

# Support of U.S. Army Special Forces in Expeditionary Warfare

A Monograph  
by  
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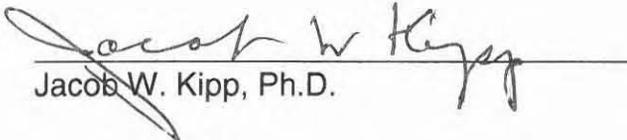
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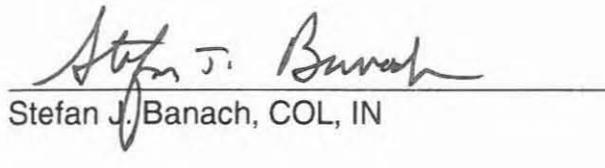
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## Abstract

SUPPORT OF U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES IN EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE by MAJOR Christopher H. Robertson, U.S. ARMY, 49 pages.

The purpose of this monograph is to explore the relationship between the emerging U.S. Army doctrinal concept of *expeditionary warfare* and logistical support of U.S. Army Special Forces. By first defining expeditionary warfare, exploring the role of U.S. Army Special Forces in conducting expeditionary warfare, and identifying the implied logistical requirements within expeditionary warfare, case studies will explore the operational lessons learned from forces involved in expeditionary warfare. From case analysis, the lessons learned from the British military's experience during Operation CORPORATE and the U.S. military's experience in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, reveal that the austere operational and logistical environments associated with expeditionary warfare require a logistical system capable of promoting the operational commander's flexibility, rapidly deploying under compressed timelines, and improvising logistical support.

From an examination of current U.S. Army Special Forces logistical structures and these lessons learned, I recommend defining *expeditionary warfare* as: the rapid deployment of military forces worldwide on short notice to a potentially austere operational and logistical environment to conduct full spectrum operations across the spectrum of conflict. In addition, I recommend the next MTOE revision of the Special Forces Battalion Service Detachment include a truck squad with personnel, adoption of an armored version of the U.S. Army's Light Medium Tactical Vehicle, and return of the ammunition specialist to its force structure. Finally, I recommend a realignment of the Support Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) Reserve Component units to the Active Component.

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## Introduction

Since the Fall of 2001, the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) has provided the regional combatant commanders with an unprecedented number of Army Special Forces units for employment to achieve the nation's strategic goals in waging the Global War on Terror. Key to the employment of these Army Special Forces' units is the logistical organization that supports them. In 2004 USASOC reorganized the command's only logistics organization, the 528<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Support Battalion, into the Support Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) or SB (SO) (A) due to the increased requirements for support of Army Special Forces.<sup>1</sup> The reorganization provides USASOC with an operational-level, deployable logistics organization to support deployed Army Special Forces' units worldwide.

Emerging U.S. Army doctrine calls for Army forces to be expeditionary in nature and able to conduct "no-notice expeditionary operations."<sup>2</sup> This doctrine presents a dichotomy in terms, character and action. Clear definitions of the doctrinal requirement for an expeditionary character and action are absent and often prove contradictory in nature. This monograph answers the following research question: Will the current configuration of the SB (SO) (A) provide adequate support of U.S. Army Special Forces in expeditionary warfare? My hypothesis is that the SB (SO) (A) will not provide adequate support of U.S. Army Special Forces in expeditionary warfare due to the Army's cognitive crisis following Operation ALLIED FORCE, which distorted the development of U.S. Army doctrine conflating the term *expeditionary* with *speed*.

This monograph examines emerging U.S. Army operations and logistics doctrine to define expeditionary warfare and the requirements this places on logistics organizations to answer

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *U.S. Army Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (Provisional) Fact Sheet* (Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office, undated), 1.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1: The Army* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, June 2005), 1-20.

the research question. To frame this inquiry, a definition of expeditionary warfare and the doctrinal nature of Army Special Forces' operations within this framework serve as the start point. A discussion of U.S. Army logistics doctrine and its linkage to expeditionary warfare sets the environment for case study analysis. The historical case studies focus on the nature of logistics requirements in expeditionary warfare while the common aspects of these campaigns serve as the base requirements within emerging U.S. Army doctrine for evaluation. The current SB (SO) (A) structure provides a reference point for analysis of these requirements against current capabilities.

# Expeditionary Warfare and Support of U.S. Army Special Forces

## Theory and Expeditionary Warfare

Central to the question of the SB (SO) (A)'s ability to support U.S. Army Special Forces in expeditionary warfare lies the concept of 'expeditionary warfare' itself. Expeditionary warfare in emerging Army doctrine serves as the theoretical concept for the conduct of future warfare envisioned by the United States military. Before exploring the concept of 'expeditionary warfare', the construction of theoretical concepts must be examined in order to develop a shared understanding of the derivation of expeditionary warfare and its promulgation in current and emerging U.S. Army doctrine. This discussion of the epistemology of theoretical concepts will allow a cogent discussion of expeditionary warfare and its relationship to the question of adequacy of logistical support to U.S. Army Special Forces.

Doctrine serves as the mechanism to provide a shared understanding through a common language across organizations for theoretical concepts. Dewey's discussions regarding thought give form to the idea of theoretical concepts as "given or ascertained facts stand for or indicate others which are not directly ascertained."<sup>3</sup> This relation between what we ascertain, or know, and what we do not ascertain, or do not know, applies a cognitive model to a perceived physical reality. For doctrine to possess utility in military thinking, the theoretical concepts must exist independent of a specific time or place. In other words, they must be abstract and not concrete: a cognitive model. Where theoretical concepts no longer apply irrespective of place or time, yet remain in usage, a "semantic senility" creates discord within the theory and its application.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> John Dewey, *How We Think* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991), 26.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. James J. Schneider, "Classical Roots of Military Theory II" (lecture, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, September 5, 2005).

In order to establish a shared understanding of the theoretical concept, an explanation must be applied to the cognitive model. From the Western philosophical tradition, Newtonian physics uses explanation to overlay the cause-effect relationship of the theoretical concept. This mechanical concept of the underlying causal mechanism describes the observed or described effect through a hidden, but perceived, cause. Differing perspectives derived from unique contextual experiences lead individuals to apply diverse explanations of the causal phenomenon. Doctrine attempts to eliminate this difference through synthesis as language serves to bridge this divide by applying definitions to our experiences.

Language however creates ambiguity within doctrine in its attempt to provide explanation to abstract theoretical concepts. Doctrinal definitions serve as reference points for the author and reader for the theoretical concepts presented. A “shared agreement” must exist between the author and reader for the definition, otherwise an improper message and meaning, is transferred.<sup>5</sup> To complicate this meaning transfer further, “primitive” definitions provide “shared agreement” on meaning that “cannot be described using” other definitions.<sup>6</sup> This develops a circular logic as the term uses itself to define the theoretical concept. Aristotle attempted to resolve this type of language issue in discussing theoretical concepts of primitive terms such as ‘virtue’. Only through the examples of what is or is not virtuous, a characteristic, or virtuous actions, an act, provide the meaning of virtue.<sup>7</sup>

Aristotle and Plato both encountered a phenomenon germane to the discussion of doctrinal definitions such as ‘expeditionary warfare’; the adding of meaning to words by others.<sup>8</sup> In Aristotle and Plato’s dialogues, the reference points, definitions, used by the participants shift

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Davidson Reynolds, *A Primer in Theory Construction* (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1971), 46.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, in *Classics of Political and Moral Philosophy*, ed. Steven M. Cahn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 188-202.

<sup>8</sup> Reynolds, *A Primer in Theory Construction*, 46.

as the individuals construct new definitions through the addition of meaning different from those constructed earlier. In his discussion on theory construction and the use of language, Reynolds assigns 'derived definition' to connote this phenomenon resident in social sciences.<sup>9</sup> In his treatise on the theory of war, Clausewitz states "war is an act of human intercourse...a part of man's social existence."<sup>10</sup> As social sciences deal with the interaction of human beings, the study of warfare inherently belongs to the realm of social sciences. Therefore, doctrinal definitions, as the language of warfare, tend to drift, once promulgated, as individuals provide additional meaning to theoretical concepts.

U.S. Army doctrine adheres to this discussion of language and its use in addressing perceived gaps in knowledge through the introduction of theoretical concepts. The emergence of 'expeditionary warfare' within U.S. Army doctrine addresses a perceived gap within the U.S. Army operational experience. What generated the cognitive crisis must be explored to create a shared understanding of the term's meaning.

### **Airland Battle Doctrine and Task Force Hawk**

From where then does the concept of 'expeditionary warfare' derive? A better question may be why did the United States Army feel the need to change from the tested and validated concept of Airland Battle doctrine? Thomas S. Kuhn begins to unravel the why from his discussion of scientific revolutions. In 1962, Kuhn published his now famous *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, in which he challenges the prevailing notion of an evolutionary progression of scientific knowledge. Kuhn argues that 'revolutionary science' brought on by a 'crisis' in explaining anomalies in research generates new paradigms and promulgates new theories rather than an evolutionary progression of scientific knowledge. Extrapolated to military

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 173.

doctrine, this cognitive crisis arises from the “failure of existing rules” to explain anomalies generated from empirical experience, whether in training or combat, or theoretical research.<sup>11</sup>

Brigadier General (Retired) Shimon Naveh of the Israeli Defense Force applies this methodology in discussing the development of operational theory in the U.S. Army during the 1970s-1980s. Following the Vietnam War, the U.S. Army underwent a cognitive crisis brought about by failure in its most recent experience, an incoherent tactical doctrine, and the beginnings of what Naveh describes as operational cognition. The “failure to provide appropriate answers to the relevant strategic and operational challenges” posed in the Western European theater led to the search for a bridge between the strategic and tactical levels.<sup>12</sup> Theorists within the U.S. military turned to the Soviet conceptions of operational theory for these answers. From this examination, an alternative paradigm, the articulation of the need for an “operational concept...defined as a universal tool” to address anomalies in the current U.S. Army tactical theory emerged. This need for articulation crystallized in the “formulation of the Airland Battle” doctrine in 1982.<sup>13</sup> Operation Desert Storm placed the Airland Battle theory in a “vast experimental laboratory” which not only tested but also validated the new paradigm.<sup>14</sup> U.S. Army commanders viewed the operational concept of Airland Battle as “the intellectual road map” for the design and conduct of operations.<sup>15</sup>

What then led the U.S. Army to abandon the Airland Battle operational theory that stretched from its inception in the mid-1970s to its manifest expression in Southwest Asia in

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<sup>11</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 68.

