

**DEFINING AFGHANISTAN
POLICY AND RISK-AMERICA'S
ACHILLES HEEL?**

BY

COLONEL REGINALD L. SIKES, JR.
United States Army

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

DEFINING AFGHANISTAN POLICY AND RISK- AMERICA'S ACHILLES HEEL?

by

Colonel Reginald L. Sikes, Jr.
United States Army

Dr. Janeen M. Klinger
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

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War is a failure of diplomacy to bring about a natural order to resolve disagreements between actors. Since the attacks on 11 September 2001, the United States has propagated the policies and objectives of the nation based upon a conventional Army strategy. Since 2003, the National Strategy has relied on the military counter-insurgency (COIN) tactics to implement policy. As a single instrument of national power, the military cannot effectively address the current impact of globalization on insurgency tactics of provocation, intimidation, protraction, and exhaustion beyond the defined area of operation in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, U.S. forces fight alongside allies and partners in renewed efforts to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda. In the face of a complex and uncertain security landscape in which the change of pace continues to accelerate the current strategy cannot succeed without a long-term decremented impact on the force. This paper will describe the challenges posed by the war in Afghanistan and offer some recommendations.

DEFINING AFGHANISTAN POLICY AND RISK- AMERICA'S ACHILLES HEEL?

Field manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency, defines an insurgency as an organized, protracted political-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control.¹ In the aftermath of World War II, the United States found itself firmly planted as an unrivalled global power. The nation's decisive and unmatched contribution of blood and treasure to the allied defeat of the Third Reich in Europe and the Japanese empire in the Pacific theater exemplified strength and resiliency to the entire world. At the strategic level of leadership, the complex and ambiguous problems of the nation require a more detailed and system oriented approach due to the very nature of the lasting impact that decisions can have across national and global issues. One such way to apply strategic thought is through the study of history to inspire insights and critical thinking to similar circumstances in the world today. Drawing on the application of history to the current situation in Afghanistan in the context of Neustadt and May's book Thinking in Time, we can "help define the immediate situation and the decision makers concerns in it, from which to draw objectives."²

War is a failure of diplomacy to bring about a natural order to resolve disagreements between actors. Since the attacks on 11 September 2001, the United States has propagated the policies and objectives of the nation based upon a conventional Army strategy. Since 2003, the National Strategy has relied on the military counter-insurgency (COIN) tactics to implement policy. As a single instrument of national power, the military cannot effectively address the current impact of globalization on insurgency tactics of provocation, intimidation, protraction, and exhaustion beyond

the defined area of operation in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, U.S. forces fight alongside allies and partners in renewed efforts to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda. In the face of a complex and uncertain security landscape in which the change of pace continues to accelerate it is doubtful that the current strategy in Afghanistan can succeed without a long-term detriment to the force.

This paper will explore the COIN strategy attempt to address or recognize the current environment in terms of globalization as it applies to the implications of possible failure in Afghanistan. Additionally, it will offer some recommendations in terms of policy that the United States can further develop to balance its commitment to the War on Terror, and attempt to define the far reaching effects of protracted combat on the United States Army. The paper will describe challenges in Afghanistan and conclude offering recommendations to alleviate the effect of protracted combat on the armed forces.

Background

To say United States military forces are stretched thin in Afghanistan is an understatement. While American casualties continue to rise and the U.S. budget deficit is following the same trend, President Obama sits at a point where his foreign policy for Afghanistan may well define his presidency no matter how much domestic political issues such as health care reform are in the forefront for the American people. More recently, developments in Pakistan have given rise to heightened concern of the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) by a radical non-state actor such as Al Qaida. Since assuming command in July, General Stanley McChrystal produced an initial Commander's Assessment that called for not only increased troop levels, but also a change in strategy to focus on the population.³ The first free election in

Afghanistan was surrounded by controversy of widespread fraud, which led the international community to pressure Afghanistan to conduct a run off between the two major candidates. Now with President Karzai's emergence as the victor by default, it heightens the central dilemma that faced President Obama as he decided whether to escalate the U.S. involvement in the war in Afghanistan.⁴ Even though the United States is far from completing its mission in either Iraq or Afghanistan, the U.S. must look ahead and begin to assess the level of the threat or extent of the interest for the U.S., and whether President Obama's decisions surrounding the policy for Afghanistan can withstand the scrutiny of the international community and the American people.

As a result of globalization, the international terrain has become affected by far reaching and consequential shifts in power that threaten the security of international order. The emergence of new powers, the growing influence of non-state actors, particularly those with significant global influence such as Al Qaeda, have gained access of destructive enabling technologies, and pose a possible tipping point in their quest to achieve weapons of mass destruction as they continue to pose profound threats to international order. Global interconnectedness facilitated by the internet and other forms of real time media outlets spotlight domestic actions, which in turn will influence world opinion. The global reaction to the recent election of President Obama is an example of this dynamic. This reality warrants close consideration as the nation confronts present day social issues balanced with his decision to deploy an additional 30,000 forces in support of the policy in Afghanistan. The American ideology of freedom, justice, and liberty for all persons will remain a key determinant in the

formulation of foreign policy, and the nexus between these policies and the nation's global stature will endure.

During President Obama's November address at West Point he stated that his policy would be released in early December, and would center more on the goal of keeping Al Qaida from using the region to launch more attacks against the United States and to bring stability to Afghanistan.⁵ The President understands the complications in Afghanistan and a need to focus on Al Qaida and not the Taliban. It is Al Qaida, and the jihadists idealist that need a safe haven from which to propagate their global strategy. Because Al Qaida does not recognize such things as geographic borders, they measure their success or failure in ideological rather than territorial terms. One only needs to examine the importance of Pakistan to the strategy in Afghanistan and the extremely complex and volatile environment that presents many ambiguous challenges for the United States and its allies. Due to this being such a difficult problem, there is no one solution to implement and it is unwise to say only one option is the correct answer, because no particular course of action proves unambiguously better than the rest. While there could be many courses of actions available to the United States, they need to work simultaneously with each other to achieve maximum effectiveness. