

# **Typewriter Leadership in a Facebook World**

**A Monograph  
by  
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**AY 2008**

<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved</i> <i>OMB No. 0704-0188</i>		
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. <b>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</b>					
<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 21-05-2009		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> Monograph		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b> JUL 2008 – MAY 2009	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> <b>Typewriter Leadership in a Facebook World</b>			<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>		
			<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>		
			<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>		
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> COL Drew R. Meyerowich United States Army			<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>		
			<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>		
			<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>		
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> School of Advanced Military Studies ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301			<b>8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER</b>		
<b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301			<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>		
			<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>		
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b> See Abstract					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Army leadership					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b> Unclassified		<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>  (U)	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b> Stefan Banach, COL, IN, SAMS DIR	
<b>a. REPORT</b> (U)	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> (U)			<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> (U)	<b>19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code)</b> 913-758-3310

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)  
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18



# SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

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## **Abstract**

TYPEWRITER LEADERSHIP IN A FACEBOOK WORLD by COL Drew R. Meyerowich, U.S. Army, 52 pages.

Throughout history, technology has played a vital role in combat. While improvements in weaponry are typically at the front of the military leader's minds, technology like the internet would not appear to be as significant. However, the internet has drastically increased the speed at which news and information travels around the world. While this fact alone does not change how military leaders must think both tactically and strategically, it does require leaders to be adaptive and responsive to the strategic impact of tactical news and information.

Historically, information was a form of power closely guarded, secured, and provided only when there was a need to know. Modern communication equipment and the internet make global news available to anyone who wants it, or wants to provide it. Senior military leaders grew up in the Military during a period where this technology was not a reality. In that short period of time, typewritten forms were replaced by emails and instant messaging. Failing to adapt to the speed at which information travels has plagued today's military leadership in dealing with the management and understanding of information, traditional media, and new forms of media like the internet. Legacy policies towards information management have crippled the United States efforts against terrorism creating a military that is reactive and defensive towards what Thomas L. Friedman refers to as "A Flat World." This monograph focuses on both these failures, and indicates a way ahead in understanding Strategic Communications (STRATCOMs) within the military and creating a culture that is both proactive and adaptive to the realities of STRATCOMs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Military leadership failed to understand the strategic impact of key events in Afghanistan and Iraq. Compounding this lack of understanding was the ability to visualize the second and third order effects of military plans and operations in the strategic landscape. The failure to visualize these effects resulted in strategic messages reactive, defensive and unresponsive to the fast-paced, global-media world they faced. This monograph shows these failures as far back as the NATO Bombing of the Chinese Embassy in 1999, but uses recent cases in Afghanistan and Iraq including that of Corporal Patrick Tillman and Abu Ghraib. These failures had damaging effects on both immediate operational objectives and long term strategic goals. The military culture is slowly changing, but will fail to adapt to the "Flat World" if all military leaders educated by typewriter leadership fails to adapt to the Facebook World.

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## **INTRODUCTION: The Flat World and the United States Military**

### **The Flat World**

In 2005, Thomas L. Friedman proclaimed, “The World is flat” in his book by the same title. Knowing that Christopher Columbus proved this proclamation false, Friedman shows how technology has redefined what the term really means. The diffusion of the telegraph, telephones, the personal computer, satellites, fiber optic cable, and the birth of the World Wide Web, was the birth of a global economy, but equally as important, the world came into each individual’s living rooms.<sup>1</sup> This birth creates an incredible opportunity that empowers individuals, groups, and businesses to flourish not only locally, but also on a global scale. Unfortunately, not all of this empowerment and technology is used benevolently; whatever the technology or innovation, people find a way to both use it and abuse it.<sup>2</sup> There is a direct correlation between personal experiences of Iraqi villages containing only mud huts with dirt floors but equipped with satellite television, and Friedman’s classification of the “Twilight Zone” between the flat and un-flat world; a clash of culture and technology is a reality on today’s battlefield.<sup>3</sup> Personal experiences in dealing with bogus information while in Iraq echoed in Friedman’s account of how a cell phone text message scare swept through Khartoum, Sudan claiming that Muslim men would lose their manhood if they shook an infidel’s hand. Even in living in a first world country, email scams are routinely received that defy all logic, yet people are willing to believe. Friedman used his example to shows how people who, despite owning a scientific marvel like a cellular phone, were completely willing to believe a complete scientific fallacy. These examples fact strikes

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, Thomas L, *The World is Flat*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 372.

<sup>3</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 382.

right at the heart of just how powerful technology can be in transmitting any idea, regardless of how absurd.<sup>4</sup> Friedman's parallels between an individual's hope for a better future tied to a global middle class speaks volumes about the struggle that nations face in expanding a "pathway out of poverty" for the dark corners of the developing world. If these dark corners of the developing world cannot find any hope locally, they will seek it from anyone who will provide them with alternative solutions to their problems. The spread of technology offers the ability to spread these alternative solutions globally, but also freedom of thought, expression, and opportunity to both good and evil individuals and organizations.<sup>5</sup>

How does this apply to the National Policies of the United States? The tearing down of the Berlin Wall will forever be associated with the end of the Cold War, but also as the beginning of the Global War of Ideas. It seems to reason that America, the sole remaining Super-power, should be seen as a shining light of opportunity and hope, but conversely, international public opinion polls say something very different. While tough decisions about the protection of America and its finite resources regarding foreign policy objectives must take top priority, effective communication of America's ideals of freedom and "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" seem to have been lost globally in all that America has done for the spread of democracy, and halting tyranny.

### **Global Opinion and the Role of the United States**

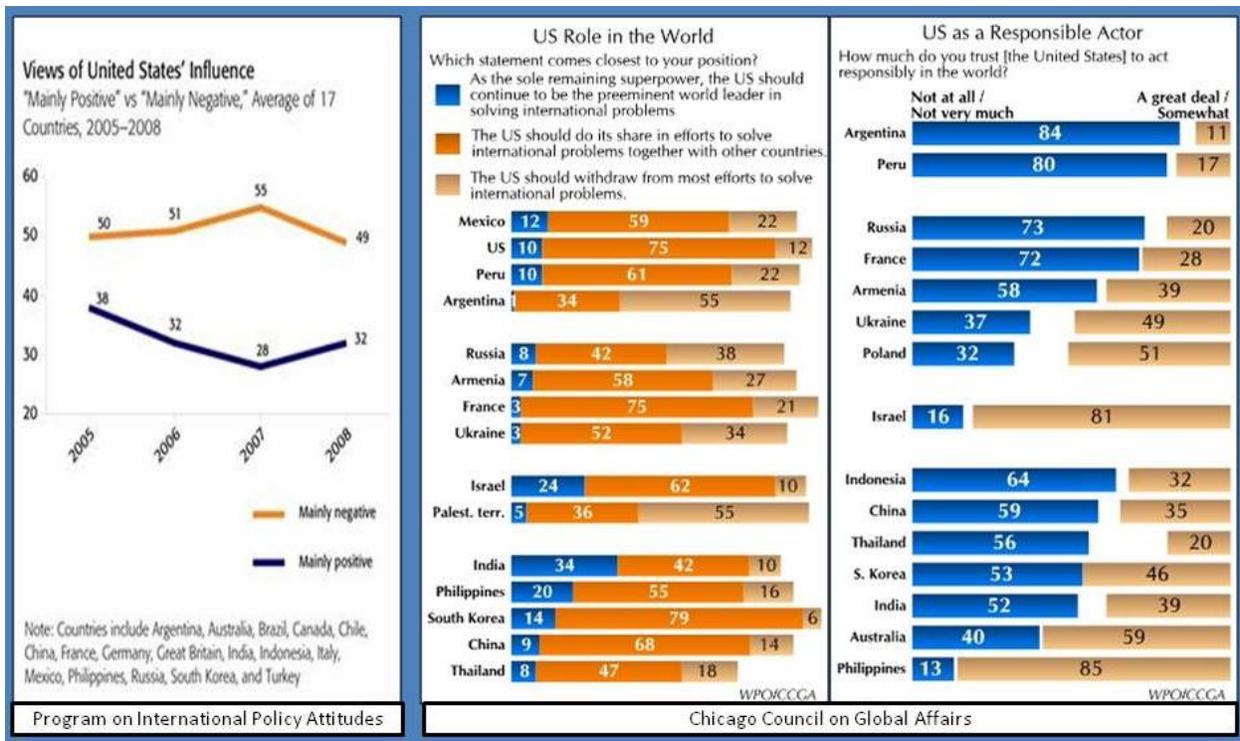
Recent polls conducted by The Program on International Policy Attitudes have shown the first upswing in international opinion about American influence after years of negative slides, but

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<sup>4</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 373.

<sup>5</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 393.

views, however, are still predominantly negative.<sup>6</sup> A similar poll conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs shows an international rejection of the US as the preeminent world leader. Similarly, despite the fact that America lacks international trustworthiness or the ability to act responsibly in foreign affairs, a majority of these countries still want the US to do its share in international affairs multilaterally as opposed to unilaterally.<sup>7</sup> The fact that global opinion polls can even be effectively conducted shows both the capabilities of modern technology and the global belief that every country should have a say in the “Flat World”



Despite earlier indicators of terrorism, 11 September 2001 was the day where hatred towards America was realized. How did America’s message of Hope and Democracy for the oppressed get lost after the Cold War? Why have all military actions since 9-11 seemed to have

<sup>6</sup> Program on International Policy Attitudes, “BBC World Service Poll: International Opinion Poll” (London: GlobalScan Incorporated, 2008), 1 (Table 1).