<sup>12</sup> Shimon Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence: The Evolution of Operational Theory* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997), 256.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 263.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 252.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, April 1992), 329, [http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/persian\\_gulf](http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/persian_gulf) (accessed March 1, 2008).

1991? Referring back to Kuhn's discussion on scientific revolutions, the U.S. Army's paradigms on Airland Battle underwent a conceptual crisis brought about by the perceived anomalies of its operational experiences around the globe following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Kuhn ascribes significance to a crisis by its "indication...that an occasion for retooling has arrived" for members of a community, in this case the U.S. Army.<sup>16</sup> This retooling derived from the U.S. Army's experience during its participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) 1999 Kosovo Campaign, Operation ALLIED FORCE.

During the 1990s, under the so-called "Clinton Doctrine", the nation embarked on a series of humanitarian, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement missions around the globe using U.S. Army forces.<sup>17</sup> The Former Yugoslav Republic of Serbia's repression and attempted ethnic cleansing of the Albanian minority in its Kosovo province generated a NATO military action dubbed Operation ALLIED FORCE in 1999. Initially conceived as an "air-only" campaign, General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, only four days prior to the start of the air-campaign articulated the desire for an integrated air-ground campaign using the U.S. Army's AH-64 Apache helicopters.<sup>18</sup>

Clark's request generated controversy within the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff as to the appropriateness and the vulnerability of a ground force in the campaign's operational concept. United States civilian and military leaders still harbored images from Task Force Ranger in Somalia during October 1993. Despite the differing positions on the use of the U.S. Army, President Clinton assented to General Clark's request on April 3, 1999. Seventy-eight days later,

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<sup>16</sup> Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 76.

<sup>17</sup> David Jablonsky, "Army Transformation: A Tale of Two Doctrines," *Parameters* 31, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 43-62, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/parameters/01autumn/Jablonsk.htm> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>18</sup> John Gordon IV, Bruce Nardulli, and Walter L. Perry, "The Operational Challenges of Task Force Hawk," *Joint Force Quarterly* 29 (Autumn-Winter 2001/2002): 53, [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq\\_pubs/aw0102.htm](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/aw0102.htm) (accessed March 1, 2008).

Operation ALLIED FORCE ended with not a single U.S. Army AH-64 committed to action inside Kosovo during the campaign despite the deployment of nearly 5,100 personnel and 500 C-17 sorties to bring Task Force Hawk, the U.S. Army contingent for the NATO operation, and its twenty-four AH-64 Apache helicopters to full-operational capability.<sup>19</sup> This perceived failure ultimately served as the catalyst for the response to the U.S. Army's cognitive crisis.

The first pillar of the U.S. Army's cognitive crisis focused on the belief that the Army could not deploy itself rapidly enough to crises around the globe, its strategic mobility. A Department of Defense press release on 4 April 1999 announcing President Clinton's decision reinforced this impression stating that the deployment would "take up to ten days", thereby implying an initial operating capability on 14 April 1999.<sup>20</sup> General Clark set the requirement for the task force's deployment closure as 23 April 1999.<sup>21</sup> Regardless of the confusion regarding the deployment timeline and the significant problems encountered with infrastructure in Albania, Major General Hendrix, Task Force Hawk Commander, declared the unit ready for operations on 7 May 1999, nearly two weeks after the target date set by General Clark.<sup>22</sup> Following Operation ALLIED FORCE, the U.S. Army's new chief of staff, General Eric K. Shinseki, added to this belief when discussing Army transformation, "Time on the front end has the sense of urgency. It's getting there with the right sufficient capability to be able to be decisive quickly."<sup>23</sup> General Shinseki's comments highlighted the next pillar of the U.S. Army's cognitive crisis while addressing the current issue of strategic mobility. If the U.S. Army could not deploy to the crisis

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<sup>19</sup> Bruce Nardulli et al., *Disjointed War: Military Operations in Kosovo, 1999* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002), 74, [http://rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/2007/MR1406.pdf](http://rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1406.pdf) (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, "U.S. Attack Helicopters and Multiple Launch Rocket Systems to Deploy in Support of Operation Allied Force," (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense [Public Affairs], April 4, 1999), no. 145-99, <http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=2030> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Nardulli et al., *Disjointed War*, 71.

<sup>22</sup> Gordon IV, Nardulli, and Perry, "The Operational Challenges of Task Force Hawk," 54.

<sup>23</sup> Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, interview, "The Future of War," *Frontline*, PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/future/interviews/shinseki.html> (accessed March 1, 2008).

in a timely fashion, what relevance would the institution possess for military action in future conflicts?

Institutional relevance related to service roles and competencies comprised the second pillar of the U.S. Army's cognitive crisis. Deputy Secretary of Defense Hamre in August 1999 explicitly addressed this issue in a statement regarding the U.S. Army in the future, it "cannot simply be what it *was*, and think that it is going to be relevant."<sup>24</sup> This statement held clear budgetary implications for the U.S. Army. During the Clinton-era of constrained and falling expenditures on defense, services with relevance would receive priority for funding. Coupled with this pressure, generalizations regarding the future conduct of warfare articulated in an "illusory hope that somehow...the enemy will capitulate because of a well-orchestrated precision munitions campaign" reshaped the American concept of the nature of war.<sup>25</sup> Advocates of 'surgical-strike' warfare by air power and missile technology ignored Clausewitz's warning against falling under this siren's song:

Kind-hearted people might of course think there was some ingenious way to disarm or defeat an enemy without too much bloodshed, and might imagine this is the true goal of the art of war. Pleasant as it sounds, it is a fallacy that must be exposed.<sup>26</sup>

The U.S. Army's core competency, to close with and destroy the enemy, no longer resonated with relevancy in the aftermath of Task Force Hawk.<sup>27</sup> U.S. Army civilian and military

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<sup>24</sup> Colin Clark and George Seffer, "Hamre to U.S. Army: Rethink Future War Strategy," *DefenseNews*, September 6, 1999, 6.

<sup>25</sup> Frederick S. Rudesheim, "Discovering the Army's Core Competencies," in *Army Transformation: A View from the U.S. Army War College*, ed. Williamson Murray (Carlisle, PA: Publications and Production Office, July 2001), 83, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=256> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>26</sup> Frederick S. Rudesheim, "Discovering the Army's Core Competencies," 83. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, 83-84.

<sup>27</sup> Frederick S. Rudesheim, "Discovering the Army's Core Competencies," 83.

leaders confronted a challenge, “a redefinition” of the expectation society constructed for the Army in future conflicts.<sup>28</sup>

The redefinition of the U.S. Army’s doctrinal role in future conflicts provided the final pillar of its cognitive crisis. Internal resistance to peacekeeping missions throughout the Clinton-era generated frustration at what U.S. Army leaders perceived as “alien” to the roles articulated in the “Army’s 1999 Vision Statement.”<sup>29</sup> During the Kosovo campaign, this “frustration was evident over decisions to employ” Army aviation in a seemingly unconventional way, without a maneuver ground force.<sup>30</sup> To address this frustration, the U.S. Army moved to develop a new doctrine that would provide coherence to its participation in future conflicts. Following the experience of Task Force Hawk, the U.S. Army under General Shinseki sought to “invest in current off-the-shelf technology to stimulate” the development of this new doctrine.<sup>31</sup> This methodology contained the seeds of its own disaster as the U.S. Army sought to validate a proposal from its results. The U.S. Army embarked on a course to “decide what result you want to achieve, then build an event to meet success” by starting with a technology solution to generate a doctrine proposal.<sup>32</sup>

Under the aegis of General Shinseki, the U.S. Army embarked on a process of transformation to deal with the cognitive crisis generated by the anomalies in its operational theory. Transformation attempted to address these anomalies as they related to the U.S. Army’s strategic mobility, institutional relevance, and doctrinal coherence from its recent experiences. A

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<sup>28</sup> Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., interview, “The Future of War,” *Frontline*, PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/future/interviews/krepinevich.html> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>29</sup> William F. Grimsley, “The Army through the Looking Glass” in *Army Transformation: A View from the U.S. Army War College*, ed. Williamson Murray (Carlisle, PA: Publications and Production Office, July 2001), 107, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=256> (accessed March 1, 2008). For the U.S. Army 1999 Vision Statement, see Shinseki testimony to Congress.

<sup>30</sup> Grimsley, “The Army through the Looking Glass,” 107.

<sup>31</sup> Jablonsky, “Army Transformation: A Tale of Two Doctrines,” 43-62.

