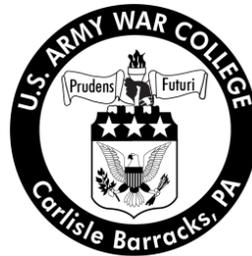


Civilian Research Project USAWC Fellow

Employing U.S. Army Special Forces to Defeat America's Emerging Threats

by

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United States Army



United States Army War College
Class of 2013

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Following the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and Iraq while targeting al-Qa'ida (AQ) and other transnational terrorist organizations in order to neutralize America's security threats. U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) supported Operations Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) by conducting Unconventional Warfare (UW) operations. After the overthrow of the Taliban and Saddam's government, SF transitioned from UW to Foreign Internal Defense (FID), creating the Afghan and Iraqi Army Commandos who led the way for their new governments' security. Today, the U.S. and our Special Operations Forces (SOF) focus heavily on Surgical Strike missions, specifically Counter Terrorism (CT) and Direct Action (DA) operations as we continue to target AQ and other terrorist organizations. This focus on Surgical Strike operations and underutilization of SOF in Special Warfare operations such as FID and UW may limit DOD's ability to defeat emerging threats. This paper will examine Special Warfare operations, specifically FID, Preparation of the Environment (PE) and UW and how the application of these missions can efficiently support long term U.S. national security objectives.

Employing U.S. Army Special Forces to Defeat America's Emerging Threats

In his 2010 National Security Strategy, President Barack Obama stated that “our military will continue strengthening its capacity to partner with foreign counterparts, train and assist security forces, and pursue military-to-military ties with a broad range of governments.”¹ Faced with cuts to the military budget, the Department of Defense (DOD) must be pragmatic on how its resources are invested to ensure security for our nation while defeating America's emerging strategic threats.

As the U.S. and our allies struggle with recessions and declining economies, global security collaboration assumes an even greater priority in the 21st century. Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated in testimony to Congress in 2008, “As borne out by Afghanistan, Iraq, and in other theaters large and small, success in the war on terror will depend as much on the capacity of allies and partners in the moderate Muslim world as on the capabilities of our own forces.”²

When the Department of Defense (DOD) reassesses its requirements and global engagement beyond Afghanistan in 2014, its capacity to meet future security challenges must also be examined. Repeated twenty-five times in the January 2012 Department of Defense publication, “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,”³ building partner capacity is a critical component of our future National Security Strategy. If DOD and the U.S. Army want to maximize their resources to ensure success in building partner nation security capacity with our allies, they must reexamine how resources are prioritized to accomplish this strategic goal.

Surgical Strike Operations

Since 9/11, the Department of Defense has achieved great success in Surgical Strike Operations which is defined as: “ the execution of activities in a precise manner

that employ special operations forces in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover or damage designated targets, or influence threats.”⁴ U.S. Counter-terrorist operations have killed or captured hundreds of Al Qaida (AQ) leaders around the world to include Osama bin Laden, as well as thousands of other terrorist leaders and radical Islamic foot soldiers. According to Risk Management Solutions historical catalog of macro terrorism attacks (defined as attacks with the minimum severity of a car bomb) terrorist violence has increased substantially since AQ’s attack on America. From 1991-2001, there were approximately 1,200 macro terrorism attacks around the world. Since 2001, there have been more than 2,400 macro attacks worldwide, killing over 37,000 people and injuring nearly 70,000, with over 60% of these victims being in Afghanistan and Iraq.⁵

Surgical Strike units (Special Mission Units, the 75th Ranger Regiment, select Special Forces Companies) are trained and equipped to provide a primarily unilateral, scalable, direct action capability that is skilled in hostage rescue, kill / capture operations against designated targets, and other specialized missions.⁶ Surgical Strike forces and their direct support enablers (e.g. Special Operations Aviation and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance assets) have greatly benefitted from increased resourcing to conduct counter-terrorism and direct action operations over the past 11-years. Special Warfare forces (e.g. Green Berets) have not received an equal share of these DOD additive resources following the 9/11 attacks.

Unfortunately, terrorism is only a by-product of the hybrid security threats we face today-- the root cause of terrorism is extremism. The most prevalent and lethal extremist threat to the U.S. has been Islamic extremism which is defined as: “ the

spread of an Islamic ideology that denies the legitimacy of nonbelievers and practitioners of other forms of Islam and that explicitly promotes hatred, intolerance, and violence that could lead to future terrorist activities that threaten U.S. national security interests.”⁷ Until the United States and our global allies are able to quell extremism, terrorists will continue to threaten the free world.

During his tenure as the JSOC Commander, then LTG Stanley A. McChrystal developed a Surgical Strike network (CT and DA focused) that had devastating effects on AQ and other Islamic extremist terrorist organizations around the world.⁸ His command maximized USSOCOM’s Special Mission units, the 75th Ranger Regiment, and SOFs direct support and combat service support enablers, and most impressively the interagency (eg. Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, etc.). This Surgical Strike network primarily focused on destroying AQ wherever they operated. A key component of McChrystal’s Counter-terrorist Joint Task Force success resulted from its’ ability to integrate the interagency into every phase of the Find, Fix, Finish, Exploitation and Analyze (F3EA) targeting process.⁹ He also received extraordinary support from the General Purpose Force (e.g. CAS, rotary wing, ISR assets, etc.) and maximized his CT focused networks’ effectiveness with the employment of Liaison Officers in select commands and governmental agencies. Finally, the Surgical Strike forces received substantial resourcing support from the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and DOD which ensured success for current and future man hunting operations. Unfortunately, Special Warfare and DODs focus on building partner nation

capacity has not received the same level of resourcing and collective support that Surgical Strike has enjoyed.¹⁰