<sup>7</sup> The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, “World Publics Reject US Role as the World Leader” (Chicago: Worldpublicopinion.org, 2008), 1 (Table 2).

increased international anger and hatred for the United States and what it stands for? With on-going military operations around the world, how can the military play a role in reversing America's negative image and still conduct necessary combat operations to weed out and destroy terrorism? Is the military showing the correct agility and vision to not only win on the battlefield, but also in the war of ideas against terrorists that threaten national security? This monograph will explore the military's understanding of Strategic Communications (STRATCOM), its use of STRATCOMs in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and the future use of STRATCOMs by the military in support of National objectives.

Did military leadership understand the significance and strategic context of actions taken at the tactical level? Did they even believe that tactical decisions and events could have strategic impact? Were leaders proactive, agile and holistic enough to deal with the tactical realities of combat on the strategic stage? Did leaders' prioritize media engagements to achieve strategic success even with tactical failures? This monograph will use two actions to show a lack of vision and leadership in understanding the effects of good STRATCOMs. The Patrick Tillman case in Afghanistan and Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq are both examples that had enormous ramifications on both National support and International opinion. This monograph will use both examples to illustrate a complete underestimation by the military leadership of how fast information is transmitted globally. Additionally, outdated military system of media engagements slowed reaction to media requests, and poor vision to see the second and third order effects in the use of tactical failures by adversaries to gain strategic support. The failure by the US Military to understand and adapt to these realities resulted in negative effects in planning and execution of combat operations and also a failure in effective communications tied to the strategic vision of National Policy.

## **Structure and Method**

The purpose of this monograph is to analyze the military definition and understanding of STRATCOMs and how the Department of Defense applies National level understanding of the definition. This monograph will further examine the practical application of STRATCOMS in military operations now and in the future. Finally, this monograph will propose a possible way to incorporate lessons learned to streamline and decentralize the use of all sources of engagement to maximize STRATCOM by the military in support of National Objectives.

What is the historic use and understanding of STRATCOMs in military doctrine? This monograph will look at the use of the term “STRATCOM” in military doctrine and the incorporation of Department of Defense policies and vision into this doctrine. This doctrinal review will not be all-inclusive, but it will include key Joint and Service manuals applicable to understanding the military’s vision of STRATCOM compared to the Department of Defense’s vision.

Second, this monograph will discuss how technology has created a highly complex and multi-cultural problem both nationally and internationally for implementation of US Foreign Policy Objectives. Included in this discussion will be the cultural aspects of nuclear weapons policies during the Cold War. The United States and the Soviet Union, the two competing Superpowers, were embattled in a “War of Ideas” between democracy and communism and how the “Strategic Context” of both nations played heavily during this period of history. How applicable are these lessons learned in current military operations? The intent here is to apply

usable lessons learned with today's challenges and the War of Ideas between western societies and radical extremists.

How effective is the military at understanding and using STRATCOMs in accomplishing missions? This monograph will look at examples of STRATCOMs in current military operations and how effective they have been in implementing any of the lessons learned in terms of second and third order effects strategically, and military vision tied to US National Objectives.

Examples from Afghanistan and Iraq will show the lack of strategic thinking and vision by military leadership as well as a reluctance to change systems to apply STRATCOMS in support of National Policies.

Finally, this monograph will propose strategies to change the military cultures on STRATCOMS to both accomplish mission objectives and achieve the foreign policy objectives of the Nation. How has the military culture affected the use of STRATCOMs in operations? Thomas L Friedman's visualization of globalization shows a complex problem facing developed countries. His view, compounded by personal accounts in both Afghanistan and Iraq, is the basis for this paper. The military must evolve holistically in understanding the strategic impact of military operations as well as transform outdated systems to harness all available means in the information age to accomplish both military objectives and communicate National Foreign Policy.

## **SECTION 1: Doctrine and Strategic Communications**

### **The Origin of the Term**

In order to understand the way ahead in terms of STRATCOMs, a history on the term's use in doctrine is critical. Prior to the events of 11 September 2001, there was a common understanding that military operations in support of the national strategy had to keep national and international constraints and limitations on all aspects of operations into account to understand and solve the problems faced in combat. By understanding this, planning could harness all aspects of National power to achieve success. Unfortunately, policies and procedures failed to harness modern technologies and synchronize national vision across the Department of Defense and other governmental agencies to meet the challenges of the future. The first reference to the term "STRATCOM" was by the United States Air Force in their Public Affairs Operations Manual published in October 1999, but this reference applied STRATCOMs as a separate component of information communications.<sup>8</sup> Despite this, the vision for the Public Affairs community by the Air Force saw a definite need for commanders to understand the effects of the global information environment on military objectives. The manual defines the global environment as individuals, organizations, or systems that collect process and disseminate information worldwide; the vision statement succinctly acknowledged the effects of modern technology to transmit instantly real-time information to influence domestic and international policy-makers effecting any military action<sup>9</sup>. While this manual was specifically for Public Affairs Officers in the Air Force, it clearly illustrates the complex challenges that military commanders face with the evolution of technology and the global information environment. It

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<sup>8</sup> The United States Department of the Air Force, Doctrine Document 2-5.4, *Public Affairs Operations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1999), 22.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Air Force Doctrine 2-5.4, 4-5.

further acknowledges that leaders will be unable to control the speed of these new world technologies physically. No other military doctrine addressed the term until 2006.

Why was the Air Force seven years ahead of the rest of the military in understanding the implications of STRATCOMs in modern combat? One possibility could be the Air Force's hard lessons learned from the unfortunate bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on 7 May 1999 during NATO actions in Yugoslavia five months before publication of the manual. Despite incredible success in stopping the ethnic cleansing conducted by Slobodan Milosevic's regime, the incident did nothing but complicate Western efforts to secure a diplomatic settlement to the Kosovo conflict and created new strains in US-Chinese relations that already hampered by the Chinese opposition to the bombing campaign from its onset.<sup>10</sup> Publicly, a poor reaction to media requests following the bombing resulted in initial reports of a stray bomb followed up by reports of faulty intelligence resulting in the actual targeting of the embassy. This poor interaction with the media did nothing but further speculations of a cover-up.<sup>11</sup> Traditional media outlets lacked credible sources of information and reluctance by leaders to address the problem forced media outlets to search out any source fueling conspiracy theories popping up overnight on the internet claiming everything from a deliberate target planned by President Clinton himself, to a military-planned target designed to embarrass the Clinton Administration by the military establishment.<sup>12</sup> In the end, huge amounts of man-hours and leadership were tied up in the strategic consequences of a tactical mistake.

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<sup>10</sup> Daniel Williams, *NATO Missiles Hit Chinese Embassy* (Washington: Washington Post, 8 May 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Brent Sadler, CNN.COM: "CNN Reports" (<http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9905/08/kosovo.03/>, 8 May 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Mike Head, World Socialist Web Site: "How could the bombing of the Chinese embassy have been a mistake?" (<http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/may1999/bomb-m10.shtml>, 10 May 1999).

## Joint Doctrine

Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations (JP 3-0)*, provides the best doctrinal reference to the evolution of the term STRATCOM. Early editions used terms synonymous to STRATCOMs, but the actual term did not appear until the 17 September 2006 edition. It was in this edition that the term STRATCOM was first defined:

Strategic Communications (SC) is focused USG efforts to understand and engage key audiences in order to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power.<sup>13</sup>

While previous versions of the JP 3-0 did not use this term, it did emphasize the need for strategic planning to incorporate the “Geostrategic Context.” The 1995 version of JP 3-0 discussed Geostrategic Context as incorporating both domestic and international influences to include: political and/or diplomatic long and short term causes for crisis; domestic influences including public will, competing demands for resources, political, economic, legal, and moral constraints; international interests that include hostile, coalition, and neutral countries, international law, positions of international organizations, and other competing or distracting international situations.<sup>14</sup> While the previous edition talked about strategic context in terms of operational planning for joint operations, the 2001 version added Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) to this strategic context. In dealing with full spectrum operational planning, the understanding of the geostrategic context did not change. Specific tasks for the Combatant Commander included the employment of forces to deter adversary action and to integrate and

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<sup>13</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2006), I-6.

<sup>14</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-0: Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1995), B-1.

synchronize other elements of National Power.<sup>15</sup> Despite the interagency flavor addressed in the 2001 version, it did not provide any vision or method on how to achieve this other than the physical requirement to plan for it.

Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 17 SEP 06 was the first version of joint doctrine to discuss the need for STRATCOMs for all combatant commands. More importantly, it identified the need to synchronize this strategy across all geographic commands to defeat adversaries through strategies to include:

- Direct and continuous military action coordinated with Other Governmental Agencies (OGA) to apply the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power within their geographic areas.
- Attacking in concert with multinational partners to defeat the threat before it reaches US borders.
- Preemptively attacking in self-defense those adversaries that pose an unmistakable threat of grave harm and which cannot otherwise be deterred.
- Denying future sponsorship, support, or sanctuary through cooperation or by convincing states to perform their international responsibilities.<sup>16</sup>

While the 2006 version only provided the definition and the above strategies, it did provide the basic guideline for both interagency and international coordination for the advancement of national interests using National Policy directives. It does not delegate the authority or responsibility for STRATCOM to any one entity, but gave a basic vision for Combatant Commanders to not only coordinate and synchronize their efforts across all geographic commands, but also allows for interagency synchronization across the whole of government.