<sup>32</sup> Grimsley, “The Army through the Looking Glass,” 121.

common criticism of military organizations during such periods of transformation centers on the myth that militaries use recent experience to prepare to re-fight the last war more effectively. The more dangerous reality, according to Williamson Murray, is that “military organizations fail to study past military experiences” and as a result construct “a picture of future war that fits their own preconceptions and assumptions.”<sup>33</sup>

Two assumptions formed the foundation for the picture of future war that guided the U.S. Army in transformation. The first assumption hypothesized that future adversaries would not allow the U.S. Army time to deploy to a crisis spot and generate combat power unfettered. When asked what lessons enemies of the U.S. should take away from a study of Operation DESERT STORM, General Shinseki responded “they should not take a six-month pause...the pause is what gave us the opportunity to structure” the war’s outcome.<sup>34</sup> Lieutenant General Dubik, former Deputy Commanding General for Transformation, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, made this assumption explicit, stating that the U.S. Army “will not have six months in the future” to deploy and generate decisive combat power.<sup>35</sup> As Murray highlighted, the U.S. Army ignored recent institutional experiences in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Rwanda, and even Kosovo to construct an image of future war.

The second assumption hypothesized that rather than used as the tool of last resort in major combat operations such as Operation DESERT STORM, the U.S. Army would become the tool of first choice in preventing instability around the globe. This conception, known as the Clinton Doctrine, advocated the use of the U.S. military, particularly the U.S. Army, in a

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<sup>33</sup> Williamson Murray, “Introduction,” in *Army Transformation: A View from the U.S. Army War College*, ed. Williamson Murray (Carlisle, PA: Publications and Production Office, July 2001), 6-7, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=256> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>34</sup> Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, interview, “The Future of War,” *Frontline*, PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/future/interviews/shinseki.html> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>35</sup> Maj. Gen. James Dubik, interview, “The Future of War,” *Frontline*, PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/future/interviews/dubik.html> (accessed March 1, 2008).

constabulary role regardless of whether or not the nation's vital interests were at stake.<sup>36</sup> Morals and values, not vital interests, would serve to guide U.S. military involvement abroad. Natural disaster, genocide, international crime, and other threats defined the future nature and conduct of warfare to which the U.S. Army would respond. The U.S. Army's domination across the "spectrum of operations" signaled that the force constructed to defeat the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe could not meet the requirements of these low-intensity conflicts.<sup>37</sup>

From these assumptions, the U.S. Army articulated a new vision to guide materiel development, doctrine, and organization. General Shinseki and Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera formally presented this vision to the Congress on 26 October 1999 and outlined its goals:

- Deploy a combat-capable brigade anywhere in the world within 96 hours
- Deploy a division anywhere in the world within 120 hours
- Deploy five divisions anywhere in the world within 30 days.<sup>38</sup>

This framework later expanded to include reducing (or no) use of Reserve Component forces in the first 30 days of a conflict.<sup>39</sup> The other U.S. military services took notice of this framework and viewed it as a direct threat to their role in the nation's military structure.

Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James Conway, "called for a hard look at the real

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<sup>36</sup> Jablonsky, "Army Transformation: A Tale of Two Doctrines,": 43-62.

<sup>37</sup> Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, statement to Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Status of Forces*, 106<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (October 26, 1999), <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/1999/991026es.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *2004 Army Transformation Roadmap* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Operations, Army Transformation Office, July 2004), 3-18, <http://stinet.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA440168&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2008). See also, Maj. Gen. Mitchell H. Stevenson, Commander, United States Army Combined Arms Services Command (CASCOM), "CGSC and SAMS Presentation," (briefing, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 7, 2007), 5. The *2004 Army Transformation Roadmap* calls for 'reducing' the need for reserve component forces while the CASCOM brief states 'no' reserve component forces in a conflict's first 30 days.

requirements” for this type of capability.<sup>40</sup> In a harsher tone, General Conway added that no “universally accepted” requirement existed for the U.S. Army to deploy five divisions to a crisis spot in 30 days.<sup>41</sup>

The U.S. Army encapsulated these goals in a slogan and concept, “a strategically responsive force.”<sup>42</sup> The U.S. Army attempted to formalize this slogan in doctrine with publication of FM 3-0, *Operations*, in June 2001. The publication stated that a strategically responsive force will “generate and sustain maximum combat power at the time and place joint force commanders (JFCs) require.”<sup>43</sup> This statement hinted at the U.S. Army’s true vision, an *expeditionary* force that would address the three pillars of its cognitive crisis: strategic mobility, institutional relevance, and doctrinal coherence. The U.S. Army would transform itself to deploy faster than potential adversaries, prevent or defuse instability, and dominate across the spectrum of conflict. With this vision and doctrinal expression, the U.S. Army would pursue a two-pronged methodology of *evolutionary* doctrine and *revolutionary* materiel development.

With the arrival of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to the Pentagon in 2001, transformation focused on a single-pronged methodology of *revolutionary* doctrine and materiel development. During his confirmation statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Mr. Rumsfeld remarked that the Department of Defense “must take advantage of the new possibilities that the ongoing technological revolution offers to create the military for the next

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<sup>40</sup> Hunter Keeter, “Commandant Seeks Inter-Service Discussion Over Expeditionary Roles, Missions,” *Defense Daily*, October 31, 2000, 1, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=63054744&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=5094&RQT=309&VName=PQD> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Shinseki, statement to Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Status of Forces*.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0: Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2001), 3-0.

century” and address “resistance to change” within its structure.<sup>44</sup> The future Secretary of Defense also signaled a veiled reference to the ‘failure’ of the U.S. Army during Operation ALLIED FORCE, “When U.S. forces are called upon, they must be ready to cope with any contingency they may face.”<sup>45</sup> The Department of Defense 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) reiterated these views. U.S. military strategy would “shift the basis of defense planning from a ‘threat based’ model...to a ‘capabilities-based’ model” and deploy “the capacity to swiftly defeat” the nation’s adversaries.<sup>46</sup>

The 2001 QDR made explicit the type of organization necessary to achieve this new strategy, *expeditionary forces* from all services.<sup>47</sup> These expeditionary forces would possess *expeditionary capabilities* and conduct *expeditionary operations* to realize a strategy of deterring conflict in new ways, distinct from the Cold War deterrence model.<sup>48</sup> These terms, while expressed as official reference points, lacked explication. The 2001 QDR also made explicit that the past nature and conduct of warfare no longer remained relevant. Fundamental changes in the “conceptualization of war” and the way “war is waged” rendered “previous methods of conducting war obsolete.”<sup>49</sup> At first glance, the U.S. Army’s response to its cognitive crisis appeared to presage the paradigm shift within the Department of Defense.

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<sup>44</sup> Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld, statement to Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Confirmation Hearing*, 107<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (January 11, 2001), <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2001/010111dr.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, September 30, 2001), IV, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/qdr2001.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, September 30, 2001), 14, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/qdr2001.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2008).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>49</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, September 30, 2001), 14.

What General Shinseki's transformation efforts, the U.S. Army's 2001 field manual, the Secretary of Defense's statements to Congress, and DoD's 2001 QDR lacked was a "unified operational manoeuvre" necessary to describe an operational framework for defeating potential adversaries.<sup>50</sup> In similar efforts after Vietnam, the U.S. Army addressed its cognitive crisis with Airland Battle doctrine as the unifying operational maneuver. Following its experiences in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom and in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. Army began revising FM 3-0, *Operations*, to incorporate "the requirements of an Army transforming into a more strategically agile, modular force while at war" and present a unified operational maneuver.<sup>51</sup>

This progression in the U.S. Army to generate a revolution in a doctrinal theory is analogous to Kuhn's description of scientific revolutions. Kuhn states "fact and theory are not categorically separable" during this process.<sup>52</sup> If neither fact nor theory contains a "common cognitive denominator", then the process will develop inconsistently.<sup>53</sup> The detachment between theory, a unified operational maneuver, and the common cognitive denominator, or what Kuhn describes as paradigm, will result in the "formulation of a distorted doctrine" leading "to severe operational failure" for the U.S. Army.<sup>54</sup> A common cognitive denominator results from a shared agreement as to the meaning articulated from a theory's terms. The earlier discussions on the use of primitive and derivative terms now elucidate the problems of ensuring a common cognitive

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<sup>50</sup> Naveh, 290.

<sup>51</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3-0: Full Spectrum Operations (DRAG)* (Washington, D.C.: November 22, 2006), IX.

<sup>52</sup> Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 7.

<sup>53</sup> Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence*, 255.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 274.

denominator in doctrine. The manual's emerging doctrine introduces a new unifying operational maneuver with the use of a primitive term, *expeditionary warfare*.<sup>55</sup>

## **Expeditionary Warfare in Current U.S. Doctrine**

As introduced earlier, to properly frame the question of the SB (SO) (A) ability to support Army Special Forces in expeditionary warfare, doctrine must provide an agreed upon definition as the base for shared understanding. Shared understanding of this theoretical concept allows for force doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facility development. The requirement for forces capable of waging expeditionary warfare derives from the Army's two capstone field manuals (FM), FM-1, *The Army*, and FM 3-0, *Operations: Full Spectrum Operations*. As an Army capstone doctrinal manual, FM-1, *The Army*, states that the Army "requires military forces with an expeditionary capability" in order to achieve the nation's military goals.<sup>56</sup> FM 3-0 outlines future warfare including "rapid deployments with little or no notice" and an expeditionary warfare focus on "the achievement of decisive effects."<sup>57</sup> Army doctrinal publications however, provide little explication of what 'expeditionary capability' means.

As a starting point for resolving the confusion produced by the Army's capstone and other doctrinal publications, an official definition will serve to unravel the confusion. FM 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics*, defines an expeditionary force as "an armed force organized to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country."<sup>58</sup> While this term provides a starting point for analysis, it seems overly broad to cover the intended meaning of 'expeditionary warfare'.

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<sup>55</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0: Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 2008), 1-16.

<sup>56</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1: The Army*, 2-5.