The U.S. and our Allies must continue to maintain focus on targeting terrorist leadership, thus disrupting terrorist networks through the application of Surgical Strike missions primarily executing CT operations. As often repeated by LTG McChrystal, “it takes a network to defeat a network.”¹¹ DOD, the Interagency and our Allies have developed an effective Surgical Strike focused network that has disrupted and often prevented Islamic extremist terrorist organizations from carrying out a subsequent catastrophic attack (e.g. 9/11) against the U.S. and our allies. Unfortunately, Surgical Strike operations are a short term game, sometimes referred to as “whack a mole” operations, meaning another terrorist leader replaces the one that was killed or captured by the Surgical Strike raid. Terrorists operate in cellular networks and quickly regenerate new leaders who continue to threaten the U.S. and our allies. Targeting terrorist leadership has devastating impacts on terrorist organizations, but fails to destroy violent extremism motivations which generate more terrorists.¹²

The long term solution to defeating extremism requires the U.S., our allies and partner nation forces to cooperatively target extremism at its roots. Civil wars and insurgencies are unlikely to emerge if the state can successfully monitor and control subversive and extremist elements while meeting the needs of their population.¹³ For USSOCOM and USASOC, it means creating a persistent Special Warfare global engagement campaign that focuses on training select partner nation security forces to fight and defeat extremist elements and other threats to their nation’s security. The Department of Defense and U.S. Army must increase their investment in Special

Warfare (Foreign Internal Defense, Military Information Support Operations, Preparation of the Environment and Unconventional Warfare) operations with a reallocation of resources and funding to USSOCOM and USASOC.

Special Warfare —The Long Term Solution to Defeating Extremism

In July 2012, Lieutenant General Charles Cleveland took command of the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and directed his staff to examine the allocation of resources that support Surgical Strike and Special Warfare operations. Special Warfare, defined as: “the execution of activities that involve a combination of lethal and nonlethal actions taken by a specially trained and educated force that has a deep understanding of cultures and foreign language, proficiency in small-unit tactics, and the ability to build and fight alongside indigenous combat formations in a permissive, uncertain, or hostile environment.”¹⁴ It was clear to the incoming Commanding General that USASOC needed to reorganize its command and resources to better support the USSOCOM objective of creating a Global SOF Network, focused on building and sustaining relationships with our allies and partners in order to provide a framework to deliver the full spectrum of SOF capabilities.¹⁵

The USSOCOM Commander’s intent behind creating a Global SOF network aims to optimize SOF agility and responsiveness, improve partner nation capability, and facilitate collaboration with non-Defense US Government departments and agencies. This initiative will increase U.S. access and influence in key regions of the world, strengthening our strategic partners’ ability to defeat our mutual security threats.¹⁶ The primary method USASOC will utilize to support the development of the Global SOF network is through the application of Special Warfare operations.¹⁷

DOD and USSOCOM already possess a proven and capable force to build partner capacity within USASOC. United States Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) provides uniquely trained and resourced units that are capable of long-duration operations in denied areas. USASFC (A)'s Green Berets, organized into 12-man Special Forces A-Teams, are the primary units of action for Special Warfare (SW) operations. Special Forces missions that directly support the SW line of effort include Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Preparation of the Environment (PE) and Unconventional Warfare (UW). SF A-Teams are specifically designed to train, advise, and assist host nations in conducting special operations and building indigenous forces war-fighting capability.¹⁸

Over the past fifteen-years, SF units deployed around the world have succeeded in strengthening nation capacity in remote and hostile environments. In 1999, the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) began deploying SF A-Teams to Latin America to support Plan Colombia. This FID mission focused on building the Colombian Military and Police Counter Drug and later Counter-Narco-Terrorist capacity. After 13-years of engagement, our Colombian allies have effectively disrupted cocaine production while simultaneously rendering the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) ineffective. In 2002, the 1st SFG (A) deployed forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines and destroyed insurgent extremist groups on the island of Mindanao. When the political conditions were conducive to advisory assistance, the 3rd SFG (A) deployed Special Forces to Pakistan and conducted FID training which helped to strengthen the Pakistani Frontier Corps in their on-going operations to target terrorist and extremist groups operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Green

Berets further validated their ability to partner with indigenous forces and facilitate America's national security objectives as evidenced by 5th SFG(A) UW operations with the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan and 3rd and 10th SFG(A) UW operations with the Peshmerga in Northern Iraq.

Following the invasion and subsequent emergence of democratically-oriented governments in Afghanistan and Iraq, Green Berets created the Afghan and Iraqi Commandos in support of partnered COIN operations. These host nation (HN) Commando forces quickly joined the United States' effort to free their countries from AQ, Taliban and other Islamic extremist organizations that threatened their nations developing governments while simultaneously setting an example for the creation of other host nation security forces.

Green Berets have been building partner nation capacity around the world since their inception in 1952, enabling our allies to defeat terrorist organizations, insurgent groups, narco-traffickers and other threats to their national security. Short term engagements do not work; building partner capacity must be a long term U.S. campaign strategy as it often requires a decade or longer to succeed. U.S. Army Special Forces have proven time and again that they are DODs best organization in building our allies' security capacity and conducting partnered operations.

In 1999, Plan Colombia kicked off with President Clinton's pledged \$1.6B in aid aimed at fighting the illicit drug trade, increasing the rule of law, protecting human rights, expanding economic development and instituting judicial reform.¹⁹ According to official government statistical information from August 2004, in two years, homicides, kidnappings and terrorist attacks in Colombia decreased by as much as 50 percent, the

lowest level in almost 20-years. In 2003, there were 7,000 fewer homicides than in 2002, a decrease of 27%.²⁰ By April 2004, the government had established a permanent police or military presence in every Colombian municipality for the first time in decades. The Colombia military reported a 90-percent drop in kidnappings, and a 20 percent reduction in the size of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarios del Colombia (FARC) controlled territory from 2000-2007.²¹ During this same time period, the Colombian government reported a greater than 50% reduction in FARC membership (17,000 to 8,000).²² Even though some would argue the FARC has been defeated and the war is over, Army Special Operations Forces are still engaged in Colombia and will be for the foreseeable future in order to ensure victory over the FARC and prevent their reemergence.