The newest version of Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations*, 13 FEB 2008, further expands the definition and use of STRATCOMs for operational use and planning. While

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<sup>15</sup> United States Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0: *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2001), I-4.

<sup>16</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0, 2006, I-7.

the definition remains the same as the previous edition, the latest version states that the United States Government uses STRATCOM to provide top-down guidance relative to using the informational instruments of national power in specific situations.<sup>17</sup> This is the first account in joint doctrine that provides a perception that STRATCOMs is not a tool for geographic Combatant Commanders for either planning or execution, but rather a tool for the National Command Authority to provide direction and guidance. While this does not mean the Department of Defense does not play a role, it dilutes the responsibility across all elements of national public diplomacy. To help assign responsibilities to the Combatant Commander, the publication continues to describe predominant military activities that support STRATCOM themes and messages to include information operations (IO), public affairs (PA), and defense support to public diplomacy (DSPD) and makes no reference to the significance of operational leaders in theater planning or communicating these ideas.<sup>18</sup> Using this joint doctrine as the primary guidance for STRATCOMs implies that it is the responsibility of the whole of government and the National Command Authority to provide top-down guidance for all branches of government supporting within each of their respective activities, the military's being IO, PA, and DSPD. Nowhere does it recommend the use of STRATCOMs down to and including the tactical level of command.

### **Department of Defense Task Force on Strategic Communications**

Before examining the current military service manual's use of the term STRATCOM, it is important to discuss policy-level initiatives that have helped shape the

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<sup>17</sup> United States Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0: *Joint Operations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2008), I-2.

<sup>18</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0, 2008, I-2.

understanding of the term. The most significant of these initiatives was conducted by the Department of Defense, Defense Science Board (DSB). This board was established in 1956 on a recommendation of the Hoover Commission, for the Assistant Secretary of Defense to appoint a standing committee to conduct basic research, component research, and further the advancement of technology in areas of interest to the Department of Defense.<sup>19</sup> The DSBs charter is to provide insight to the pressing and complex technology problems facing the Department of Defense in such areas as research, engineering, and manufacturing, and will ensure the identification of new technologies and new applications of technology in those areas to strengthen national security.<sup>20</sup> In 2004, the DSB held its first conference on STRATCOMS when they formed a Task Force on STRATCOMs (DSBTF) consisting of representatives from the National Security Council, White House Office of Global Communications, Department of State, the Department of Defense, Broadcasting Board of Governors and the academic and private sectors.<sup>21</sup> The final report, published in September 2004, concluded that STRATCOMs must be transformed, and is vital to US national security and foreign policy. The report outlined seven summary recommendations that would greatly improve the ability of the United States to communicate with and thereby influence worldwide audiences (TABLE 1). In addition to the scope, purpose and definition of STRATCOMs, the DSBTF clearly states that effective STRATCOMs can not only prevent a crisis from developing, but it can help diffuse a crisis after it has developed, with the specific purpose of winning the battle of ideas as it pertains to National

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<sup>19</sup> United States Department of Defense, Defense Science Board: *History of the Defense Science Board* (<http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/history.htm>, 2009), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Defense Science Board: Charter of the Defense Science Board, 1.

<sup>21</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communications* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2004), Cover Letter.

Policy.<sup>22</sup> This report spelled out the critical need for the United States to credibly communicate to populations throughout the world in order to achieve its national objectives. The DSBTF

- (1) *Recommends that the President issue a directive to:*
- (a) *strengthen the U.S. Government's ability to understand global public opinion, advise on the strategic implications of policymaking, and communicate with global audiences;*
  - (b) *coordinate all components of strategic communication including public diplomacy, public affairs, international broadcasting, and military information operations;*
  - (c) *provide a foundation for new legislation on the planning, coordination, conduct, and funding of strategic communication.*
- (2) *Recommends that the President should establish a permanent strategic communication structure within the NSC and work with Congress to create legislation and funding for a:*
- *Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communication*
  - *Strategic Communication Committee within the NSC*
  - *Independent, non-profit, non-partisan Center for Strategic Communication*
- (3) *Recommends that the President work with Congress to create legislation and funding for an independent, non-profit and non-partisan Center for Strategic Communication to support the NSC and the departments and organizations represented on its Strategic Communication Committee. The Center should be guided by three purposes:*
- *Provide information and analysis on a regular basis to civilian and military decision makers on issues vital to U.S. national security including global public opinion; the role of culture, values, and religion in shaping human behavior; media trends and influences on audiences, information technologies, the implications of all source intelligence assessments, and non-departmental, non-political advice that will sharpen their judgment and provide a basis for informed choices.*
  - *Develop mandated and self-initiated plans, themes, products and programs for the creation and implementation of U.S. communications strategies that embrace diplomatic opportunities and respond to national security threats.*
  - *Support government strategic communications through services provided on a cost recovery basis that mobilize non-governmental initiatives; foster cross-cultural exchanges of ideas, people, and information; maintain knowledge management systems, language and skills inventories, and procedures to recruit private sector experts for short term assignments, deploy temporary communications teams; augment planning, recruitment, and training; and continually monitor and evaluate effectiveness.*
- (4) *Recommends that the Secretary of State redefine the role and responsibility of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to be both policy advisor and manager for public diplomacy.*
- (5) *Recommends that public diplomacy office directors in the Department of State should be at the level of deputy assistant secretary or senior advisor to the Assistant Secretary.*
- (6) *Recommends that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy should act as the DOD focal point for strategic communication and serve as the Department's principal on the NSC's Strategic Communication Coordinating Committee. Coordinate strategic communication activities with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs and the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.*
- (7) *Recommends that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Joint Chiefs of Staff ensure that all military plans and operations have appropriate strategic communication components, ensure collaboration with the Department of State's diplomatic missions and with theater security cooperation plans; and extend U.S. STRATCOM's and U.S. SOCOM's Information Operations responsibilities to include DoD support for public diplomacy.*

SUMMARIZED RECOMMENDATIONS OF DSB TASK FORCE ON STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS<sup>23</sup>

TABLE 1

<sup>22</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, i.

<sup>23</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 6-9.

concluded that STRATCOMs must be transformed if America is to reverse negative world opinion and counteract the enemy's destructive objectives and agenda. This transformation must go beyond the basics of harnessing technologies and emphasizes that, "Leadership Counts".<sup>24</sup>

The DSBTF did an outstanding job in succinctly defining the problem that America faces with globalization as being engaged in a generational and global struggle about ideas, not a war between the West and Islam. In order to be successful in this struggle, the nation must stop concentrating solely on state actors, and must think in terms of global networks, both governmental and non-governmental.<sup>25</sup> With the end of the Cold War and the events of 11 September 2001, America embarked on a national strategy very similar to the successful Cold War model used against Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism. The term "War on Terrorism" was coined as a struggle against another form of totalitarianism.<sup>26</sup> The report is quick to point out that America is not engaged in another Cold War struggle. While the enemy's objectives are manifested in radical Muslim ideals, the strategic context facing America is that U.S. policies and actions are seen by the overwhelming majority of Muslims as a threat to the survival of Islam itself.<sup>27</sup>

All seven recommendations are policy-level and procedural-level recommendations designed to counter the threat and solidify authorities at the policy level of government. These recommendations are clearly designed to counter a repetitious pattern of hollow authorities and ineffectual committees that the board said could no longer be afforded.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 2.

<sup>25</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 2.

<sup>26</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 34.

<sup>27</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 35.

<sup>28</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 61.

When looking at this report operationally, it is clear that the recommendations for the Department of Defense centered on synchronizing interagency coordination for both planning and monitoring of military strategic initiatives. More importantly, military commanders and planners can gain significant insight to the holistic approach expected by policy-level authorities in the accomplishment of military operations in support of national objectives.

In addition to policy recommendations and insight to the future of STRATCOMs, the DSBTF provided a comprehensive view of what the term STRATCOM should mean. The DSBTF saw an inability of the Nation to communicate ideas in crisis, and that STRATCOMs must be transformed by addressing it with the same commitment that the nation places in its defense, homeland security, and intelligence.<sup>29</sup> The board defined this transformation of communications as requiring a sophisticated method that maps perception and influences networks, identifies policy priorities, formulates objectives, focuses on “doable tasks,” develops themes and messages, employs relevant channels, leverages new strategic and tactical dynamics, and monitors success. To do this, the DSBTF sees STRATCOMs as an innovative and aggressive approach to not only understand other cultures, but to determine ways to motivate human behavior throughout the global audience by seeking out credible messengers using a dialogue of ideas, and to realize the need for decades of sustained effort.<sup>30</sup> While the recommendations provided in the final report were very much focused on streamlining authorities, the vision the report gave was of a complete transformation of culture across the whole of government. This need for a cultural shift is stated in the final report, “We need to move beyond outdated concepts, stale structural models and institutionally based labels. Public

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<sup>29</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 2.

