, 191-193, **196 notes**, **199 notes**, 204
- Karzai, Hamid 21, 52, 189, 190
- Kennedy, John F. 12, 13, **31 notes**
- Korea 11, 116
- Law of armed conflict 56, 71
- Leahy Laws 145-147, **152 notes**
- Leidig, Vice Admiral Charles J. 148
- Los Pepes 92, 93, 96
- Mali 25, 26, **33 notes**, **36 notes**
- McRaven, Admiral William 45, 57, **64 notes**, 72, 77, **79 notes**, 147, 177
- Military Advisory Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group (MACVSOG) 14
- Military Assistance iii, iv, v, 1, 27, **37 notes**, 44, 45, 68, 71, **78 notes**, 98, 143, 155, 171-177, 180, 181
- Military Assistance Advisory Group 13
- Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) 14, 15
- Military Information Support Operations (MISO) **198 notes**
- Minister of National Defence 82
- Moro Islamic Liberation Front 19
- Mujahedeen 18, 19, 192
- Mullah Omar 20
- National Directorate of Security (NDS) 21
- National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 362 15

I N D E X

- NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ) 46, 47, 61, 63
- Niger 25, 116
- non-governmental organizations (NGOs) 42, 70, 71, 75, 88, 99, **102 notes**,
117, 118, 125, **138 notes**, **197 notes**,
- Non-traditional Partners 87, 89, 91, 94, 97-102,
- North America 3-5, **27 notes**, **28 notes**
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) **34 notes**, 46, 61, **64 notes**, 95,
99, 100, 101, **105 notes**, 107, 108, 110, 114, 115, **137 notes**, 143, 166,
186, 187, 189, 190, 193, **199 notes**, 201
- Northern Alliance (NA) 20, 33, 52
- Nova Scotia Rangers 4
- Office of Strategic Services (OSS) 8-11, 13, **29 notes**, **30 notes**
- Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) 20, 188, 202
- Operation Iraqi Freedom 188, 202
- Operational Groups (OGs) 8, 9
- Other Government Departments (OGDs) 48, 70, 71, 174, 175, 180, **197 notes**
- Ottawa **64 notes**, 125, 126, 128, 129, 131, **140 notes**, **196 notes**, **197 notes**,
204
- Peshmerga 23
- Petraeus, General David 189, **198 notes**
- Philippines 19, **33 notes**, 91, 93, 94, **103 notes**, 147
- Phoenix Program 14-16, **32 notes**
- Plan Colombia 17
- Policy on Government Security (PGS) 128, 131

I N D E X

- Presidential Unit Citation 9
- Prime Minister's Office (PMO) 111, 125, 126
- Private Military Corporations (PMCs) 87, 88
- Privy Council Office (PCO) 111, 125, 126
- Professional Development (PD) 174, 180
- Propaganda 6, 7, 58
- Provincial Intelligence and Operations Coordination Centers (PIOCC) 15
- Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU) 15, 16
-
- Ranger Tradition 5
- Rangers 4, 5, 11, **29 notes**
- Reagan, Ronald 16
- Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) 16, 18, **32 notes**
- Risk v, 1, 2, 19, 27, 46, 48, 53, 82-85, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94, 96, 97, 99, 101, 102, 121, 129, 132, 135, 143-145, 148, 149, 158, 159, 162, 165, 166, 168-171, 174, **199 notes**
- Robinson, Linda **163 notes**, 188, **197 notes**
- Rogers, Major Robert **29 notes**
- Roosevelt, Franklin D. 8, **103 notes**
- Rouleau, Colonel [Brigadier-General] Mike iv, 193, **200 notes**
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) 128
-
- Sabotage 6, 7, **30 notes**, **36 notes**
- Savage Wars of Peace 10, **31 notes**
- SEALs 24