As the United States moves forward in a period of unknown stability and global security, it is time for our nation and DOD to invest in building partner capacity with our allies, like we have in Colombia. An investment in a global security network of allied countries will enhance the disruption of terrorist organizations and ultimately defeat common enemies and hybrid security threats in the future. The U.S. lacks the resources to effectively do it alone and Special Forces are ideally suited to lead the way for the Department of Defense in defeating our emerging threats through the application of Special Warfare operations.

Unfortunately, there are not enough Green Berets and Special Forces Operational Detachment- Alphas (SFOD-As) to meet all the demands that have been placed on them following the 9/11 attacks. As of January 2013, the United States Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) has 360 SFOD-As in the active component (72 x

SFOD-A per active duty Special Forces Group) and 108 SFOD-As in the National Guard (54 x SFOD-As per National Guard Special Forces Group).²³ The goal for the U.S. Army is 1-year deployed to 3-years in CONUS or a dwell of 1:3.²⁴ SFOD-A's current dwell ratio is 1: .88 (less than 1-year in CONUS to every year deployed) and is largely due to their heavy commitment in Afghanistan. Green Berets therefore are unable to meet all of the Combatant Commander (CCDR) overseas mission requirements. Additional sourcing solutions will be required to meet the growing need of building partner capacity.

While SOF conducted hundreds of Foreign Internal Defense (FID) missions in some fifty-six countries in 2007, they generally were short in duration (several weeks to a few months).²⁵ With more than 80% of forward-deployed SOF tied down in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2008, and 99% of those forces committed to combat operations, Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP) missions worldwide fell by 50%.²⁶ Between FY11-14, USASFC (A) is forecasted to execute approximately 66-72% of the TSCP requirements annually.²⁷ An important factor to recognize with these statistics is the demand for SFOD-As in support of enduring operations will continue to take priority over TSCP missions. CCDRs often request short notice TSCP missions after post annual resourcing conferences that USASFC (A) is unable to support which lowers the percentage of TSCP missions SF are able to execute annually.²⁸

Today, there is much debate in the Army on how to focus resources and how to prepare our forces to build partner nation capacity in the future. Who can accomplish the mission with the best chance for success and least risk to our Soldiers as they live and operate in austere, foreign and often high risk security environments? When

examining the current set of DOD terms and definitions that support building partner capacity (or advise and assist), there are common misunderstandings associated with these often collaborative missions.

Irregular Warfare (IW), Unconventional Warfare (UW), Preparation of the Environment (PE), Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Military Information Support Operations (MISO), Civil Affairs Operations (CAO), Security Force Assistance (SFA), Counter-Insurgency (COIN), Stability Operations (SO), and Counter Terrorism (CT) exemplify the array of critical operations which are required to build a global security network. It is important to review these doctrinal terms before presenting recommendations on how USASOC and the U.S. Army can best prepare and employ in the future to build partner nation capacity and defeat hybrid transnational threats.

Irregular Warfare (IW)

IW is defined as a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will.²⁹ IW is an umbrella of operations to defeat irregular threats. These operations include: CT, UW, FID, COIN and Stability Operations (all of which are USSOCOM and USASOC core operations). The General Purpose Force (GPF) also conducts FID, COIN and Stability Operations.

Unconventional Warfare

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 guerrilla force in a denied area.³⁰ UW, Green Beret's

primary mission, focuses on regime change and is best exemplified in Afghanistan with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and Northern Alliance overthrow of the Taliban government in 2001. Terrorist organizations and enemy countries (e.g. Iran) are currently employing UW campaigns against the U.S. and our allies. Green Berets are DOD's primary force that is trained on the art of UW, thus understanding what it takes to defeat this form of asymmetric warfare.

Preparation of the Environment

An umbrella term for operations and activities conducted by selectively trained special operations forces to develop an environment for potential future special operations.³¹ This mission, a SOF core activity, directly supports USASOC forces preparation for future UW campaigns as well as CT and DA operations. PE activities normally require a cover for action in their execution and are secret in nature in order to protect future SOF operations. Several Combatant Commanders have UW operations included in select CONPLANS. Steady state PE operations, conducted by the same Special Forces units that will execute UW campaigns in support of CCDRs CONPLANS must be conducted around the world to ensure success in the event of war.

Foreign Internal Defense

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.³² FID is a core SOF operation and has been conducted by all of USSOCOM's service components around the world. USASFC (A)'s Green Berets possess the greatest capacity to execute FID in austere, high threat environments. Examples of successful Special Forces FID operations can be found around the globe

in the form of past and on-going Theater Security Cooperation Assistance Program (TSCP) missions, like Plan Colombia, OEF-Philippines, and OEF Trans-Sahara.

Military Information Support Operations (MISO)

MISO are defined as planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the originator's objectives.³³ This USSOCOM core activity is a critical shaping operation which helps garner support for Special Warfare missions such as FID, UW, CT and other SOF core operations and activities. The 4th and 8th Military Information Support Operation Group (4th & 8th MISO GRPs), a USASOC subordinate command, has been instrumental in executing MISO operations globally in support of national security objectives and campaigns. Special Forces Groups have MISO Soldiers included in their headquarters' structure (MTOEs) and maintain a habitual working relationship with the regionally oriented language trained 4th & 8th MISO subordinate units.