<sup>30</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 2.

diplomacy, public affairs, psychological operations (PSYOP) and open military information operations must be coordinated and energized.”<sup>31</sup> Having a proactive approach to STRATCOMs is the only way that national objectives can be achieved in the future. The DSBTF effectively conveyed the need to be ahead of the enemy’s thought process and not just inside his decision cycle. In the age of advanced communications, the DSBTF eloquently described the need for change in stating “Being reactive to outside information is tantamount to losing.”<sup>32</sup>

### **DSBTF and Implementation in Joint Doctrine**

How has the work of the DSBTF been captured in Joint Doctrine? It was almost four years between the publishing of the final results of the DSBTF and the publishing of the current version of Joint Doctrine in Joint Publication 3-0. Despite that, the vision, emphasis and holistic approach identified in the report were not translated into joint doctrine. The DSBTF convened again in 2008 as a follow-up to the board of 2004 with additional recommendations as well as an assessment of the previous recommendations implemented. The overall assessment was that the United States will fail in meeting 21<sup>st</sup> century national security challenges if it does not take existing government collaboration with civil society to a new level.<sup>33</sup> They concluded that while positive steps had been taken, they were based considerably on the skills and imagination of current leaders and not based on the implementation of previous

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<sup>31</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 3.

<sup>32</sup> 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board, 38.

<sup>33</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communications* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2008), xii.

recommendations. It was also clear that the biggest challenge faced in implementing the recommendations was the continued resistance from traditional organizational cultures.<sup>34</sup>

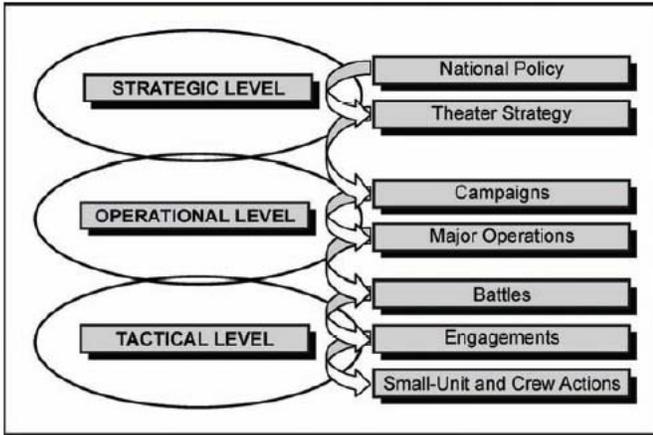
### **Service Level Doctrine for Strategic Communications**

The question remains why has joint doctrine failed to address STRATCOMs with the same importance as the DSBTF? It is significant to point out that the latest Army Doctrine on Operations, published February 2008, did not even contain the term STRATCOM and is one example of the cultural challenges faced by the Nation. Doctrine is manifested in the culture of those who write it, and “Strategic” is viewed by the Army as a level of war as opposed to the reach and capability available globally in the Information Age (TABLE 2). FM 3-0 did, however, address information and how it applies to combat power on the modern battlefield in the face of technology and globalization. Additionally, effective information engagements by commanders are necessary to shape the operational environment as part of on-going operations.<sup>35</sup> The most significant aspect of doctrine in the new manual includes the all-encompassing role of information in all elements of combat power (TABLE 3). It is here that the basis of information, and how it applies to all aspects of operational missions, diverges from what the Department of Defense seeks in STRATCOMs. While Army doctrine uses information in support of the mission, the Defense Science Board sees the mission as a supporting function for information. While this appears as a subtle difference, it strikes at the heart of how the military culture must adapt to a more holistic approach needed in planning and leadership in the Information Age.

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<sup>34</sup> 2008 Report of the Defense Science Board, xi.

<sup>35</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 3-0: *Operations* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2008), 1-8.



FM 3-0, FIGURE 6-1, Levels of War

TABLE 2<sup>36</sup>

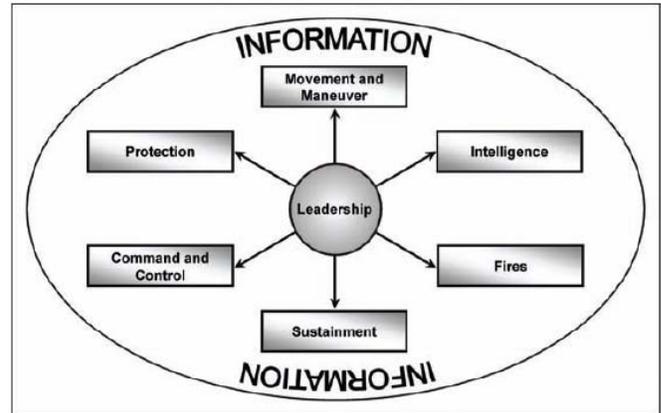


Figure 4-1. The elements of combat power

TABLE 3<sup>37</sup>

This new holistic approach in STRATCOMs is best observed in the U.S. Marine Corp STRATCOM Plan published in July 2007 and can be applied to not only all branches of the military service, but directly to every combatant command and even the whole of government. While not all-inclusive in terms of the current fight faced as a Nation, the holistic approach that it uses on mission support, mission readiness and mission sustainment is exactly what the DSBTF sees as an innovative and holistic approach. The Marine Corps' definition of STRATCOMs states that this is a Service-Level process that integrates activities across all informational functions and engages key audiences to achieve effects consistent with Marine Corps interests, policies and objectives, extending well beyond the principle communication missions of the Marine Headquarters Agencies,<sup>36</sup> and it must include leaders from across the Corps. Despite being completely "Marine-Centric", this definition shows an aggressive, decentralized vision that is

<sup>36</sup> FM 3-0: *Operations*, 6-2.

<sup>37</sup> FM 3-0: *Operations*, 4-1.

necessary to change the leadership culture: Every leader is a recruiter, advocate, spokesperson, and statesman.<sup>38</sup> While an assumption must be made that Marine Corps Interests are in line with US Interests, the policy clearly shows how technology has bridged a gap between strategic interests and the ability of leadership at all levels of the military having strategic impact. This capstone 12-page document provides not only this holistic definition, but provides leaders with key themes that resonate not only to the Nation's Support, but also Allies, Adversaries, and the Marine Corps itself. More important than the vision and themes, it addresses the use of traditional news media and "new" media and interpersonal transactions that encourage supportive behavior.<sup>39</sup> Definitions provided for each of these engagements include:

- **Mass Media:** Media specifically designed to reach a very large audience regionally and globally that includes newspapers, television, radio, broadcasting and publishing.
- **New Media:** This is continually developing technologies and communication methods typically internet related.
- **Third Party Spokespersons:** These are influencers within key audiences that are informed enough to articulate priorities or positions on specific issues. They are available within every key audience and developing these relationships within key audiences is vital to broadening their understanding.
- **Academia:** These are institutions and "think tanks" typically involved in law-making and policy-making.<sup>40</sup>

The Commandant of the Marine Corps has specifically tasked the Marine Strategic Communication Council (SCC) with the implementation of this plan, but he clearly states that every leader across the Corps must read and understand the plan simply because success in the Nation's current fight depends on this holistic plan.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps: *Strategic Communication Plan* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2007), .1

<sup>39</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, 6.

<sup>40</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, 6-7.

<sup>41</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, 8.

This section has taken a deep look into the development of STRATCOMs into doctrine. From the highest levels of the Department of Defense and the work of the DSBTF, to the implementation of lessons learned since 11 SEP 01, there is a wide disparity in the understanding of what STRATCOM is. From STRATCOMs being a top-down direction from national authority to being a holistic approach where every leader implements STRATCOMs, the doctrine is too broad to generate a common understanding or effectively help change the military culture in terms of information engagements. The military as a whole has been ineffective in harnessing the capabilities of modern STRATCOMs and this lack of understanding is illustrated in the diverse meanings found in current doctrine. As stated by the DSBTF, ‘the United States will fail in meeting 21<sup>st</sup> century national security challenges if it does not take existing government collaboration with civil society to a new level.’<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> 2008 Report of the Defense Science Board, xii.

## **SECTION 2: Strategic Context of Culture and the Borderless Culture**

### **The Virtual Caliphate and Cultural Context**

Thomas Friedman pointed out that a century ago, anarchists were limited in their ability to communicate and collaborate with one another, to find sympathizers, and to band together. With global communication systems like the internet available today to anyone, this collaboration and ability to band together globally is not a problem.<sup>43</sup> A “Virtual Caliphate” has been established by terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda to not only reach out and recruit those sympathetic to their cause, but also to provide propaganda necessary in soliciting funds to train, support and expand extremist ideals. The Nation, and all developed countries, therefore, are in a war against an enemy like none before. The terrorist movement has taken root in Radical Muslim ideals, but could have easily taken the form of any radical group with the ability to mass through global networks. The current enemy is a non-state foe with no geographic borders that strikes intermittently on a global scale to promulgate their agenda. This agenda is easily transmitted globally with the strike of a button either by email or by postings on virtually limitless web sites around the world. Their very existence is outside the parameters of traditional state player’s and has enabled people to seek or transmit common ideas and ideals in a borderless society that is not tied to the global responsibilities or authorities of traditional state players.