<sup>57</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0: Operations*, 1-16.

<sup>58</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1-02: Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, September 2004), 1-75.

U.S. forces permanently stationed in South Korea, Japan, and Europe would be considered expeditionary forces per doctrine, as a de-facto consequence of their location instead of their character or action. This definition contradicts FM-1's explication of expeditionary capability as "the ability to promptly deploy" forces from CONUS worldwide.<sup>59</sup>

FM 3-0 does little to reconcile this contradiction. FM 3-0 continues the theme from FM 1 and defines expeditionary capability as "the ability to promptly deploy combined arms forces worldwide."<sup>60</sup> Limiting the definition of expeditionary capability to combined arms forces, Army doctrine sows confusion with regard to the concept of expeditionary warfare. Army doctrine does not currently define special operations forces or logistics organizations as combined arms forces, instead Army doctrine defines combat arms forces as "two or more arms...usually consisting of infantry, armor, cavalry, aviation, field artillery, air defense artillery, and engineers."<sup>61</sup> This limitation to a force's designation without regard to character or action ignores the Army's historical precedents and its conceptual basis.

The Army has deployed forces to deal with the aftermath of natural disasters in foreign countries, most notably after Hurricane Mitch in 1994, and to conduct decisive action, most notably in Afghanistan in 2001. In neither of these cases was the force conducting the execution comprised of combined arms forces. Logistics units from the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps Support Command provided the bulk of forces for the response to Hurricane Mitch, while a combined element of Central Intelligence Agency paramilitary forces and U.S. Army 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group teams provided the bulk of forces during the initial phases of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. While neither unit fits the doctrinal category of combined arms forces for execution of expeditionary warfare, both fit the emergent concept of expeditionary warfare in character and

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<sup>59</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1: The Army*, 3-11.

<sup>60</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0: Operations*, 1-16.

<sup>61</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1-02: Operational Terms and Graphics*, 1-37.

action. This incongruent issue is not merely one of semantic difference; the emerging doctrinal concept of expeditionary warfare within full-spectrum operations does not categorize decisive action as belonging solely to the realm of combined arms forces.

As FM 3-0 states, the Army's "operational concept is the core of its doctrine."<sup>62</sup> The Army operational concept directs how those forces will conduct expeditionary warfare and provides the logic for force structure development. The Army's emerging concept of full spectrum operations requires "continuous, simultaneous combinations of offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support tasks."<sup>63</sup> The U.S. Army's vision of expeditionary warfare contained within the spectrum of conflict ranging from stable peace to general war, requires a broader description of forces than merely combined arms forces.

FM 3-0 attempts to provide a tighter explication when dealing with the definition of expeditionary operations, the action of expeditionary warfare. Without providing examples of expeditionary warfare, FM 3-0 highlights distinguishing characteristics of expeditionary operations to include actions within "very austere operational environments."<sup>64</sup> The notion of 'austere operational environments' hints at the implicit concept of expeditionary warfare. Taking BG (R) Shimon Naveh's discussions on the operational level of war, the operational environment made up of the front and depth of the operational formation serves as the driving force for enabling strategy to tactics.<sup>65</sup> The depth of the operational environment drives action from the rear to the front to deliver blows against the enemy. Under the concept of expeditionary warfare, the logistical system enables and sustains the expeditionary force to deliver these blows.

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<sup>62</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0: Operations*, 3-1.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-0: Operations*, 1-16.

<sup>65</sup> Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence*, 17.

Logically then, an austere operational environment corresponds to an austere logistical environment which requires a robust organic logistical system to counter.

The United Kingdom's military theorists share in this conception of expeditionary warfare. Major General Julian Thompson, UK, commander of 3 Commando Brigade during the Falklands War, commenting on amphibious operations in 2002, referred to "red carpet operations" in warfare.<sup>66</sup> Comparing the coalition experience during Operation DESERT SHIELD with the British experience in Operation CORPORATE, Thompson states that "the build-up in Saudi Arabia in 1990-1 was a classic Red Carpet operation, that is a build-up in a friendly country, which provided the key assets, airfields, ports, and an enormous bonus, fuel; all without any enemy interference whatsoever."<sup>67</sup> While the lack of enemy interference rests with the adversary, Thompson cogently describes the antithesis of expeditionary warfare's nature.

The United States Air Force accepts this notion of an austere operational and logistical environment for expeditionary warfare as well. In its thinking about expeditionary warfare, the Air Force describes an environment where "no forward deployed US forces or developed bases" exist.<sup>68</sup> This articulation of expeditionary warfare provides a clearer meaning to the character of expeditionary operations than does the Army's use of the term austere and comes closer to an implicit understanding of expeditionary warfare.

U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) doctrine since 2001 provides a similar discussion as the 2008 version of U.S. Army FM 3-0 on the concept of expeditionary warfare introduced in the

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<sup>66</sup> Maj. Gen. Julian Thompson, UK, "Force Projection and the Falklands Conflict," in *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years On: Lessons for the Future*, ed. Stephen Badsey, Rob Havers, and Mark Grove (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 82.

<sup>67</sup> Maj. Gen. Julian Thompson, UK, "Force Projection and the Falklands Conflict," in *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years On: Lessons for the Future*, ed. Stephen Badsey, Rob Havers, and Mark Grove (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 82.

<sup>68</sup> Col. Edward C. Mann III (R), Lt. Col. Gary Endersby (R), and Thomas R. Searle, *Thinking Effects: Effects-Based Methodology for Joint Operations* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, October 2002), 12.

2001 QDR. USMC doctrine defines an expedition as “a military operation conducted by an armed force to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country.”<sup>69</sup> USMC doctrine addresses the requirement for an expeditionary mindset, capability, and operations that coincides with the previous discussion of U.S. Army doctrine. The difference between USMC and U.S. Army doctrine lies in the discussion of forces. Whereas U.S. Army doctrine explicitly states expeditionary capability as the capability to deploy combined-arms forces, USMC doctrine discusses “the deployment of military forces to the scene of the crisis or conflict and their requisite support some significant distance from their home bases.”<sup>70</sup> The USMC concept provides a more inclusive description of force within expeditionary warfare and reflects U.S. military experience from the earlier discussion of Hurricane Mitch and Operation Enduring Freedom.

U.S. Army doctrine requires a reexamination to correct deficiencies and errors in its theoretical concept of expeditionary warfare. As Major General Thompson, UK, adroitly states in his discussion of amphibious operations, expeditionary warfare is “not the movement of troops from A to B.”<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, current and emerging U.S. Army doctrine focuses on this discussion of force projection as the end rather than the means for operational execution. Merely getting to the fight faster with a smaller footprint as a measure of operational success distorts the historical military experiences of expeditionary warfare.

These differences within the theoretical concepts from the Army’s capstone doctrinal publications provide a basis for deriving a synthesis to establish a shared understanding of the character and action of expeditionary warfare. From a derived synthesis of the previous

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<sup>69</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-0: Marine Corps Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, September 27, 2001), 2-4.

<sup>70</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 3-0: Expeditionary Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, April 16, 1998), 32.

<sup>71</sup> Maj. Gen. Julian Thompson, UK, “Force Projection and the Falklands Conflict,” 82.

discussions, I propose defining expeditionary warfare as follows: the rapid deployment of military forces worldwide on short notice to an austere operational and logistical environment to conduct full spectrum operations across the spectrum of conflict.<sup>72</sup>

As the future warfare concept for employment of U.S. Army forces across the spectrum of conflict, expeditionary warfare applies to all types of Army formations, including both special operations and conventional forces. How the supporting doctrines for U.S. Army special operations and U.S. Army logistics align requires examination to answer the question of the SB (SO) (A)'s ability to support U.S. Army Special Forces in expeditionary warfare.

### **U.S. Army Special Operations and Expeditionary Warfare**

Special Operations as a category nests itself within U.S. military doctrine. As FM 1-02 states, special operations are those “operations conducted by specially organized, trained, and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic, or informational objectives by unconventional military means...these operations are conducted across the full range of military operations.”<sup>73</sup> To achieve the objectives discussed above, the U.S. Special Operations Command's (USSOCOM) *Special Operations Forces Future Employment Concept* articulates three enabling concepts, the third being a “global expeditionary force” through creation of “quick reaction, mission-focused, task organized SOF teams.”<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> FM 3-0 defines the *spectrum of conflict* as “the backdrop for army operations. It places levels of violence on an ascending scale,” while *full-spectrum operations* refers to the combination of “offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results.” See, FM 3-0: *Operations*, page 2-1 and 3-1 respectively.

<sup>73</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1-02: Operational Terms and Graphics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, September 2004), 1-173.

<sup>74</sup> U.S. Special Operations Command, *Special Operations Forces Future Employment Concept: A Core Enabling Concept for the Capstone Concept for Special Operations* (Tampa, FL: USSOCOM, November 2007), 5-6.

USSOCOM explicitly links the future employment and nature of special operations forces within expeditionary warfare as articulated in the 2001 QDR.

U.S. Army Special Operations doctrine, promulgated in FM 3-05, *Army Special Operations Forces*, provides the operational concept for the employment of U.S. Army Special Forces in support of U.S. Army operations as expressed in FM 3-0. Within the contemporary operating environment, FM 3-05 acknowledges that U.S. Army Special Forces “will be...continuously engaged” around the globe.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, U.S. Army Special Forces units and their support infrastructure will conduct special operations within the construct of expeditionary warfare.