Civil Affairs Operations

Those military operations conducted by civil affairs forces that (1) enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in localities where military forces are present; (2) require coordination with other interagency organizations, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, indigenous populations and institutions, and the private sector; and (3) involve application of functional specialty skills that normally are the responsibility of civil-government to enhance the conduct of civil-military operations.³⁴ CAO is an integral supporting activity for Special Warfare missions (e.g. FID and UW) as evidenced through improved stability

(security, economic and governance) in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Colombia, the Philippines, and throughout the Trans-Sahara.

Security Forces Assistance

The Department of Defense activities that contribute to unified action by the U.S. Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions.³⁵ This is a USSOCOM core operation and also a GPF operation which is primarily focused on improving allied and host nation security force capacity.³⁶

In 2004, the El Salvadorian Ambassador to the U.S. stated it was his country's responsibility to repay America by sending forces to Iraq to support their long term allies in the War on Terror.³⁷ This is an example of where past FID and SFA engagements have and will continue to build deep alliances and support for U.S. national objectives.

Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Operations

COIN operations are defined as comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to defeat an insurgency and to address any core grievances. COIN is primarily political and incorporates a wide range of activities, of which security is only one. Unified action is required to successfully conduct COIN operations and should include all host nation (HN), US, and multinational agencies or actors. By doctrine, civilian agencies lead COIN efforts. When operational conditions do not permit a civilian agency to lead COIN within a specific area, the joint force commander (JFC) must be cognizant of the unified action required for effective COIN.³⁸ This USSOCOM Core operation is very broad and is most often led by conventional forces with SOF in support as demonstrated in Iraq and Afghanistan following the initial invasions and subsequent regime changes. COIN is a long term operation and is population focused in contrast to the shorter term SFA

operation focused on host nation security forces. Both GPF and SOF conduct COIN operations and achieve great success when applied in a mutual supporting manner. COIN operations in OIF and OEF demonstrated the importance of interdependence between the GPF and SOF in the execution of this long term operation.

Stability Operations

An overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment (and) provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief.³⁹ This is also a USSOCOM core operation and a major operation for the GPF. In 2010, the U.S. deployed forces to Haiti to conduct Stability Operations following their devastating earthquakes. Operation Unified Quest, led by LTG Ken Keen included personnel from all branches of the military totaling over 17,000 service members in and around Haiti.⁴⁰

Counter-Terrorism (CT)

CT is defined as actions taken directly against terrorist networks and indirectly to influence and render global and regional environments inhospitable to terrorist networks.⁴¹ This is a USSOCOM core operation and USASOC has several subordinate commands that primarily focus on the execution of this operation. From drone strikes to man hunting, CT operations have disrupted AQ and other terrorist organizations around the world and helped protect our nation from subsequent catastrophic attacks since 9/11. CT operations have greatly enhanced U.S. led COIN, SFA and FID operations around the world. As previously stated, CT is an important part of the solution to disrupt

our global security threats. However, CT does not resolve the root cause of terrorism, which is the spread of extremism.

U.S. Army Future Operations beyond Afghanistan

Currently, the U.S. Army is focused on Unified Land Operations (Offensive, Defensive, and Stability Operations), with its two core competencies of Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security.⁴² Simultaneously, the Army is developing a plan to realign select Corps and Division Headquarters and mission ready Brigade Combat Teams to conduct Security Force Assistance (SFA) operations while maintaining its global ready force.⁴³

Having served as a Special Troops Battalion Commander in a Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT) from 2008-2010, I personally experienced how a BCT struggled to meet the challenges associated with preparing for full spectrum operations (legacy missions associated with a HBCT) while also preparing for an Advise and Assist Brigade (AAB) OIF combat deployment.⁴⁴ Our BCT had too little time to prepare for all the tasks we were expected to be trained on and ready to execute in combat. Despite the overloaded training task list, our BCT attempted to prepare its Soldiers for the combat deployment as an AAB.

A significant challenge for BCTs is the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model which organizes, trains and deploys BCTs over what is ideally a three-year period. The ARFORGEN cycle made it difficult to train our units on collective tasks while key leaders were being assigned to our BCTS all the way up to our deployment in May 2009. U.S. Army General Purpose Forces (GPF) regularly move between different Divisions and BCTs whereas Green Beret Soldiers spend years in the same Special

Forces Battalions and Groups honing their regional orientation and language capabilities.

Our BCT was directed to train on Full Spectrum Operations (FSO), to include Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle and Abrams tank qualifications and gunnery in preparation for our deployment to Iraq. Following the February 2009 FSO kinetic and COIN focused mission readiness training exercise to the National Training Center (NTC) in Ft. Irwin, California, our BCT was directed to conduct an in-stride mission change and deploy to Iraq as an Advise and Assist Brigade (AAB). Although our HBCT performed well during our FSO and COIN train up, we found ourselves scrambling post NTC as the load out for Iraq began simultaneous to a short notice training program to prepare our Soldiers for the new AAB mission.

Our leaders did a remarkable job of setting up the FID-focused advise and assistance training with support from the U.S. Border Patrol (point of entry and border security operations), 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Civil Affairs related activities), El Paso and Austin City leadership seminars (infrastructure support and city governance), and training on the Rule of Law. An important fact to note was that our HBCT was directed to leave all of our Tanks and Bradley Infantry Fighting vehicles in CONUS, these legacy armored vehicles wouldn't be needed during our AAB deployment. Countless resources and man hours were consumed during the ARFORGEN cycle to train our forces on combined arms operations, none of which were conducted in Iraq as a HBCT.