I N D E X

- Secret Armies 6, 7
- Security and Intelligence Library Committee (SILC) 131
- Security Force Assistance (SFA) 21, 22, **34 notes**, **36 notes**, 48
- Seeckt, General Hans von 65, **78 notes**
- Seven Years War 5
- SOF network 1, 2, 27, 39, 43-47, 49, 87, 94, **105 notes**, 168
- Soviet Union 11, 19
- Special Forces (SF) 8, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22-24, **31-33 notes**, **35 notes**, 57, 76, 77, **78 notes**, **79 notes**, 174, 184, **195 notes**
- Special Forces Group (SFG) 11, 23, 24, **32 notes**
- Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alphas (SFODA) 8
- Special Operations Executive (SOE) 6, 8-11, **29 notes**, **30 notes**, 161
- Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) 23, 26, 47, 48, 202
- Strategic culture 88, 89, 94, 95, 101
- Strategic Utility 87-89, 91-94, 98-102
- Subversion 6, 7, 12, 13, 21, **30 notes**, **36 notes**
- Sun Tzu 1
- Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) 8, 9
- Taliban 20, **33 notes**, **34 notes**, 52, 57, 189, 192
- Task Force DAGGER 52
- Task Force Kandahar (TFK) 191
- Task Force Viking 23
- Tofflers, Alvin and Heidi 194, 195

I N D E X

- Trust iv, 18, 22, **34 notes**, 46, 61, 71-75, 95, 98, 109, 121, 133, 135, **141 notes**, 156, 160, 162, 172, 177, 178, 180
- Unconventional warfare (UW) 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 19, 23, 27, **33 notes**, **36 notes**, **78 notes**,
- United Nations (UN) 98, 108, 114, 115, 123, **138 notes**
- United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) 45, 57, 72, **105 notes**, 147, 177, 202
- US Africa Command 148
- US Special Operations Command – Africa (SOCAFRICA) 26
- Viet Cong (VC) 13-15, **31 notes**
- Vietnam (see also Indochina) 13-16, 18, **31 notes**, **32 notes**, 67, **105 notes**, 160, **163 notes**
- Village Stability Operations (VSO) 23, 149, **153 notes**, 174, 192, 193, **199 notes**
- Washington 8, 59, **64 notes**, 125, **153 notes**, 184
- Washington D.C. (also see Washington) **29 notes**, **31 notes**, **34 notes**, 59, **78 notes**, **163 notes**
- Whole of Government (WoG) iii, 63, **102 notes**, 174, 185-187, 191, 192, 194, 195, **197 notes**, **198 notes**
- Wikileaks 199, 135
- World Trade Center (WTC) 20
- World War II (WWII) **29 notes**, **31 notes**, **141 notes**



Following nearly a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan Westerners are tired of conflict and understandably reluctant to commit national blood and treasure in foreign lands. Arguably, there is a growing lack of national will everywhere for military engagements, which is underscored by a lack of resources, both human and financial. Nonetheless, and possibly even feeding on this state of affairs, there certainly is no lack of peril to which no nation is immune. In particular, geographic and geopolitical boundaries are becoming increasingly less important to antagonists as is witnessed by the rise in transnational acts of aggression including terrorism, criminal activity and cyber-attacks. Nonetheless, the response to these acts of belligerence is often slowed - if not impeded - by national boundaries and capabilities, not least of which is the lack of national will to commit resources abroad. The concept of "By, With, Through" operations helps to mitigate these issues. Central to this approach, military assistance to allied and friendly nations is paramount in assuring a secure and stable world. Whether conducting operations "by" us (namely the Western nations) for those states without the necessary capability, or "with" those countries to secure their borders, the goal is, in the end, to work "through" those same countries by empowering them to conduct their own operations to secure their borders, with the ultimate goal of regional and international security. Special Operations Forces (SOF) by nature of their agile, unobtrusive and cost-effective profile represent the ideal force to lead such a response. Importantly, the concept, in its most effective form, allows for local solutions to potentially global problems and, as such, is not only a practical solution but a fiscal and sustainable one as well. *"By, With, Through": A SOF Global Engagement Strategy* explores these issues from the perspectives of practitioners, strategists and academics.



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