With the lag time associated between update of the Army’s capstone doctrinal publications and subordinate doctrine, the current FM 3-05 does not use the term expeditionary within its lexicon. Despite this, U.S. Army Special Operations doctrine clearly places U.S. Army Special Forces within the expeditionary warfare construct. U.S. Army Special Forces employment as “unilateral” or combined with “surrogate forces” operating in “hostile, denied, or sensitive environments” explicitly accepts expeditionary operations in form. FM 3-05 expands this concept by stating that these “operations are conducted in depth” and “at great distance from operational bases” accepts expeditionary warfare in nature.<sup>76</sup> In conjunction, these descriptive statements of U.S. Army Special Operations doctrine assent to the conceptual construct of expeditionary warfare.

Due to the continuing force level requirements for U.S. Army conventional forces and their supporting infrastructure in the Afghanistan and Iraqi theaters of operations, U.S. Army Special Forces will most likely focus on unilateral joint-missions and combined missions with

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<sup>75</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-05: Army Special Operations Forces* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, September 2006), 1-1.

<sup>76</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-05: Army Special Operations Forces*, 1-3 to 1-12.

host-nation or indigenous surrogate forces rather than as U.S. single-service missions. In addition, U.S. Army Special Forces will conduct multiple “operations simultaneously” on a “global scale.”<sup>77</sup> Though these operations may not rise to the level of major operations or campaigns, U.S. Army Special Forces’ commitment in an era of persistent conflict articulated in FM-1 may include “FHA...NEO, peace operations, strikes, raids, or recovery operations” due to their unique capabilities derived from the high quality, training and education of Army Special Forces.<sup>78</sup> This employment requires U.S. Army Special Forces “to conduct any combination of offensive, defensive, stability, and civil support operations,” or full-spectrum operations.<sup>79</sup> Whether part of a joint force or in a unilateral capacity, U.S. Army Special Forces conduct “inherently offensive” operations “to compel, deter, or counter enemy actions.”<sup>80</sup> Due to the nature of these special operations, U.S. Army Special Forces require robust logistical support to achieve success in the actions assigned to them.

As the logistics system enables and sustains the operational system, FM 4-0, *Combat Service Support*, provides the theory for support of the Army’s operational concept expressed in FM 3-0. U.S. Army logistics doctrine aptly states, “operations and CSS are inextricably linked. The purpose of CSS is to generate and sustain combat power and expand the commander’s operational reach.”<sup>81</sup> With the purpose to support the operational concept, logistics must be capable of supporting the operational concept in its context and expression, expeditionary warfare.

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<sup>77</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-05: Army Special Operations Forces* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, September 2006), 1-3.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-4.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-5.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-6.

<sup>81</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 4-0: Combat Service Support* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, August 2003), 1-1.

U.S. Army logistics doctrine currently does not adequately address the theoretical concept of ‘expeditionary’, whether in warfare, operations, or forces as introduced in the 2001 QDR, FM 1, and FM 3-0. Due to the lag between capstone doctrine publication and subordinate doctrine, FM 4-0 recognizes the need to be “strategically responsive” rather than using the term ‘expeditionary’.<sup>82</sup> Although the current FM 4-0 preceded the 2008 version of FM 3-0, the 2001 QDR specifically addressed the requirement for expeditionary forces with expeditionary capabilities to conduct expeditionary operations from *all* services. FM 4-0’s requirement to “respond promptly to crisis”, does not equate to the concept of expeditionary warfare.<sup>83</sup> The U.S. Army’s emerging concept for logistical support, modular force logistics (MFL), speaks to “an expeditionary, campaign quality force,” yet does not articulate logistics support in the context of expeditionary warfare.<sup>84</sup> MFL discusses the need for transformation across the U.S. Army’s logistics force, but only provides new structures and reductions of duplicate headquarters.

Coinciding with the broader U.S. Army transformation efforts, transformation within logistics doctrine and forces attempts to address the cognitive crisis deriving from the Task Force Hawk experience and the constant tooth-to-tail tension inherent in warfare. Complementing the guidance from General Shinseki on U.S. Army transformation, logistics transformation guidelines direct Army logistics organizations to:

- Enhance strategic responsiveness to meet deployment timelines
- Reduce CSS footprint in the AO
- Reduce the logistical costs without reducing warfighting capability and readiness.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 4-0: Combat Service Support* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, August 2003), 1-2.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command, *Modular Force Logistics Concept: Version 6* (Fort Lee, VA: USACASCOM, September 20, 2006), 7.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 1-14/1-15.

Army logistics doctrine faces a conceptual crisis in dealing with these directives while attempting to address the theoretical concept of expeditionary warfare. FM 4-0 proposes that in order to minimize “the CSS footprint in the AO also requires a cultural change. The Army must leverage the use of contractors and host nation-support assets; develop procedures for split-based operations; and use ISBs when feasible.”<sup>86</sup> This articulation poses a direct contradiction to FM 3-0’s idea of austere operational environments as discussed earlier. A logistics concept that presupposes the use of host nation-support assets risks operational failure when these assets do not exist. Further signaling a failure of a coherent concept, FM 4-0 states that commanders must “weigh the risk of joint and especially, multinational support; this support may not be as reliable or responsive as organic Army support.”<sup>87</sup> A doctrine that embraces host nation-support while expressing an inherent risk from joint service and coalition partner support lacks a consistent cognitive development.

ARSOF logistics doctrine published in Field Manual-Interim (FMI) 3-05.140, *Army Special Operations Force Logistics*, attempts to bridge the doctrinal gap exposed above between the 2001 QDR, FM 3-0, and FM 4-0. Building on the expeditionary concept, FMI 3-05.140 “mandates” the need for ARSOF logistics units to have “organic logistics capabilities” to “enable ‘expeditionary’ ARSOF.”<sup>88</sup> FMI 3-05.140 provides a list of imperatives necessary for ARSOF logistics units to enable expeditionary ARSOF to include the abilities to “deploy early and rapidly...habitually train with supported unit...collocate with supported unit.”<sup>89</sup> To achieve this mandate for enabling the SF Warfighter in expeditionary warfare, ARSOF logistics units must

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<sup>86</sup> U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command, *Modular Force Logistics Concept: Version 6* (Fort Lee, VA: USACASCOM, September 20, 2006), 1-15. Intermediate Staging Base (ISB).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-19.

<sup>88</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual-Interim 3-05.140: Army Special Operations Force Logistics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 28 February 2007), 2-2.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

possess the requisite organic logistics capabilities, namely maintenance, ammunition handling, transportation, base support, and supply & services.

From the derived definition of *expeditionary warfare* discussed previously, implied logistics requirements for supporting SF emerge for consideration. First, expeditionary warfare requires a logistical system that promotes the operational flexibility of the SF commander. Secondly, expeditionary warfare requires a logistical system capable of rapid deployment under compressed timelines. Finally, expeditionary warfare requires a logistical system capable of improvisation in austere environments.

These requirements for logistics support of SF in expeditionary warfare provide a baseline for examination to determine the sufficiency of the current SB (SO) (A). The case studies of expeditionary warfare operations provide a methodology for this examination. From this examination, the lessons learned structure analysis of the SB (SO) (A) thereby providing a coherent reflection of current capabilities against required capabilities to support the SF Warfighter.

## Case Studies

For examination of expeditionary warfare and support of U.S. Army Special Forces by the Support Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne), case studies will serve to highlight relevant issues for future operations. To select the individual cases, the derived definition of *expeditionary warfare* filtered the initial list of possible cases for examination. In addition, the conflict must have occurred after World War I to account for the problems inherent in modern warfare, namely the widespread mechanization of armed forces. Additional preferred criteria included that the conflict involved state organized militaries and special operations forces. From this requirement, two conflicts with a number of research sources met all criteria, the 1982 British-Argentina Falklands War and the 2001 U.S.-Afghanistan War.

### **The Falkland Islands War (Operation CORPORATE)**

On 2 April 1982, following months of fluctuating tensions between the Argentine junta and the British government over the status of the disputed Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic, Argentine military forces seized the islands and declared the 'Malvinas Islands' once again part of the Argentine nation. Following short deliberations within the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the first British forces of Task Force 317 departed the United Kingdom on 5 April 1982 to oust Argentine forces and reclaim the Falkland Islands.<sup>90</sup> With a distance of 7,500 nautical miles separating Task Force 317 from its operational objective, Port Stanley, the capital of the British territory, and no friendly or neutral territory from which to launch a strike, British forces would ultimately conduct a forced-entry amphibious operation, Operation CORPORATE, to reclaim the islands.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> United Kingdom. *The Falklands Campaign: The Lessons* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1983), 4-6.

<sup>91</sup> Sir Lawrence Freedman, *War and Diplomacy*, vol. 2 of *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 3.

After initial air and sea battles to establish a tenuous British primacy in and around the Falkland Islands, British land forces, made up of 3 Commando Brigade along with 2 Para and 3 Para from 5 Brigade and numbering near 5,000 troops, staged a night-time amphibious assault at Port San Carlos beginning on 21 May 1982. The initial logistical support concept for British troops called for the Commando Logistic Regiment, 3 Commando Brigade to establish and operate a Beach Support Area (BSA) in the vicinity of the landing site at Ajax Bay along with two landing ships logistics (LSLs) afloat ferrying pre-loaded logistics re-supply stores to the BSA and to advancing units by rotary-wing aircraft.<sup>92</sup>

Argentine air forces compelled a major shift in the logistical support concept after attacking British vessels covering the landing operation. Task Force 317 suffered the loss of a frigate and two Gazelle helicopters and damage to a guided missile destroyer and frigate.<sup>93</sup> Unable to maintain local air superiority, British vessels, particularly the LSLs, remained highly vulnerable to Argentine air attack. As a result, all non-essential vessels including the LSLs moved outside the range of Argentine air forces. Commando Logistic Regiment supported British land forces from supplies run ashore at the BSA with re-supply to advancing units by a combination of rotary-wing aircraft, Volvo BV 202 snow vehicle, LSL, and boat.<sup>94</sup>

Beginning 1 June 1982, elements from the British Army's 5 Brigade began their amphibious landings at San Carlos.<sup>95</sup> 5 Brigade arrived with sparse logistical assets forcing Commando Logistic Regiment to provide support for the entire British land component with augmentation from two logistical companies. As 5 Brigade broke-out from the landing area, the

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<sup>92</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, "An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines," in *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years On: Lessons for the Future*, ed. Stephen Badsey, Rob Havers, and Mark Grove (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 113-115.