Understanding the “Cultural Context” of the Nation’s adversaries is not a new concept and it plays heavily on US foreign policy. In September 1977, during the height of the Cold War, Jack L. Snyder, Rand Corporation, wrote a report for the United States Air Force on implications for limited use of nuclear weapons in a crisis. As the two Superpowers faced off and divided the world, it was well understood that both countries faced certain annihilation in a

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<sup>43</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 431.

full nuclear war. In January 1974, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger announced the development of limited nuclear targeting as a supplement to the massive use option that previously existed and this report was produced to help identify Soviet reaction to this limited use option.<sup>44</sup> In describing the Soviet reaction, Snyder identified that Soviet Leadership, just like American Leadership, will make decisions based on their culture and experiences. The report helped clarify and explain origins, attitudes, and behaviors that were peculiar to American observers and the Soviet Culture.<sup>45</sup> Snyder defined “Strategic Culture” as the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior acquired through instruction or imitation.<sup>46</sup> It was through this cultural lens that Snyder concluded that the limited nuclear option might provide an effective means of demonstrating resolve, inflicting pain, and coercing the opponent.<sup>47</sup>

While seemingly outdated, this understanding of the enemy during the Cold War can directly apply to the stateless terrorists that threaten the Nation with both conventional terror and the possibility of weapons of mass destruction. Numerous reports by the US Defense Threat Reduction Agency address the complexity this threat poses to all nations. Until recently, their reports on Strategic Culture did not address the effects that globalization can have on the construction of a strategic cultural identity.<sup>48</sup> But the reports did acknowledge that understanding Strategic Culture from its inception in the 1970s has been critical for policy-making in providing: analysis of the threat, considering cultural context where conflict is

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<sup>44</sup> Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Option* (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1977), 1.

<sup>45</sup> Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture*, v.

<sup>46</sup> Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture*, 8.

<sup>47</sup> Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture*, 2.

<sup>48</sup> Darryl Howlett, *The Future of Strategic Culture* (Washington: SAIC, 2006), 6.

underway, and helping in negotiations aimed at inducing peaceful relations after hostilities cease.<sup>49</sup> Invariably, the question arises: can non-state actors be a culture or represent a culture? There are arguments for both, but globalization has significantly changed the landscape for cultural identity. It has enabled terrorist groups to conduct deadly operations outside of traditional borders which complicate the basic concept of “threat” in international relations simply because they operate inside traditional state borders with or without the state’s consent. Understanding the complex nature of this enemy, a foreign state’s support for this enemy, a foreign states inability to control this enemy inside their borders, and the enemy’s ability to hide within any population makes combating the threat even more difficult.<sup>50</sup> Terrorists use the global reach of the internet to establish bonds tied to culture, religion, and ideology, bonds directly attributed to traditional states in the past, with religion being most important bond.<sup>51</sup> Globalization and technology has created unlawful actors tied only to the boundaries of the virtual world and they are a threat to all sovereign nations and populations. By both understanding the threat the Nation faces and countering this threat, the military must adapt to the realities of globalization and effectively use technology in support of National security goals.

### **The Threat**

In his book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington discusses how modernization is creating a “Universal Civilization.” He defines this civilization as the cultural coalescing of humanity and the increasing acceptance of common values, beliefs, orientations,

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<sup>49</sup> Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture*, 4.

<sup>50</sup> Jeffrey S. Lantis, *Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism* (Washington: SAIC, 2006), 24.

<sup>51</sup> Lantis, *Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism*, 23-24.

practices, and institutions throughout the world.<sup>52</sup> He further contends that states are part of broader civilizations that share strong bonds of culture, societal values, religion, and ideologies, with religion being the central defining characteristic and the most important of these bonds.<sup>53</sup> So globalization has created a good “cultural coming together” with an end result of acceptance of all cultures and world peace. Counter to this, however, the enemy, in the form of Muslim Extremists, have viewed this “cultural coming together” much differently by isolating their own beliefs as the only acceptable culture for the world and will use violence to protect it. How do traditional states fight this borderless enemy? The enemy has manipulated the good technology of globalization to harness the strength for his resistance on a global scale. While Radical Islam has been around for centuries, it has taken root in the preaching of Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaida. His complaints against America are numerous (Table 1), but his basic belief that the United States and the West are the root of the Muslim World’s problems has remarkable traction globally.<sup>54</sup> While most terrorist organizations prior to Al Qaida were organized and structured internal to states, effective use of technology made this organization explode into a worldwide, religiously-inspired Islamist movement that promotes unaffiliated activists from across the world as well as sympathizers, all globally connected.<sup>55</sup> If America is to prevail in this war against Radical Islam, it must win at the “War of Ideas.” This is where understanding culture and success meet.

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<sup>52</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster Inc, 1996), 56.

<sup>53</sup> Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, 47.

<sup>54</sup> Daniel Byman, *The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2008), 22.

<sup>55</sup> Byman, *The Five Front War*, 31-37.

### **Osama Bin Ladin's Complaints Against the United States**

- Blasphemous Military Presence: Stationing of US and Western Forces in the Middle East is America's greatest sin.
- Destruction and Enslavement of Iraq
- Blinding Bias Towards Israel
- Support For Corrupt Regimes in Muslim World
- Subordination of the Muslim World: The US seeks to undermine any effort by Muslim Nations to gain strength.
- Creation of a Hegemonic International System: International structures created since World War II (NATO, EU, United Nations, etc.)
- A Willingness to Tolerate or even Inflict Muslim Deaths in Struggles Around the World

TABLE 1<sup>56</sup>

### **Winning the War of Ideas**

Was America fully prepared to fight this war after 9-11? The simple answer appears to be “No.” In his original report on strategic culture, Jack Snyder acknowledges that governments and policy makers are slow to change when faced with new technologies and that policies and strategy can long outlive the conditions for which they were developed.<sup>57</sup> So, all the good brought about by globalization seemed to mask the evil purposes of the current enemy to produce mayhem and murder instead of productivity and profit.<sup>58</sup> Could America see the threats of globalization when surrounded by all the benefits? Possibly. But as fast as technology spread globally, America's value for freedom of speech did not help the slow nature of government see the reality fast enough to prevent it. America is adapting slowly, but with the highest post for public diplomacy being the Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy, the “War of Ideas”

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<sup>56</sup> Byman, *The Five Front War*, 10-11.

<sup>57</sup> Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture*, v.

<sup>58</sup> Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 429.

has no direct representation with the National Command Authority when it comes to policy decisions.<sup>59</sup> When coupled with the transparency built into the US Constitution, American culture often plays directly into the hands of the enemy.<sup>60</sup> What Americans see as equality for women, the enemy sees as shameless promotion of female sexuality. In the age of satellite television and the internet, America's image is transmitted at the blink of an eye across the world. Even small news items directed to American audiences like protests held at funerals of Soldier killed in Iraq or Afghanistan are acceptable to national values of freedom of speech, but their weight has huge ramifications when transmitted globally.

Since 9-11, America has made some changes in public diplomacy and information collection and management, but this process has been slow and with limited progress.<sup>61</sup> The topic of this monograph is not about the needed changes in National Policy to fight Radical Islam; it is, instead, about the military's role in support of National security and policies. Regardless of National Policies, the military is on the frontline of this fight and right in the heart of the same audiences that terrorist networks want to win over. It is debatable if the American Public is in tune with the sacrifices the military is making in this fight against Muslim Extremists, but their support is critical for not only the morale of current Soldiers, but also the holistic nature of recruiting, training and maintaining a professional force. If the American Public sees this war as unwinnable, it will be. The Military is also waging this "War of Ideas" right in the heart of enemy's support base abroad. If they understand the enemy and the nature of the culture that provides that enemy's support base, they will certainly be defeated. But this can only be done from the ground up. Day to day interaction with the Muslim culture happens

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<sup>59</sup> Byman, *The Five Front War*, 181.

<sup>60</sup> Byman, *The Five Front War*, 181.

<sup>61</sup> Byman, *The Five Front War*, 190.

on the battlefield. If this interaction is not collected and managed using the same tools the enemy is capable of using to transmit their agenda, this fight will be lost. Old systems of information management and control must be streamlined and modernized to match the enemy's capability. Failing to do so will prevent the military from winning this "War of Ideas" in support of the Nations objectives.

### **SECTION 3: The Military and the War of Ideas**

Two premier authors on modern military professionalism and the role of the professional military in American culture are Samuel P. Huntington and Morris Janowitz. They provide in-depth looks at the military professional's understanding of themselves as well as the role of professional military leaders in American National Policy. In his book *Soldier and the State*, Huntington discussed in detail the role of the military officer in implementing state decisions with respect to military security of the nation, even if it is a decision that runs violently counter to his military judgment. This responsibility must balance both world strategy and policy and the military leader must always be alert to the political implications of their attitudes. Regardless, military leaders must be willing to accept the final decision of the statesman.<sup>62</sup> The military profession exists solely to serve the state.

Morris Janowitz, in *The Professional Soldier*, sees diplomacy as critical in war as well and sees the future of the military professional critically tied to the balance between organizational stability and adaptation to rapid technology and political change.<sup>63</sup> He unfortunately saw leadership more concerned about stability than adaptation. He stated that military leadership maintains outmoded organizational forms tied to military traditionalism that implies rigid commitment to the political status quo, a genuine belief in the inevitability of war, and a lack of concern with the social and political consequences of warfare.<sup>64</sup> Both men agree, though, that military professionals are an essential arm of foreign policy and needed in key decisions both publically and privately to support elected leaders in the execution of those

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<sup>62</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), 72-73.

<sup>63</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (New York: The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan Publishing Company Inc, 1971), 417.