In less than 3-months, our BCT retrained and refocused its units to deploy in smaller teams (section and platoon) in order to partner and advise both Iraqi Army and Police units located in south eastern Iraq (Multi-National Division-South). Our BCT

Headquarters replaced another BCT and quickly reshaped the footprint of combat outposts to support partnered operations. The Combined Joint Special Operations Forces- Arabian Peninsula (CJSOTF-AP) Headquarters in Iraq, had SOF deployed throughout our area of operation (AO) and the country, many of these SOF units were focused on conducting FID operations. The majority of the CJSOTFs forces included SFOD-A Teams. Many of these Green Berets had been operating in our AO for years, with several of the SFOD-A team members deployed to the same locations and again partnered with the same units.⁴⁵

Our BCT leadership made the decision to have some of their troops establish partnerships with some of the CJSOTF-AP HN units (e.g. Nasariyah SWAT), opting to replace the Special Forces A-Teams with their recently “AAB” trained units. Years of rapport, trust, training, human intelligence collection assets and joint combined combat operations were lost due to this GPF realignment action. The GPF platoon that replaced the SFOD-A with the Nasariyah SWAT lacked the language, cultural experience, and specialized equipment and training to safely and effectively conduct their build partner capacity mission. Lacking years of experience that the SFOD-A had, the GPF platoon was unable to maintain a low U.S. signature, had difficulty understanding the local culture and nested hybrid security threats found in our AO. Having a GPF platoon partner with host nation special operations security forces minimized the effectiveness of our U.S. COIN operation in and around Nasariyah, Iraq.⁴⁶

On 23 December 2012, the Washington Times published an article that outlined how the U.S. Army is preparing to implement a plan to deploy Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF), starting with a BCT from Ft. Riley Kansas that has been re-missioned

and reorganized to partner with HN security forces and conduct SFA missions in order to build partner capacity.⁴⁷ This initial RAF, which is a Heavy Brigade Combat Team (2/1 ID) from the 1st Infantry Division has been tasked to deploy to as many as 35-countries in Africa to battle extremism, even though the teams will be constrained to training and equipping efforts.⁴⁸ The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Raymond Odierno stated the following with regards to the RAFs: “It’s about us moving towards a scalable, tailorable capability that helps them to shape the environment they’re working in, doing a variety of tasks from building partner capability to engagement, to multilateral training, to bilateral training to actual deployment of forces, if necessary.”⁴⁹

The 2nd BCT from the 1st Infantry Division will be divided into different structures and deploy in teams ranging in size from a few Soldiers to an element the size of a Company (~200 Soldiers) to meet the specific needs of each African nation’s security requirements. If needed, the RAF is also prepared to deploy up to a Battalion sized force (800 Soldiers) to support emerging security requirements. Currently, the BCT is conducting traditional combat skill training and plans to transition in the spring of 2013 to advise and assistance task training to include language, regional culture, and other tasks to prepare it for the upcoming deployment.⁵⁰

With regards to the future of RAFs, General Odierno stated: “As we continue to progress into our new strategy, we think there are a lot of links that will enable conventional forces to provide support to Special Operations Command as they continue to do counterterrorism and other missions around the world. We are working very closely with Special Operations to develop the criteria that would allow us to align forces to support them as they conduct their worldwide missions.”⁵¹

The GPF has the potential to conduct successful SO, SFA and FID missions around the world. The concern comes from the parallels made in this paper and the recently implemented RAF concept. Retasking a HBCT to perform as advisors, potentially parking specialized equipment such as armored vehicles and shelving the skills associated with FSOs is a costly course of action. Trying to develop advise and assist skills while maintaining specialized and collective proficiency in HBCT FSO is extremely difficult, especially in a resource constrained environment. It takes a great deal of time and resources to become proficient as a HBCT in the collective task associated with full spectrum operations. It also takes several months, if not years, to train an advisor and build an advisory team that possesses adequate language skills and regional experience to accomplish the mission.

What mechanism will be used to deconflict who will be tasked to build partner capacity in a select country and with what unit? More specifically, what missions will be conducted by SOF and GPF forces and who will deconflict these operations on the ground? SOF and GPF forces are not interchangeable, but should be employed in an interoperable manner. As proven on several occasions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the GPF and SOF can achieve great success when employed as interdependent forces with the mission of building partner capacity in support of COIN operations.

Recommendations

Create a U.S. Army Advisory and Assistance Command to focus on the mission of building partner capacity. In late December 2012, Headquarters, Department of the Army, officially announced its post Afghanistan focus of building partner nation capacity by approving the Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) plan and the RAF EXORD.⁵² The RAF plan aligns select Army Corps, Divisions and Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) to

specific CCDRs, thus fostering regional alignment and support for building partner capacity. Following traditional combat skill training, RAF BCTs will transition to advise and assist tasks training to include language, regional culture, and other associated tasks.⁵³ RAF BCTs will then prepare to deploy Soldiers to serve in small advisory teams up to a company size force (approximately 200 men).⁵⁴ An ad hoc approach (at the BCT level) to prepare and employ General Purpose Force (GPF) advisors in the complex mission of building partner capacity may risk mission success.

RAF BCTs will struggle to maintain proficiency in decisive operations (e.g. combined arms training) while preparing personnel to become regionally oriented advisors that deploy select portions of their unit(s) to multiple foreign countries in support of SFA missions. The ARFORGEN model and regular reassignment and attrition of Soldiers within a BCT will make it difficult for RAF brigades to match the advisory capability of a regionally focused, specially trained and equipped force such as a United States Army Special Forces Group with its 72 x SFOD-As. A key to the past success of Military Training Teams and Embedded Training Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan was their ability to operate in mature theaters. Post Afghanistan (2014), RAFs and GPF advisory teams will not have a mature theater to support their logistical, medical, and security needs.