<sup>93</sup> Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983), 201-232.

<sup>94</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, "An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines," 115-120.

<sup>95</sup> Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 343.

operational plan called for elements of 5 Brigade to conduct an assault amphibious landing on the eastern coast of East Falkland Island near Bluff Cove and Fitzroy between 6-8 June 1982.<sup>96</sup>

Commando Logistic Regiment provided a forward element with two LSLs to support the landing and breakout toward Port Stanley.<sup>97</sup>

After consolidation, the logistical support concept called for displacement of the bulk of Command Logistic Regiment to Fitzroy and establishment of a new logistical support area. During the offloading of supplies, Argentine air attacks severely damaged the two LSLs, *Sir Galahad* and *Sir Tristram*, forcing the British to abandon them.<sup>98</sup> The logistical support concept reverted to maintaining the land force logistical support area at Ajax Bay with forward detachments at Fitzroy in the south and Teal in the north. Task Force 317 now relied on two LSLs and the few helicopter assets available to supply the land force during the final assault on Port Stanley.

After surrender of the Argentine forces on 14 June 1982, Task Force 317 consolidated forces and began a phased departure for return to the United Kingdom still wary of Argentine intentions toward the Falkland Islands.<sup>99</sup> Commando Logistic Regiment departed Port Stanley on 28 June 1982 transferring logistical support for the remaining British forces to two logistical companies. Observers hailed the British victory over the Argentine military a great success. During the campaign to retake the Falklands, several logistics issues arose that are worth exploring in the context of expeditionary warfare.

The first issue gleaned from the British experience during Operation CORPORATE centers on the issue of time available for organization and deployment of Task Force 317. Major

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<sup>96</sup> Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 275-277.

<sup>97</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, "An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines," 121-124.

<sup>98</sup> Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 278-284.

<sup>99</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, "An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines," 125-127.

General Julian Thompson, commander of 3 Commando Brigade and initial land force commander of the amphibious assault, stated “speed...was necessary to put the whole act together.”<sup>100</sup>

Domestic political pressure to act, combined with the need to initiate operations before the South Atlantic winter arrived, forced the British to mobilize, embark, and sail the forces needed to conduct an operation without actual authorization for the force commander to conduct an operation. Organization of equipment and forces and integration of a support concept with an operational plan for retaking the Falkland Islands would wait for a mission directive from the British government to the Task Force 317 commander. The requirement for speed to launch forces necessary for an operation created second and third order effects that would not manifest themselves until the amphibious assault landing began.

Due to the rapid nature of the British mobilization and force deployment, British Territorial Army/Volunteer Reserve (TAVR) forces “could not be mobilized” for the operation.<sup>101</sup> As a result, a key logistics enabler for Commando Logistic Regiment, its petroleum troop, remained in the United Kingdom. Commencement of the assault amphibious landing on East Falkland revealed the near catastrophic result of this decision. The land component’s close-in air defense systems, the Rapier, and limited transportation systems, the Volvo BV 202 snow vehicle and shore raiding craft, consumed “extraordinarily high” quantities of motor gasoline.<sup>102</sup> With bulk fuel available from the British naval vessels, the regiment’s issue lay in “getting the fuel ashore”, the task its petroleum troop was trained and equipped to conduct.<sup>103</sup> Through the use of the ubiquitous ‘jerry-can’, hand-pumps, and fuel-pods moved from ship to shore, Commando

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<sup>100</sup> Maj. Gen. Julian Thompson, UK, “Force Projection and the Falklands Conflict,” 97.

<sup>101</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, “An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines,” 126.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, “An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines,” 118.

Logistic Regiment constructed a fuel re-supply system reminiscent of the one used during World War II.

The extreme operational environment and austere logistical infrastructure on the Falkland Islands increased the support required from Commando Logistic Regiment. The Falkland Islands lacked all-weather roads for transportation, while off-road conditions on the islands' sub-antarctic tundra increased the difficulty of wheel-based transportation assets. Colonel I. J. Hellberg, commander of Commando Logistic Regiment, identified the greatest challenge his force faced in addressing this issue, "our main problem was the lack of dedicated movement assets."<sup>104</sup> A shortage of British shipping available to support the projection of Task Force 317 in a timely manner, limited the number of transportation assets, trucks and prime-movers, the land force, particularly Commando Logistic Regiment, brought to support the recapture of the Falkland Islands. An intricate combination of rotary-wing aircraft, LSLs and other small boats, private vehicles from locals, and man-hauling transported the needed supplies from the naval task force across the beach and forward to advancing units.

A final issue for the land force focused on consumption rates of ammunition and its availability during the advance on Port Stanley. Due to the offensive nature of the campaign and a lack of British air-superiority, "ammunition rates of fire were incredibly high" with some systems consuming five times the projected daily rate.<sup>105</sup> To meet the necessity for speed in getting Task Force 317 embarked and deployed, a 30-day ammunition supply for 3 Commando Brigade remained in the United Kingdom as it underwent a routine inspection and transfer to another supply vessel.<sup>106</sup> The combination of high consumption rates, low supply, and limited

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<sup>104</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, "An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines," 116.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 119.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 110.

transportation assets led some weapon systems to “run out” of ammunition during the advance on Port Stanley.<sup>107</sup> As Colonel Hellberg reflected on the operation, “it was a close run thing.”<sup>108</sup>

## **The US-Afghanistan War (Operation ENDURING FREEDOM)**

Responding to the attacks on 11 September 2001, President George W. Bush directed U.S. government agencies to develop an operations plan for ousting the Taliban-controlled government of Afghanistan, killing or capturing al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan, and preparing Afghanistan for post-Taliban life. The Central Intelligence Agency led the way with its paramilitary forces and, beginning on 7 October 2001, U.S. Central Command began the opening air phase of the campaign to accomplish these objectives in concert with regional partners, coalition allies and other United States governmental agencies.<sup>109</sup> Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF), working with CIA teams and Afghan militia forces, formed the early portion of the ground campaign. To support this ground campaign, “ARSOF units, including elements from the Special Operations Support Command, departed a few weeks after 11 September to establish an operating base at Kanabad air base near Karshi, Uzbekistan.”<sup>110</sup> The Special Operations Support Command (SOSCOM) and its subordinate battalion, the 528<sup>TH</sup> Special Operations Support Battalion (SOSB), provided the initial sustainment and support for U.S. Army Special Forces operating from Uzbekistan and in Afghanistan. Conventional force CSS units from the

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<sup>107</sup> Col. I.J. Hellberg, UK, “An Experience with the Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines,” 125.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>109</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 101. Tommy Franks with Malcolm McConnell, *American Soldier* (New York: HarperCollins Publisher, Inc., 2004), 283-288.

<sup>110</sup> John A. Bonin, Colonel, USA(Ret.), *U.S. Army Forces Central Command In Afghanistan And The Arabian Gulf During Operation Enduring Freedom: 11 September 2001-11 March 2003. Monograph 1-03* (Carlisle, PA: Army Heritage Center Foundation, March 2003), 8.

507<sup>TH</sup> Corps Support Group also deployed to augment the U.S. Army Special Forces logistics infrastructure at Karshi Kanabad (K2).<sup>111</sup>

As operations moved from the Panshir Valley through Kabul to Jalalabad, U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) units established a forward operating base (FOB) at the former Soviet air base near Bagram. In order to provide responsive logistics support, CSS units supporting SF moved with them and began establishing CSS and base infrastructure at Bagram. With the swift defeat of the Taliban government in early December 2002, the Afghanistan theater matured. Bagram developed as the main logistics hub for supporting conventional units and SF, which eventually became the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A). Although hailed as a great military success and a new type of warfare emphasizing the use of SOF in the lead, U.S. efforts during OEF exposed logistics issues in conducting expeditionary warfare.

In a research study conducted by the Army Heritage Center Foundation, leaders at U.S. Army Central Command (ARCENT) stated “logistical support to SOF and coalition forces in an austere theater involve unique and greater demands than elsewhere.”<sup>112</sup> Afghanistan’s severe terrain and lack of infrastructure proved difficult for logisticians to sustain forces spread across the theater and forced a heavy reliance on air transport into as well as within the theater. This reliance created a “logistics system with a single point of failure.”<sup>113</sup> Ground transportation for resupply of outlying SOF firebases proved difficult to sustain as anti-coalition militias conducted ambushes along the limited road networks connecting these bases. At one point in 2002, ground movement along one stretch was only permitted in the few “up-armored” HMMWVs in theater.

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<sup>111</sup> Bonin, *U.S. Army Forces Central Command In Afghanistan And The Arabian Gulf*, 9.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, 36.

<sup>113</sup> Major James J. McDonell and Major J. Ronald Novack “Logistics Challenges in Support of Operation Enduring Freedom,” *Army Logistician*, Volume 36, Issue 52, (Fort Lee, VA: Army Logistics Management College, September-October, 2004), 9.

SF CSS units neither possessed these types of vehicles nor could they have sustained U.S. Army Special Forces using just up-armored HMMWVs.