<sup>64</sup> Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 22.

foreign policies. While military leadership's support for the current battle against Terrorism can be seen as adequate, the military has failed to adapt to the advances in technology and its understanding of the second-order and third-order effects associated with tactical and strategic decisions. This has placed the military on the defensive and reactive to both the enemy and the technology to which they failed to adapt. The examples that follow are not designed to fix the specifics of the situation presented. They are both used to illustrate the poor vision of leadership associated with these failures and provide some insight into innovative and adaptive ways of winning this "War of Ideas" and transmitting America's core message in foreign policy: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

### **Corporal Patrick D. Tillman**

No one event better illustrates the military's lack of vision and comprehension of second-order and third-order effects than the case of Pat Tillman. Tillman was drafted into the National Football League in 1998 and was a starting safety for the Arizona Cardinals who mesmerized the Nation by turning down a multimillion-dollar contract to join the Army after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.<sup>65</sup> He enlisted in the Army for three years during which he completed Infantry Basic Training, Airborne School and Ranger School at Fort Benning, GA and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment at Fort Lewis Washington. He was deployed to combat in Iraq in March 2003 and was in Afghanistan on his second combat tour when he was killed by friendly fire on 22 April 2004.<sup>66</sup> As expected, his death gained the same

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<sup>65</sup> Brian Fitzgerald, USA Today, "Report: Army Knew Tillman Died from Friendly Fire" ([http://www.usatoday.com/sports/football/2005-05-04-tillman-investigation\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/sports/football/2005-05-04-tillman-investigation_x.htm), 4 May 2005).

<sup>66</sup> Mike Fish, ESPN.COM, "Timeline: An Un American Tragedy" (<http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/eticket/story?page=tillmantimeline>, 2006).

amount of media attention as his enlistment did. Slow and inaccurate reporting on his death had disastrous results on public support and the results still make headlines today, over five years later. Regardless of the events that transpired surrounding his death and subsequent reporting and missteps by the Department of Defense, this case better illustrates the huge lack of understanding or unwillingness on the military's part to harness not only the tactical value of this heroic man, but also the positive strategic impact that this Scholar-Athlete-Soldier could have done for both National support and America's image.

Patrick Tillman was a Soldier and rightfully was assigned to combat duty following completion of Infantry Basic Training. But Patrick Tillman was more than just an Infantryman. His sacrifice to enlist when the Nation needed him was noble, but his willingness to postpone the American Dream of millions of dollars as a Professional Football Player to support the country in its time of need was a critical message of selfless service for America's Youth in the form of a Public Relations Campaign. This fact was known at the highest levels of the Department of Defense and even the Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is attributed with stating; "we might want to keep an eye on him."<sup>67</sup> Understanding this, it is difficult to understand why the second and third order effects concerning the strategic impact of Corporal Tillman's story was not understood, both in his utilization as a role model and spokesman for the Army during his three years of active service, and the disastrous delays in reporting the facts of his death. Regardless of the decision on how best to utilize this Soldier for the good of the Army and the Nation, understanding the media storm that would result in the event of his death in combat would seem prudent in any planning for the second and third order

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<sup>67</sup> United States House of Representatives, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Committee Report: *Misleading Information from the Battlefield: The Tillman and Lynch Episodes* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2008), 3.

effects of the decision. To that end, the Army never was able to stay ahead of the unconscionable distraction that the poor planning produced. The unwillingness to provide relevant and timely information created a void of information that was quickly filled by speculation, particularly in the news and on the internet. Similarities to the Air Force's lessons learned in the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on 7 May 1999 are alarming in the sense that lessons were not learned. The United States House of Representatives' Report on the case says it best; "our Nation has an inviolate obligation to share truthful information with a Soldier's family and the American people." The Army let them both down by its inability to foresee the consequences of waiting almost two months to release the details to his family and America.

Why did Tillman serve two tours in combat? The Army spent \$196.9 Million in 2003 on recruiting.<sup>68</sup> It would seem that possible second and third order effects of having a Combat Veteran of Tillman's stature would have incredible strategic effects in both recruitment of Soldiers in a time of war as well as strategic value both Nationally and Internationally on the core values of this Nation and its military. There was no evidence found that suggests the military made any specific decision to send him back to combat or utilize his media recognition for Army recruitment and National support. While an argument can be made that taking advantage of the valor, commitment and service of this exceptional young man is unprofessional, the positive role model that he represents and the strategic message that he could have provided to the Nation, the war effort, and victory far outweighs the desires and needs of the individual. Celebrity status has always been a source of recruitment, National identity, support, and American values. Patrick Tillman was a Soldier and his oath of enlistment was to serve the

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<sup>68</sup> US General Accounting Office, *Military Recruiting: DOD Needs to Establish Objectives and Measures to Better Evaluate Advertising's Effectiveness* (Washington: General Accounting Office, 2003), 14.

Nation. If being used as a role model was contrary to his personal desires to serve a second combat tour, he still would have done what was asked of him as indicative of his character and desire to serve the Nation. Numerous celebrities have done the same thing in past wars yet this fact seemed to be overlooked in present day combat operations. If celebrities from World War 2, Korea and Viet Nam could be used for public support, why didn't current military leaders do the same in the current war? This lack of vision or reluctance to capitalize on this opportunity exemplifies the military's traditionalism and lack of concern with the social and political consequences of warfare that Janowitz describes.

The story of Patrick Tillman is only one of many positive stories that the military has failed to capitalize on. Every day, Soldiers in both Iraq and Afghanistan complete incredible acts of selfless service and devotion to making the world a better place. Instead of crafting these positive examples for support at home and abroad, leadership continues to be reactive and defensive to media requests alone. Combat is never a "good-news-story". Bad things will always happen when the military is called on to execute foreign policy and in no way should leadership ignore the bad news and solely report the good news. But the same can be said for ignoring the good news and only reacting to the bad news that the media world is always quick to report on. Traditional media is only one small portion of media engagements and military leaders must actively engage new technology media just as aggressively as traditional media to convey the strategic message of military operations.

### **Abu Ghraib**

No one image or event has done more to slow the war effort and damage America's image globally than the events at Abu Ghraib Prison in 2003. The picture of Iraqi

prisoners being brutalized and humiliated continues to provide propaganda for the enemy and cuts deep into America's impression of its military. Between October and December of 2003, there were numerous instances of "sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses" perpetrated by Soldiers of the 372nd Military Police Company and members of the intelligence community at Abu Ghraib Prison.<sup>69</sup> On 13 January 2004, a Soldier from the police company gave criminal investigators a compact disk containing abusive digital photos he obtained from another Soldier in the unit. LTG Ricardo Sanchez immediately ordered an investigation and was presented with findings of the abuse on 3 March 2004. Before the story was aired by CBS on 28 April 2004, 16 personnel were relieved of duty and seven were charged with criminal offenses.<sup>70</sup> There is no single or simple explanation for why the abuses occurred, but the primary causes were misconduct by a small group of morally corrupt Soldiers and civilians, a lack of discipline on the part of the leaders of the brigade, and a failure or lack of leadership by multiple echelons within the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF).<sup>71</sup> Similar to the Patrick Tillman incident, the magnitude of the problem as well as second and third order effects of the situation were ignored until the media broke the story and once again surprised the Department of Defense by the strategic impact of the event and overwhelmed the military leadership's response to the media, the Nations outcry, and the enemies propaganda internationally.

The chain of command knew of the abuses for well over three months before they were reported in the media. Despite that, nothing was done to mitigate the strategic impact of the

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<sup>69</sup>Seymour M. Hersh, "Annals of National Security: Torture at Abu Ghraib", *The New Yorker* ([http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/10/040510FA\\_FACT?CURRENTPAGE=ALL](http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/10/040510FA_FACT?CURRENTPAGE=ALL), 2004).

<sup>70</sup>Melissa Cirillo, *American Journalism Review: Abu Ghraib Timeline* (<http://www.ajr.org/article.asp?id=3730>, 2004).

<sup>71</sup>Anthony Jones, LTG, *AR 15-6 Investigation and Executive Summary: Abu Ghraib Prison and 205th Military Intelligence Brigade* (Washington: United States Army, 2004), 3.

incident. It is almost impossible to believe that leadership did not see the impact these photos would have on the mission given the reality or even perceptions of the digital images, the internet, and undisciplined Soldiers. Initial reporting of the abuses was communicated quickly to the CJTF Commander. By his own admission though, LTG Sanchez did not transmit them to more senior officials because of he did not want to interfere with or influence an active investigation.<sup>72</sup> Only when the photos were to be released on CBS did the military leadership outside of the CJTF understand the explosive impact the photos would have around the world.<sup>73</sup> Was the legal prosecution of a few undisciplined Soldiers more important than the mission and maintaining the moral edge over the enemy strategically? There is no doubt that the decision to delay the realities of the atrocities at Abu Ghraib Prison gave the enemy plenty of propaganda to recruit more insurgents that ultimately led to more American deaths and lengthened the war effort. Was prosecuting a few more important than the needs of the Nation and the strategic mission? It is pure speculation to say that release of the information earlier and the complete removal or prosecution of the chain of command would have changed the outcome, but it is clear that the difference would have been proactive and aggressive versus reactive and defensive. It is hard to imagine any worse of an outcome than what transpired. The lack of strategic understanding within the commands as well as their staffs proved to be one of the biggest flaws in the entire incident. Commanders and staffs alike disregarded the impact of the photos and the fact that they were in digital form.<sup>74</sup> Poor advice from staff officers kept the incident in the legal system as opposed to the correct level of command involvement with the context of mission

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<sup>72</sup> James R. Schlesinger, *Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations* (Arlington: Independent Panel, 2004), 39.

<sup>73</sup> Schlesinger, *Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations*, 40.