In his article, “Institutionalizing Adaptation: It’s Time for a Permanent Army Advisor Corps”, LTC(R) John Nagl recommends the creation of a permanent 20,000-member Advisor Corps, responsible for creating advisory doctrine as well as overseeing the training and deployment of 750 advisory teams of 25-Soldiers each.⁵⁵ LTG(R) David Barno has a different concept for creating an organization focused on building partner

nation capacity (FID and SFA operations). The former Commanding General of the Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan from 2003-2005 asserts the advantages of a Special Operations led Advisory and Assistance Command--a command that would oversee the training of GPF Soldiers assigned to it.⁵⁶ This Advisory and Assistance Command would integrate Special Forces personnel into the leadership of the command as well as on the Advisory Teams.

The U.S. Army should reorganize a GPF unit and assign it to USASOC to become a hybrid SOF and Conventional Army organization focused on the mission of building partner capacity. This hybrid USASOC Advisory and Assistance Command would consist of experienced Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Military Information Support Operations and Conventional Force leaders (E7-O4). This Command would develop the doctrine and training required to prepare regionally oriented advisory teams for deployments into their AORs. Soldiers would remain in the command for a minimum of three years before being eligible to return to their traditional assignments.

The U.S. Army Security Assistance and Training Management Organization (USSATMO), was originally created in 1974 as a part of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center's United States Army Institute for Military Assistance in 1974.⁵⁷ The unit's focus was to serve as TRADOCs executive agent for matters relating to overseas security assistance training management and support. USASATMO was focused not only on providing the associated training that comes with a new piece of equipment sold to a foreign nation, but also to provide select security assistance to our allies around the world. Today, the Fort Bragg based USASATMO is part of the U.S. Army Material Command, and employs more than 260 Soldiers, Department of Army civilians and

contractors who are deployed to more than 20 countries throughout the year to meet the requirements of our foreign allies requesting training assistance.⁵⁸

The Army should reorganize and re-mission a unit like USASATMO with senior leaders from both USASOC and the Conventional Army to focus on the execution of FID and SFA related missions. This hybrid command would be responsible for developing the doctrine and training required to prepare regional oriented advisory teams composed of select Special Forces and Conventional Force Soldiers for deployments into their regional AORs to build partner nation capacity. Once operational, the Advise and Assistance Command would augment USSOCOM in the execution of future TSCP missions.

This effort would begin by building a brigade sized force (USASOC component, Army Advise & Assistance Command – AAAC), led by at least a Brigadier General with a headquarters and 5 x regionally aligned battalions (RABs) and one training and support battalion. The RABs would have a Battalion headquarters and staff, 3 x line Advise and Assist Company (AAC) headquarters with 6 x Advise and Assistance Teams (AA- Teams) each manned with no less than 12 x senior leaders. The AA-Teams would be led by a Major and Master Sergeant and everyone else on the team would be at least an E7. The AA-Team design would be similar to a Special Forces A-Team in MOS functionality and staff advisory roles. The RABs would also have a small battalion support company (BSC). The Advisory Training and Support Battalion (ATSB) would run the advisory training program,—leveraging the USAJFKSWCS at Fort Bragg, NC and their already established language and regionally focused training programs for SOF Soldiers. The ATSB would also be responsible for the equipping, fielding and the

maintenance of advisory and assistance equipment (some being MFP-11) and property for the RABs and their AA-Teams.

USASOC and the GPF would assign specially selected senior leaders to the AAAC with a minimum 3-year tour of duty. The first year would be focused on training AAAC Soldiers in language, regional orientation and how to succeed as an advisor in a permissive to semi-permissive operating environment. Upon completion of this training, Advise and Assistance trained Soldiers would receive a special skill identifier and be eligible for language pay. The following two years would be focused on overseas FID and SFA mission deployments of 4-6 months in duration. A rotation cycle would be created to provide a minimum 1:1 dwell for the AA-Teams. After an AA-Soldier reached 3-years in the AAAC, he could remain as an advisor or return to a traditional branch assignment.

It is imperative to have Green Berets with experience serve in leadership positions in the Advise and Assistance command, and more importantly, on the deployable advisory teams. While a Battalion Commander in Iraq, I had a MiTT team led by a very capable SF Major with extensive FID experience in OEF-Philippines. This MiTT team lived with their Iraq unit (off the U.S. base), fully integrated into the Iraqi Commando battalion staff and assisted their partners with planning, training and the execution of missions. There was no question that this particular MiTT team understood their advise and assist mission while their partnered unit enjoyed great success and growth during their year together. 6-months into my OIF deployment, the same MiTT team was replaced by a less capable team that lacked the proper array of experience (specifically combat arms military occupational specialties) and the benefit of having a

Special Forces leader. The new MiTT team struggled to operate and had great difficulty in building rapport and advising their Iraqi unit.⁵⁹ If the right mix of combat arms and seasoned veterans are not placed on an AA-Team, the unit will struggle with advising their HN counterparts and building partner nation capacity.

Designate the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) as DOD's priority command for Theater Security Cooperation Program (TSCP) mission resourcing.⁶⁰ Allowing USSOCOM to select which building partner nation capacity events Special Operations Forces (SOF) will resource in the future will greatly enhance Admiral McRaven's vision of creating a Global network of SOF professionals.⁶¹ Although USSOCOM cannot satisfy all of the Combatant Commanders (CCDR) TSCP requirements, they should be authorized to determine which TSCP missions their subordinate SOF commands will execute before any other DOD organization.⁶²

The U.S. should put its most highly trained, best equipped and regionally oriented forces forward to build partner nation capacity. Special Operations Forces are DODs proven military assets in building partner nation security capacity in austere, high risk security environments (e.g. Plan Colombia, OEF-Philippines). USSOCOM's most capable asset to conduct Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and Security Force Assistance (SFA) are U.S. Army Green Berets in the form of Special Forces Operational Detachment A-Teams (SFOD-A).