Another unique demand for CSS support to SF involved training of the Afghanistan National Army (ANA). This challenge involved numerous logistics aspects, but none proved more difficult than arming the ANA, specifically ammunition. Many individuals without first-hand knowledge of the Afghanistan theater mistakenly believe arms and ammunition remain readily available. This is partially true, except the arms and ammunition recovered from enemy caches is usually of poor and deteriorating quality due to being leftover from the Soviet-Afghan war and the use of improper storage methods. This forced the United States government to solicit donations from nations across the globe for thousands of weapons and tens of millions of rounds of ammunition to supply the fledgling ANA. Special Operations Task Force-31 managed the receipt, storage, and issue of millions of rounds of ammunition with the one E-4 ammunition specialist assigned to the SF Battalion Service Detachment. In addition, he established two field ammunition supply points for ANA and United States ammunition storage at the Kabul Military Training Center.<sup>114</sup>

An additional logistics lesson learned from the Army Heritage Center Foundation report stated that the “ARCENT logistical and engineer planners failed to adequately provide bed-down facilities, water supply, sanitary facilities, power, or mine clearance that an expeditionary base required.”<sup>115</sup> Under current doctrine, the Army Service Component Commander (ASCC) remains responsible for providing Army service-specific logistics to deployed Army forces, including SF, and common-user logistics as directed. Elements of the 507<sup>th</sup> CSG provided the base support

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<sup>114</sup> The author served as the Battalion Service Detachment Commander for 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion/3<sup>rd</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) during the battalion’s two rotations to Afghanistan training the Afghanistan National Army.

<sup>115</sup> Bonin, *U.S. Army Forces Central Command In Afghanistan And The Arabian Gulf*, 16.

mission to fill the gap for SF.<sup>116</sup> As successor to initial SF units, CJSTOF-A's organic CSS units assumed this mission. This additional mission drained personnel and equipment resources that could have been used more effectively supporting SF units deployed at remote firebases across Afghanistan.

A final logistics lesson gleaned from Operation ENDURING FREEDOM from the Army Heritage Center Foundation report centers on force structure and access to Reserve Component forces. While not specifically referring to SF or support to SF, this lesson provides some cautionary tales for SF CSS support structure located in the Reserve Component. The study finds the following:

It appears that for a conflict like Afghanistan, the application of land power requires a more responsive, modular, balanced, and vertical slice from all of the Army's categories of forces. Army logistical support, C2/IS/ISR, and protective categories of forces, many of which came from the Reserve Components, while overall responsive proved hard to request and not at the same high readiness of Active component maneuver forces.<sup>117</sup>

This finding shows that as United States military forces continue to deploy around the globe at an increasing rate, logistical support will remain an Achilles' heel, particularly in underdeveloped, austere environments such as Afghanistan. Whether a factor of lower unit readiness or lack of availability, this problem will hamper the ability to properly support SF in future conflicts.

## **Summary of Case Study Findings**

In the final analysis, the British experience with expeditionary warfare during Operation CORPORATE revealed critical logistical issues relating to the nature of austere operational and logistical environments. The relationship between time and speed for initiation of an expeditionary campaign created and exacerbated these logistics issues. Access to reserve units

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<sup>116</sup> Capt. Michael Wigton, "LTF 530th" (Fort Campbell, KY: undated), 19.

<sup>117</sup> Bonin, *U.S. Army Forces Central Command In Afghanistan And The Arabian Gulf*, 35.

and force balancing, transportation assets, and ammunition directly affected operational and supporting logistical concepts for British land forces. The rapid deployment requirements of expeditionary warfare necessitate organic logistic capabilities to reside within the deploying force, typically from the active component. During the conduct of Operation CORPORATE, the compressed deployment timeline prevented the mobilization and deployment of fuel handling, and ammunition transfer capabilities though organic to the Commando Logistic Regiment which resided in the British reserve component. Furthermore, a lack of dedicated transportation capability limited British operational flexibility restricting British operational plans to those primarily through aerial and maritime capabilities not organic to the operational commander.

During the US experience in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, the uniqueness and level of SOF logistical demands in underdeveloped and austere theaters, inadequacy of base support planning for deployed units (SOF and conventional force), logistical force structure, and access to Reserve Component units complicated the support efforts. As in the British case during Operation CORPORATE, the lack of an adequate transportation capability coupled with the minimal protection afforded by the existing transportation assets, limited the operational flexibility of US commanders to a single point of failure system of aerial re-supply. In addition, the high demand for an ammunition handling and base support capability highlights the need for these as organic capabilities for units during expeditionary warfare. Finally, reliance on logistics capabilities within the US reserve component proved problematic not only due to access within shortened timelines, but also due to uneven quality. These findings provide a start point from which to analyze logistics transformation efforts underway within the United States Army Special Operations Command.

## U.S. Army Special Forces Sustainment Structure

Two new organizations exist within USASOC to support deployed SF units, the Support Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) which replaced the Special Operations Support Command (SOSCOM), and the Group Support Battalion (Airborne) (GSB) organic to each Special Forces Group. These organizations will be the focus of this section. Partially due to lessons learned from employment during Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM, the SOSCOM deactivated on 2 December 2005 and transformed to the SB (SO) (A).<sup>118</sup> The SB (SO) (A) has the following mission statement:

The SB (SO) (A) plans, integrates and synchronizes Army common and SOF peculiar logistics to sustain SOF across the full spectrum of employment. On order provides Signal & Level II Medical packages; deploys and provides battlefield logistics Command and Control in support of a JTF.<sup>119</sup>

The SB (SO) (A) organizational structure appears similar to the structure found in conventional force sustainment brigades with a brigade troops battalion (BTB) and subordinate CSS units. However, the majority of the SB (SO) (A) logistical capability, two multi-functional logistics units, resides in the Reserve Component.

The two multi-functional logistics units include the 732<sup>ND</sup> Main Support Company (Airborne) and the 816<sup>TH</sup> Forward Support Company (Airborne), both organized as entire Active Guard and Reserve (AGR)/Military Technician (MILTECH) units. The 732<sup>ND</sup> MSC (A) organizational structure includes: a Headquarters Section, Medical Section, Supply Platoon, Airdrop Support Section, Organizational Maintenance Section, Service Platoon, Base Support Platoon, and Food Service Section.<sup>120</sup> The 816<sup>TH</sup> FSC (A) organizational structure includes a Headquarters Section, Food Service Section, Supply Platoon, Medical Platoon, Transportation

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<sup>118</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *U.S. Army Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (Provisional) Fact Sheet*, 1.

<sup>119</sup> Colonel Edward F. Dorman, III, Commander Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne), "Brigade Vision Brief," (Fort Bragg, NC: November 2006), 5.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

Platoon, and Maintenance Platoon.<sup>121</sup> These units, fully manned and equipped, will provide unique logistical capabilities to the SF commander operating in an underdeveloped theater or austere environment, particularly with the base support platoon located in the 732<sup>ND</sup> MSC (A) and robust medical support.

The new Group Support Battalion (GSB) located within each Special Forces Group (SFG) now provides the SF commander an enhanced CSS logistical capability. The mission of the GSB is to provide CSS for the SFG and its deployed elements. The organization of the GSB includes: a Headquarters Detachment, Group Service Support Company, and Group Support Company. Employment of the GSB provides a command, control and operational headquarters that is directed by the SFG commander or higher authority. The GSB provides the SF commander with the ability to establish and operate the Forward Support Base (FSB) as part of an Army Special Operations Task Force (ARSOTF) or CJSOTF in multiple locations. In addition, the GSB HQ Detachment serves as the access point for SF CSS requirements to the conventional force CSS structure once established as well as coordination with the Theater Army Special Operations Force Liaison Element (ALE), a liaison organization of the SB (SO) (A) and formerly known as the Special Operations Theater Support Element (SOTSE). The GSB HQ Detachment organization mirrors that of other multi-functional CSS battalions with a command section, S-1, S-2/3, S-4, Property Book Officer (PBO), and Support Operations (SPO) section.

The GSSC, similar in structure to a multi-functional Forward Support Company in the conventional force Brigade Combat Team, possesses the following organizational structure: a Company Headquarters, Sustainment Platoon, Distribution Platoon, Maintenance Platoon, Medical Platoon, with additional field feeding and base support sections. The mission for the GSSC includes providing CSS to deployed SF elements and its attached elements as directed by

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<sup>121</sup> Colonel Edward F. Dorman, III, Commander Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne), "Brigade Vision Brief," 33.

the GSB. The GSSC provides the SF commander with a consolidated CSS capability previously found spread across the Group Service Detachment, the SF Battalion Service Detachment, and the 528<sup>TH</sup> SOSB. This consolidation represents a distinct advantage with an organic capability that belongs to the SFG commander instead of an ad-hoc task organization from separate units that do not conduct habitual training together.

Some of the more critical components of the GSSC include its sustainment and distribution platoons. These two platoons provide the SF commander with the CSS capability to meet the requirements for supporting forward to subordinate SF battalions. The sustainment platoon organized with a Supply Section, Petroleum/Oils/Lubricants (POL) Section, Ammunition Section, Water Section, gives the SF commander a dedicated CSS capability to simultaneously sustain deployed SF elements instead of being forced to rely on conventional force CSS structure. Viewed through the lens of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, this represents a significant enhancement in capability, particularly during early stage operations.

The distribution platoon provides the SFG commander a dedicated CSS capability to conduct ground and aerial resupply of deployed SF elements at separate locations. The truck squad MTOE provides the dedicated mobility platforms, and the associated night vision, weapon system, and tracking system to perform day/night operations, force protection, and force tracking. This capability, necessary for SF logistics assets to support the SF Warfighter however remains insufficient for high-threat environments as demonstrated during OEF. The limited protection afforded by current transportation assets, LMTV/FMTV/HMMWV-variants, prevented their use to support forward deployed SF units during OEF.