<sup>74</sup> Schlesinger, *Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations*, 39.

success.<sup>75</sup> While it is true that LTG Sanchez had many other issues and problems ongoing during this period of time, the argument made in the Army Regulation 15-6 Investigation of the Abu Ghraib Report that he had to prioritize resources and efforts for fighting the growing counter-insurgency, thereby saving coalition and Iraqi lives, is in direct contradiction to the impact the Abu Ghraib incident eventually had because it was not dealt with effectively.<sup>76</sup> This incident was more than a problem to be dealt with by the traditional Uniform Code of Military Justice. The fact that the gravity of the abuses was not conveyed accurately and immediately to the Secretary of Defense is unconscionable. It still remains unclear if any National leaders saw the Abu Ghraib photos until just before airing on CBS.<sup>77</sup>

### **Typewriter Leadership in a Face Book World**

How could military leaders not foresee the impact of events involving Patrick Tillman and Abu Ghraib? If they did see their impact, why was there a reluctance to act aggressively and harness technology for the strategic good of the mission? America is blessed with a highly educated and professional military, yet why was none of this foreseen? As discussed early in this chapter, the military as an organization is slow to change in the form of adaptation to advances in technology and its understanding of the second and third order effects associated with tactical and strategic decisions. Events like the two here illustrate the traditional thinking that is unprepared for the capabilities of today's technology and the limitations old systems have placed on the military. The results have forced the military into a defensive posture waiting to react to the digital world as opposed to engaged and prepared for the challenges of a complex

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<sup>75</sup> Schlesinger, *Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations*, 43.

<sup>76</sup> Jones, AR 15-6 and Executive Summary, 11.

<sup>77</sup> Schlesinger, *Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations*, 51.

environment of global communications. The military culture has slowly adapted to media advances in the past like film media in World War 2. So why has it taken so long to understand and adapt to new forms of media in combat and in the face of vast improvements of technology in modern warfare? The military's reluctance to embrace and adapt to the Information Age shows an ignorance towards the enemy's ability to capitalize on it and an arrogance towards the effects it can have on successful mission operations. The fact that most leaders below battalion level have never used a typewriter speaks volumes about the leaders above them. Instead, they are masters of video uploading, BLOGs, Search Engines, and Facebook.<sup>78</sup> "Typewriter Leaders" need to embrace the capability and resourcefulness of junior leaders and not stifle it with outdated policies by providing top-down guidance like the Marine Corps STRATCOM Plan, and allow it to be executed at the lowest levels of leadership.

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<sup>78</sup> Video uploading refers to individuals taking self-recorded video and storing them on either self-maintained or commercially-maintained internet sites available to the public. BLOG is a contraction for the term Web Log and refers to a self-maintained internet diary that is typically arranged in reverse-chronological order. These BLOGs can include text commentary, digital images, and video uploads. Search Engines are tools to search for specific content available on the World Wide Web. Facebook is a privately owned social network ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) where individuals can join networks organized by city, occupation, schools or regions to connect and interact with other people.

#### **SECTION 4: The Way Ahead**

The United States Military is the most capable and professional military in the world and, for the foreseeable future, direct confrontation by any adversary almost guarantees complete destruction. The enemy has been quick to adapt to this reality and has mastered the ability to fight from the shadows of international politics and the borderless world that globalization and technology has created. The DSBTF has outlined the need for the military to change the current mindset, but updated doctrine fails to inspire and transmit the same holistic vision that this report sees as critical to mission success. While the current enemy has capitalized on the advances of technology in transmitting their ideology globally to gain political, financial and public support, the US Military has been completely reactive to this global environment and unable or unwilling to proactively engage in this war of ideas. Any military response has been slow at best, and antiquated policies and cultural inadequacies in dealing with the media has come across as defensive or guarded. This failure solely rests on the inability of leadership at all levels of the military to aggressively challenge these antiquated policies of communications and their unwillingness to accept risk in order to seize the initiative away from the enemy by forcing a drastic change to the military's culture of dealing with both traditional and nontraditional media. All levels of military leadership must embrace the professional application of STRATCOMs if the Department of Defense is going to do its part in reversing America's negative image and combat the terrorist ideology globally. Leaders must ensure that they actively direct subordinates to take a productive role in this as well as assisting higher commands in streamlining and improving the military's relationship with the media.

As stated in Chapter 1, the DSBTF report of January 2008 has seen some improvements in the application of STRATCOMs as outlined in their previous report, but still finds some cause

for concern. Their view of success has been based on individual leadership skills and perseverance to fight traditional organizational cultures and not based on any significant institutional change.<sup>79</sup> Since military doctrine is written by military leaders that may, or may not, have embraced the realities of modern technology on the battlefield, the recognized successes have been ineffectively translated into military doctrine and will not be until the military culture, as a whole, changes to a more progressive and decentralized approach by leaders to strategic engagements with both traditional and emerging media outlets. Even with the holistic vision provided by the DSBTF, the military has always approached media relations cautiously and in a very controlled manner. That condition, compounded by the enemy's effective use of the internet, has showed the military to be reactive to news sources and enemy information, protective and defensive of on-going military operations, and most importantly, slow and unresponsive to all targeted audiences' insatiable need for information in the age of the internet.

### **Military on the Strategic Battlefield**

“What we do matters more than what we say.”<sup>80</sup> This is a simple premise by the DSBTF and strikes right at the heart of personal experiences as a Task Force Commander in Iraq. From assumption of command, through deployment preparation and finally during the 15-month deployment, strategic message transmitted to Soldiers was simply to convey that individually, Soldier will not be able to win the war in Iraq, but, individually, Soldier's can lose it. While this concept was predicated on the impact of events at Abu Ghraib prior to the unit's deployment, it was very similar to the DSBTF vision despite no knowledge of their reports at the time. At the

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<sup>79</sup> 2008 Report of the Defense Science Board, xi.

<sup>80</sup> 2008 Report of the Defense Science Board, x.

tactical level, this message was simple. Soldiers are clearly not involved in the strategic level of combat operations, but strategically, they can have both positive and negative impact based on their actions. The strategic effects of information and the disadvantages faced at the tactical level were obvious to many leaders on the ground. Approval for messages and themes as part of operations were typically approved too late to address the issue for which they were created.<sup>81</sup> Equally as disturbing was the fact that the local populace had little or no visibility on both the positive achievements by the coalition, or the negative impact on the local populace by the insurgents.<sup>82</sup> These facts, coupled by the insurgent's active local communications network, attacked not only the credibility and support by the local community, but also the support for the Iraqi Police and Military as they developed into a professional and competent security force for all of Iraq. To reverse these factors, tactical leaders had to stop seeing STRATCOMs as a separate mission to augment operational objectives and start seeing both as mutually supportive to local and strategic objectives.<sup>83</sup>

### **Fighting and Winning the War of Ideas**

In his article, "The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations", COL Ralph O. Baker made the observation that the military cannot influence the press if it doesn't talk to them.<sup>84</sup> While this is an obvious statement, the military culture continues to make this a huge challenge for tactical commanders

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<sup>81</sup> Baker, Ralph O, COL, "The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operations", *Military Review* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2006), 16.

<sup>82</sup> Baker, The Decisive Weapon, 19.

<sup>83</sup> Darley, William, "Clausewitz's Theory of War and Information Operations", *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2006), 74.

<sup>84</sup> Baker, The Decisive Weapon, 18.

to do. This view is not shared across the military and while some leaders embraced the importance of communicating ideas to multiple target audiences through various media outlets, some did not. It is extremely difficult for subordinate commanders to change the culture of higher leaders but equally as difficult for superiors to change the mindset of subordinates who have had leaders in the past who have not embraced these changes. Effective change must be drastic if it is to change the culture. This will require aggressive implementation of the holistic view of STRATCOMs throughout leadership development. More importantly, leadership must assume risk and accept the fact that not all subordinate media engagements will go well or be perfect. Any zero-defect mentality associated with implementing this decentralized approach will result in a failure to change the military culture. Leaders must demand subordinates aggressively seek strategic engagements at all levels within their command, hold them accountable for the professional implementation of their engagement plan, but willingly share the burden of their decisions and development.

The U.S. Marine Corp STRATCOM Plan published in July 2007 is an exceptional document in transmitting the holistic vision of the Department of Defense. Every service within the Department of Defense needs to develop a similar document. More importantly, this plan provides a general guideline that operational commanders can use for guidance and development in their implementation down to Battalion Level. The Department of Defense must direct this to happen. Dealing with the media has long been a part of leadership training, but more can be done. As fast as technology changes, junior leaders are better suited in developing new and innovative ways of engaging key audiences than their superiors. Leadership must harness this and incorporate their concepts and ideas into their STRATCOM Plans.

Events like Abu Ghraib and the Patrick Tillman case have a lasting impact on not only the national and international public, but also the military culture that needs to be changed to avoid similar instances in the future. While professionalism in the military will never allow it to fail the Nation, technology has increased the transparency of combat operations and both the good and bad associated with them. Only by understanding this and embracing the realities of the modern media, leaders can only guarantee three things in using military might: America's Military will not fail; bad things will happen, and bad decisions will be made. In a culture where failure is not an option, these realities are conflicting and add to the difficulty in changing the military culture. While modern technology has increased the transparency of combat, this conflicts with a military culture that wishes to shelter society from the realities of combat. Doctrine will not solve this. Professionally, military leaders should be comfortable with the ambiguity and uncertainty associated with combat, but this is not always the case. Only when all levels of leadership embrace the fact that the US Military will never fail in combat, bad things will happen and bad decisions will be made, will doctrine begin to take on the holistic vision of STRATCOMs that the DSBTF describes.