Before becoming a Green Beret, candidates are subjected to a very rigorous selection and training regime that takes between 66-100 weeks to complete depending on the 18-series Military Occupational Specialties (e.g. SF Operations, Intelligence, Weapons / tactics, Engineering, Medical & Communications).⁶³ All Green Berets must

complete the Special Forces Qualification Course which includes specialized training on Unconventional Warfare, language, survival evasion resistance and escape training and how to work and operate in small teams while conducting combat operations with indigenous forces behind enemy lines. Once a Green Beret completes his training, he is then assigned to an operational Special Forces Group (SFG) and ultimately a SFOD-A where he will begin years of deployments to his SFG's specific theater of operation. Through this regimen of regular deployments to the same AOR, Green Berets develop regional orientation, language proficiency and an understanding of the threats and the host nation forces with whom they will operate in the future.⁶⁴ RAF BCTs will not have the level of regional orientation, unit continuity and advisory capacity that is found in Special Forces.⁶⁵

SFOD- A personnel are trained in a minimum of one of the following military occupational specialties: Special Forces Operations (18A- Team Detachment Commander, 180A- Team Executive Officer, 18Z- Team Operations Sergeant: Unconventional Warfare focused), Intelligence operations (18F: Human Intelligence focused), Weapons and military tactics (18B), Engineer operations (18C: construction and explosives), Advanced Medical operations (18D), and Communications operations (18E). SFOD-As are composed of two 18B, 18C, 18D and 18E Special Forces Non-Commissioned Officers and four senior Green Beret leaders which enables a detachment to operate in two independent 6-man teams when needed to support emerging mission requirements. Green Berets selection, training, equipment and small unit cohesion make them uniquely flexible and capable of partnering with indigenous forces in the most austere of environments and successfully accomplishing the mission.

By design, SFOD-As are a force multiplier and save our government valuable resources through their ability to organize, train and advise partner nation or indigenous forces during times of peace or war.

Enemies such as Al Qaida, the Taliban, Iranian Quods Forces and other hybrid transnational security threats currently employ components of UW (e.g. sabotage and subversion) against the U.S. and its allies. The United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) has been designated as the lead agency for DOD in the conduct of UW operations.⁶⁶ As experts in UW, Special Forces are uniquely prepared to counter the UW activities of our enemies while executing TSCP operations with our allies and host nation security forces around the world.⁶⁷

Enabling SOF leadership to select the countries and host nation security forces will expand our Global SOF Network and build partner nation capacity, allowing USSOCOM and specifically USASOC to refocus resources to better support Special Warfare missions (primarily FID and UW). The increased focus on Special Warfare will also provide Green Berets the necessary access and cover for actions to facilitate Preparation of the Environment (PE) activities in support of future UW campaigns within their target theaters of operation. Despite the fact that many CCDRs have UW operations written into their contingency plans, the current level of PE activities fails to adequately support future UW operations. Special Forces need to increase their global PE activities to ensure success of future UW operations.

Adequately fund the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) exercise program in 2013 and beyond with a focus of deploying U.S. Army regionally aligned Headquarters and BCTs in support of regional alignment and building partner capacity. Prior to 9/11,

the GPF regularly deployed overseas to participate in CJCS directed exercises with allied nations. Unfortunately, the CJCS exercise program has taken dramatic funding cuts by Congress since 9/11, thus making it difficult for DOD to adequately develop our allies' security forces. The former CJCS, Admiral Mike Mullen stated to the 112th Congress and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on defense, "balancing global strategic risk requires strong military-to-military engagement programs. These collaborative efforts engender mutual responsibility and include ongoing combined operations, multi-lateral training exercises, individual exchanges, and security assistance".⁶⁸ U.S. Army Corps and Division Headquarters and BCTs can strengthen their regional alignment and build partner capacity by participating in more successful joint exercises with our partner nations such as: Operation Flintlock in the Trans-Sahara, Operation Cobra Gold in Southeast Asia, Operation Ulchi Freedom Guardian in Korea, Operation Bright Star in the Middle East, Operation Tradewinds in Latin America, and Operation Austere Challenge in Europe.

Resource U.S. Army Special Forces to serve as DODs forward deployed long term security engagement force. In the Republic of Korea (ROK), USASOC maintains the 39th Special Forces Detachment (formerly known as Detachment Korea or DET-K) which is comprised of less than two-dozen Special Forces Officers and Senior NCOs who serve as Special Forces Liaison Elements (SFLE) in support of ROK Army Special Forces Brigades. In the event of a war with North Korea, these SFLEs will be invaluable assets to the U.S. and our allies as the ROK Special Forces disrupt an attack from the North Korean People's Army. In peacetime, 39th SF Detachment personnel provide invaluable FID support to the ROK Special Warfare units as well as provide the CCDR

and U.S. Forces Korea Commander the ground truth on the current readiness of our ROK SOF allies and the threat situation on the Korea peninsula.

Every theater of operation needs one if not multiple 39th Special Forces DET like organizations to conduct long duration partnerships with allied and host nation Special Operations and select security forces to build partner capacity. These SFLEs will become regional experts and instrumental in facilitating Preparation of the Environment activities to support future regional UW operations in support of the CCDRs CONPLANs.