The final SF CSS organization to be examined in this section is the SF Battalion Service Detachment. The SF Battalion Service Detachment provides the SF Battalion Commander an organic capability to plan for and sustain the SOTF and operationally deployed AOBs and SFODAs at multiple locations simultaneously. The SF Battalion Service Detachment mission is to provide CSS to a Special Operations Task Force (SOTF), formerly known as the Forward

Operating Base (FOB). The FOB is formed around a deployed SF battalion and its deployed operational elements; typically SF Companies (known when deployed as Advance Operating Bases, or AOBs) or individual Special Forces Operational Detachment Alphas (SFODAs).

The SF Battalion Service Detachment organized along the lines of a multi-functional logistics unit with the following elements: a Detachment Headquarters, Field Feeding Section, Aerial Delivery Section (Rigger), Supply and Transportation Section, Mechanical Maintenance Section, and Ground Support and Electronic Maintenance Section. The current MTOE for the detachment provides no organic transportation capability for resupply operations.<sup>122</sup> The Supply and Transportation Section contains vehicles with no transportation specialists. In addition, no organic capability exists within the SF Battalion to manage the requisition, receipt, storage, issue, and turn-in of ammunition. However, the capabilities listed for the SF Battalion Service Detachment on the MTOE include: field level logistics, to include Class V (ammunition) and transportation necessary to conduct operations.

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<sup>122</sup> See MTOE Document Number 31815GSP13, available at <https://www.usafmsaradd.army.mil/usafmsa> (accessed on 18 May 2008).

## Analysis and Recommendations

### Analysis

Examination of current and emerging U.S. Army doctrine, lessons learned from Operations CORPORATE and ENDURING FREEDOM, and the transformation of Army Special Forces sustainment units, provides a starting point for continued development of logistics doctrine and structure for the support of SF in expeditionary warfare. As currently configured, the Support Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) will not provide adequate support for SF in expeditionary warfare due to a lack of dedicated ground transportation assets, insufficient ammunition management capability, and force component imbalances. This is due in part to the Army's cognitive crisis following Operation ALLIED FORCE, which distorted the development of U.S. Army doctrine conflating the term *expeditionary* with *speed*. Notwithstanding the enormous transformation of U.S. Army Special Forces CSS units conducted over the past two years, challenges remain that must be addressed to provide effective support to the SF Warfighter.

The logistics issues from Operations CORPORATE and ENDURING FREEDOM discussed earlier provide the backdrop for the examination of the SB (SO) (A)'s ability to support SF in expeditionary warfare. These issues include dedicated transportation assets, ammunition handling capability, and base support capability, and the readiness and access to Reserve component units. The construct of *expeditionary warfare* challenges current CSS operating concepts to *reduce* the logistical footprint in theater as a sacrifice to generating combat power. The modern experience in expeditionary warfare questions this logic and posits an *increase* in the logistical footprint.

U.S. Army Special Forces logistics infrastructure must continue to advance to meet current and emerging requirements. Ensuring that U.S. Army Special Forces CSS units possess the correct personnel and materiel to operate as envisioned necessitates a continual review of force capability versus force requirement. With an increasing force structure, current U.S. Army

Special Forces CSS transformation efforts may not meet the U.S. Army Special Forces commander's demands.

The austere and underdeveloped theaters SF have experienced in the past, and can continue to expect to deploy in the future, will stress the need for sustained ground resupply operations. Current MTOE structure provides no dedicated transportation capability within the SF Battalion Service Detachment. The lack of a dedicated transportation capability during Operations CORPORATE and ENDURING FREEDOM limited the flexibility of operational commanders. As seen during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, due to the threat of IEDs and ambush by anti-coalition militias, the low protection offered by current transportation assets necessitated the use of aerial resupply of operationally deployed SOTF AOBs and SFODAs. This created the aforementioned single point of failure resupply system for these units.

The elimination of the ammunition specialist from the SF Battalion Service Detachment MTOE eliminated a singularly important capability for deployed SOTF commanders. Operations CORPORATE and ENDURING FREEDOM demonstrated the value and need for an organic ammunition transfer capability during expeditionary operations. During Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, SOTF-31 Service Detachment managed millions of rounds of United States and ANA ammunition. Without the organic capability present at the time, the SOTF-31 Service Detachment could not have managed this enormous challenge. The British experience in the Falklands show that increased expenditure and supply of ammunition necessitates trained ammunition specialists at the unit level. While the GSB does possess an ammunition section within the sustainment platoon consisting of six personnel, geographically separated operations, as demonstrated in the Falklands and Afghanistan, will remain the norm for future operations and require an organic ammunition handling capability at the SOTF level. Attaching an individual from the GSB to the SOTF defeats the purpose of the having an organic CSS capability within the SF Battalion.

Next, base support will continue to challenge logisticians in conventional and SF units. Operation ENDURING FREEDOM revealed clear problems in the planning and execution of base support operations. SF relied heavily on conventional force units to augment the capabilities of the now extinct SOSCOM and 528<sup>TH</sup> SOSB. The current SF Battalion Service Detachment provides no specific base support capability, while the GSB does possess a small base support section consisting of nine personnel. The SB (SO) (A) contains the most robust capability, 37 personnel, residing in two Reserve Component units. This force balance should be converted to bring these Reserve Component units into the Active Component force structure. Operation CORPORATE highlighted the impact that time and speed of mobilization timelines may not prove sufficient to provide the SF commander with the needed capabilities particularly when conventional force units are unavailable.

The final challenge identified during Operations CORPORATE and ENDURING FREEDOM centered on the availability and readiness of Reserve Component units, including CSS organizations. Under the current SB (SO) (A) structure, the entire CSS augmentation capability, its deployable CSS units, reside in the Reserve Component organized as AGR units. As illustrated in the case studies, austere theaters will require rapid force generation and increased logistics infrastructure to support deployed SF especially during forced entry and initial operations. Putting aside any manning or readiness issues, access to the Reserve Component due to the regulatory and political pressures resulting from the U.S. experience in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, may prevent their timely and effective use to meet these challenges if conventional CSS force structure is unavailable. As mentioned previously, this capability should be aligned in to the Active Component force structure.

SF units will continue to deploy to remote regions with underdeveloped and austere logistical infrastructures across the globe. The logistics lessons identified above provide a model for U.S. Army Special Forces logistics considerations.

## Recommendations

1. **Define *expeditionary warfare* as:** the rapid deployment of military forces worldwide on short notice to an potentially austere operational and logistical environment to conduct full spectrum operations across the spectrum of conflict.

2. **Provide a dedicated transportation capability to the SF Battalion Service**

**Detachment.** To accomplish this, add one truck squad consisting of four 88M personnel (one E-5 and three E-4s) to the SF Battalion Service Detachment during the next MTOE revision. This will relieve the burden on the Supply, Maintenance, and Food Service sections to provide personnel to conduct ground resupply operations to AOBs and SFODAs.

3. **Increase the protection of transportation capabilities across the SF logistics**

**system.** To accomplish this, adopt an armored version of the Light-Medium Tactical Vehicles (LMTVs) (similar to those utilized by conventional forces in the Iraqi theater), currently used within the GSB and SF Battalion Service Detachment must be adopted within SFGs. This will provide enhanced operational flexibility to the SF commander when dealing with support operations in IED threat environments.

4. **Provide an ammunition transfer capability to the SF Battalion Service**

**Detachment.** To accomplish this, return the ammunition specialist, MOS 89B, to the SF Battalion Service Detachment MTOE during the next MTOE revision. This will ensure SF Battalions maintain the necessary organic capability to effectively manage ammunition requirements.

5. **Realign the current Reserve Component SB (SO) (A) units to the Active**

**Component immediately.** This will not only posture forces for rapid deployment, it will add a base support capability to the SFG commander. The readiness, manning, and mobilization timelines for Reserve Component forces limits the SF commander's operational flexibility during

deployment to conduct operations in an potentially austere operational and logistical environment.

**6. Areas for further research:**

a. Examine the modular capability of ARSOF logistics units below the brigade and group levels to determine the feasibility of supporting units across and between theaters of operations.

b. Examine the feasibility of Special Forces Group logistics units to support the Enhanced Special Forces Group containing four SF-battalions in order to determine capability requirements and capabilities.

c. Examine logistics consumption rate data for expeditionary operations to determine the sufficiency of Combined Arms Support Command logistics planning factor tools.

Incorporation of these recommendations provides the SF Warfighter with a logistics structure that is both necessary and sufficient in expeditionary warfare. First, expeditionary warfare requires a logistical system that promotes the operational flexibility of the SF commander. With the provision of dedicated transportation, ammunition transfer, and base support capabilities, the SF commander possesses the base logistics functions required in expeditionary warfare: arm, fuel, fix, move, and sustain. Without these changes, the SF commander lacks the ability to arm, move, and sustain deployed forces sufficiently. Secondly, expeditionary warfare requires a logistics system capable of rapid deployment under compressed timelines. By moving the Reserve Component units organic to the Support Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) to the Active Component, the time required for mobilization, training, and integration disappear, thus enabling a rapid deployment capability. Lacking a logistics rapid deployment capability, the SF commander cedes operational initiative and prevents achievement of decisive results. Finally, expeditionary warfare requires a logistical system capable of improvisation in austere environments. With the base logistics functions and increased protection

of transportation assets, the SF commander can sufficiently tailor support to meet changes within his operational environment.

The Special Forces Warfighter demands and deserves the most effective and responsive logistics support available. This is the mission of SF logistics units.

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