### **Changing the Institution**

Only through leadership development can the military begin to change the culture associated with STRATCOMS. Training must empower all leaders with the ability to effectively communicate across the spectrum of technology on their level of tactical and technical expertise. As leaders advance in their education, they must be educated and trained on not only empowering their subordinates to do the same, but also to accept the realities of the information world and underwrite the honest mistakes of a subordinate. Institutionally, the Army has begun

this change. The Combined Arms Center has injected these realities into officer course curriculum; the most significant being in Field Grade Officer development at the Command and General Staff School (CGSS). In the latest policy memorandum, dated 12 March 2009, resident students must complete a media interview, speak to a community organization or school, write a letter to the editor, op-Ed piece, or article for publication, and participate in a reputable blog about their military service.<sup>85</sup> Based on opinions posted to the Combined Arms Center BLOG Site, student opinion varies from fully supporting the requirement to outwardly hostile.<sup>86</sup> These varying degrees expressed by junior Field Grade Officers represent their experiences as Company Grade Officers and the conflicting opinions of STRATCOMS they received from their senior leaders. More importantly, their opinions show the depth and breadth of the problem associated with changing the military culture. Regardless of their opinions, their current leadership is mandating these requirements and it is this type of leadership that is needed in both the institutional military and the operational military if the culture is to be changed. Even if junior officers embrace the holistic understanding of STRATCOMs during their education and go back to the operational military to demand and empower their subordinates to do the same, they will quickly revert to outdated concepts and ineffective communications if their senior leaders reprimand them. Senior leaders must not just target select audiences of junior leaders. All junior leaders must be directed and empowered to accomplish this holistic approach to STRATCOMs if the culture is to change.

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<sup>85</sup> William M. Raymond JR, Command and General Staff School Policy Memorandum Number 8: *Sharing Our Story With The Nation* (Fort Leavenworth, Command and General Staff School, 12 March 2009).

<sup>86</sup> United States Army Combined Arms Center, Student BLOG Site (Fort Leavenworth, [http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/BLOG/blogs/cgsc\\_student\\_blog/archive/2009/02/27/blog-policy-flawed.aspx](http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/BLOG/blogs/cgsc_student_blog/archive/2009/02/27/blog-policy-flawed.aspx), 2009).

Even with education, junior leaders cannot be expected to execute STRATCOMs without encouragement and guidance. Senior leaders must provide straightforward guidance to subordinates so they are prepared for this role but also be prepared if they fail to adapt or adhere to it. This requires senior leaders to understand the cultural friction between the military and the various sources of media. In preparing CGSS Students for the requirements for graduation, LTG William B. Caldwell, IV, Commander, Combined Arms Center gave guidance to students and set the stage for this guidance by explaining the past military culture to what he referred to as “The 4 A’s”.<sup>87</sup> His reference to the military culture associated with the role of the media as nothing more than an ANNOYANCE to military leaders and this coupled with any excessive media attention as being bad for one’s career has created a culture of AVOIDANCE. These factors resulted in leaders limiting ACCESS to information even within the military community for fear of leaks to the media. These three factors created the culture that still exists today in training leaders to ANSWER THE FACTS to the media and avoid any personal deductions about the implications of these facts. Understanding the “4 A’s” of the past and how they directly apply to the examples provided in this paper illustrates how the culture has not adapted to the current operational environment, thus setting the stage for LTG Caldwell’s guidance and empowerment to the CGSS Students.

There is always a risk in empowering subordinates to conduct STRATCOMs and leaders must maintain an active dialogue with their subordinates to define the parameters of both good and bad strategic engagements. Training and education cannot be accomplished only in the military school system; it also must happen at all levels of command. Receiving this training from their direct first-line, or second-line supervisor only improves the dialogue needed to define

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<sup>87</sup> William B. Caldwell VI, Command and General Staff School Speech: Operating in the Information Domain (Fort Leavenworth, Command and General Staff School, January 2009).

these parameters. By opening this dialogue, senior leaders can learn applications of STRATCOMs using innovative and new technologies typically embraced sooner by young leaders. Additionally, this training provides leadership opportunities to encourage and reward successful applications, and to counsel and punish subordinates who fail to apply general guidelines of application. Leadership can never expect every media engagement to be a good one, especially in the business of combat, but junior leaders must be empowered to engage at their discretion and their superiors must be prepared to underwrite honest mistakes when they arise.

LTG Caldwell's specific guidance to the students at CGSS is given in the format of "The 4-Be's": Be Open, Be Responsive, Be Proactive, and Be Relevant.<sup>88</sup> The past avoidance must be reversed by actively encouraging subordinates to engage with the media and be open enough to tell it like it is. Leaders must be responsive to what is happening. They must seek out the media to not only tell it like it is, but also to correct errors and respond to the enemy's use of the same media. This requires leaders and their staffs to be proactive in planning media engagements to ensure they get accurate reports. Most importantly, all leaders must understand that no engagement with the media will go perfectly or the way it was intended. Leaders must understand the broader context of what they are doing and how it will impact on their organization, the mission, and the broader national objectives.

### **Adapting Typewriter Leadership**

Despite the poor examples from the past, there are positive signs from the operational level of the military where senior leaders have begun to harness the power of modern

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<sup>88</sup> William B. Caldwell IV, Command and General Staff School Speech: Operating in the Information Domain (Fort Leavenworth, Command and General Staff School, January 2009).

technologies. The best example recently implemented is the Theater BLOG Site developed by the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division in Iraq. On this site, Soldiers are empowered to write their opinions on a variety of topics that range from mission specific opinions to answering questions about issues ranging from “Opinions on Stupid Army Rules” to “Gays in the Military”.<sup>89</sup> Soldiers and leaders across the Division have enthusiastically responded. Soldiers are not only able to voice their opinions, but also see their leadership responding as well. Division leadership is not only able to transmit their guidance and messages, but also gain insight and ideas from subordinates. What is most striking about the entire site is the ownership that is heard in all of the postings. Soldiers and leaders alike refer to the problems they address as “Our” problems and “Our” solutions. Information from this site could easily be taken out of context by anyone, but the benefit of such a tool far outweighs the risks and is exactly the kind of innovation that senior leaders must embrace if the military is to succeed in the Information Age.

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<sup>89</sup> United States Army, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division: Mountain Sound Off BLOG (Baghdad, <http://www.taskforcemountain.com/mountain-sound-off>, 2009).

## CONCLUSION

This monograph shows a conflict between the military definition and understanding of STRATCOMs and the Department of Defense's definition. More importantly, examples from ongoing combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown that leadership failed to understand the significance or strategic context of tactical operations in the age of the internet despite clear implications identified in previous operations dating back to 1999 with the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, during NATO actions in Yugoslavia.

Military doctrine must be developed in adherence to the holistic vision of the Department of Defense and the work of the DSBTF, but this is not enough. Doctrine cannot change the military culture. Military professionals must refute the past culture associated with media relations and embrace the realities of immediate global communications and the age of technology. Only by understanding the complex nature of globalization can the military become proactive and agile both to the realities of combat and responsive to the enemy use of media against it.

Leaders failed to understand the significance of Patrick Tillman's death at the strategic level. As information became available about the events, leaders were unable or unwilling to effectively communicate the realities of combat to the media in a proactive way or be responsive to the speed in which technology transmitted new information. Even before his death, leaders failed to understand the strategic context of who Patrick Tillman was or what he represented to America in terms of National will and unity. Bad things happen in combat and society understand this. The military must evolve from the age of complete information control to an adaptive force that understands the holistic value of information in the age of technology, and be willing to use it to convey the strategic purpose of military operations. There is too much

reluctance at all levels of leadership to open a dialogue with all sources of media. Junior leaders will never do this until they see their superiors accomplishing it and demand it from their subordinate.

Criminal events and bad decisions like Abu Ghraib are also an unfortunate reality of war. Military leadership saw the significance of this terrible event, but even when faced with digital images of the circumstance, they were unable or unwilling to face the realities of just how fast information spreads in the age of the internet. Failure to see this once again placed the military in a reactive and defensive posture and leaders were unable or unwilling to take a proactive stand against it. While “telling it like it is” would have caused some legal issues associated with prosecution of some of the individuals involved, it would have placed the strategic mission first and would have significantly reduced some of the negative impacts felt nationally and internationally. Instead, the enemy maintained the initiative in the use of this event in the media. More importantly, the credibility of the military’s dialogue with the media and the public was severely tarnished. The failure by the military to be responsive to the enemy’s use of the media only prolonged his initiative and threatened the overall good of the mission.

Bad news will never get better with age. Leaders must be able to understand the broader context of every tactical, operational and strategic decision they make. This monograph has shown that leadership and education is beginning to adapt, but will fail unless the culture of the military’s relationship with the media changes. The military education system can only accomplish so much. Operational leaders must reinforce what is being taught in schools by setting the example in the holistic understanding of STRATCOMs. The Commandant of the Marine Corps’ STRATCOM Plan is a perfect example of this understanding and guidance. Programs instituted in the military education system that requires media engagements like the

policy at CGSS will provide some experience, but will fail if leaders return to operational assignments that continue to shy away from the realities of technology and the media. Only when every operational command provides innovative ways of harnessing the power of technology as provided in the example of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division in Iraq, can the military expect to see the culture change. Once the military culture becomes more proactive in the use of STRATCOMs, doctrine will follow and leaders at all levels will have the necessary education and mentorship to accomplish America's mission in the "Flat World".

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