Conclusion

As the U.S. Army looks beyond Afghanistan and embraces the mission of building partner capacity, it should work closely with USASOC to create a focused hybrid command, comprised of 18-series and GPF experienced leaders who have the sole mission of deploying to a specific region to conduct FID and SFA missions. By granting USSOCOM the authority to take the lead role in building partner capacity in support of the creation of a Global SOF network, the Department of Defense will increase its ability to defeat terrorist networks, extremism and other security threats to America. Special Forces by design are an economy of force and are proven combat multipliers.

Increased funding support for CJCS exercises that focus on deploying Army BCTs overseas to exercise CCDR 's combined joint contingency plans will enable DOD to expand and strengthen its global security network. SFLEs are an invaluable asset in building partner capacity and will facilitate coalition combat operations in the event of a war. The use of SFLEs could be expanded with little cost and resources and greatly assist DOD and USSOCOM in the mission of building partner capacity.

Reallocating funds within DOD to support the above recommendations will save our government money in the long run. With the proper authorities and adequate resources USSOCOM and the U.S. Army will achieve success in the critical U.S. National Security objective of building partner capacity.

Endnotes

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the region. The mission focused on collective joint training tasks for the Comandos Navales and Combat Dive Team with an emphasis on maritime supported direct action operations. The exercise culminated with a SFOD-A 775 created joint-interagency exercise that encompassed all of the previous weeks' training. The Comandos Navales executed a 50-nautical mile ocean infiltration in order to conduct reconnaissance of coastal narco-trafficking trans-load sites. These same locations were previously used to move cocaine from small Colombian planes to narco-trafficker boats to facilitate continued movement of the cocaine shipment to the United States. The Comandos Navales conducted the infiltration and reconnaissance of the target area without compromise and guided in their seaborne assault force that captured the narco-traffickers while they were trans-loading drugs from an aircraft to a boat. This joint and combined operation included participation from the GOE, E.S. Airforce, E.S. Navy, E.S. National Police and U.S. DEA. Not long after SFOD-A 775 redeployed, the Comandos Navales and the GOE began interdicting drug shipments from Colombia in support of U.S. national counter-drug objectives. Through years of deployments to El Salvador (which several of SFOD-A 775 team members were veterans of), the Green Berets were able to apply their extensive regional, language and interpersonal relationship to create a training program that not only met the CCDRs directed JCET terms of responsibility training requirements, but more importantly gave the GOE a mission they could execute to support the U.S. counter- drug war.

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⁵⁶ LTG(R) Barno, David, Senior Fellow and Advisor at the Center for a New American Strategy and former Commanding General of Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan from 2003-5, interviewed by author, Washington DC, December 13, 2012.

⁵⁷ United States Army Security and Training Management Organization website, Home page, <http://www.usasac.army.mil/usasatmo.aspx> (accessed on January 10, 2013)

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Shumate, Author's first-hand experience as the Special Troops Battalion Commander for 4/1 AD, JUN 2008- JUL 2010.

⁶⁰ William H. McRaven, *Posture Statement of Admiral William H. McRaven, USN, Commander USSOCOM Before the 112th Congress, Senate Armed Service Committee*, Posture Statement presented to the 112th Congress, 2nd sess. (Washington, DC: U.S. Special Operations Command, 2012). The United States Special Operations Command (with over 66,000 members as of 2012) is comprised of five-component commands: United States Army Special Operations Command, Naval Special Warfare Command, Air force Special Operations Command, Marine Corps Force Special Operations Command and the Joint Special Operations Command. SOF personnel operated in over 100 countries in 2012.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Shumate, *Author's personal experience while assigned to USASOC, JSOC and USASFC (A) between 2006-2008 and 2010-12*, "Service components of USSOCOM have dedicated units that are language trained, regionally oriented and globally deployed to conduct FID and SFA (e.g. Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, Air Force 6th Special Operations Squadron, and Marine Special Operations Battalion members are examples of SOF advisors)."

⁶³ MAJ(P) Trevor Hill, Operations Officer, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), interviewed by author, Fort Bragg, NC, January 9, 2012.

⁶⁴ U. S. Special Operations Command, *USSOCOM Directive 10-1* (Washington, DC: U.S. Special Operations Command, 2009). Appendix A (Terms of Reference—Roles, Missions, and functions of Component Commands) lists USASOC as the Lead Component for UW and Ground FID among many other mission sets (e.g. CAO, MISO, ASO, PE, SO Urban Combat, CQB, Airborne Operations (Static & MFF), RW/Tilt Rotor Infil/Exfil Techniques, UAR & NAR, SOF SSE, and JSOMTC). Also see the ARSOF Core activities paragraph at <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/swmag/archive/SW2401/SW2401DefiningWar.html> (accessed January 11, 2013).

⁶⁵ COL(R) David Maxwell, Georgetown University Faculty, interviewed by author, Georgetown University, Washington DC, December 12, 2012.

⁶⁶ U. S. Special Operations Command, *USSOCOM Directive 10-1* (Washington, DC: U.S. Special Operations Command, 2009). Appendix A (Terms of Reference—Roles, Missions, and Functions of Component Commands) lists USASOC as the Lead Component for UW and Ground FID among many other mission sets (e.g. CAO, MISO, ASO, PE, SO Urban Combat, CQB, Airborne Operations (Static & MFF), RW/Tilt Rotor Infil/Exfil Techniques, UAR & NAR, SOF SSE, and JSOMTC). Also see the ARSOF Core activities paragraph at <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/swmag/archive/SW2401/SW2401DefiningWar.html> (accessed January 11, 2013).

⁶⁷ Shumate, *Author's personal experience as the Deputy Chief of Staff, G8 (Force Management) for the United States Army Special Forces Command (Airborne), 2010-2012*.

⁶⁸ Michael G. Mullen, *Posture Statement of Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Before the 112th Congress, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense*, Posture Statement presented to the 112th Congress, 1st session, (Washington DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2011), 19.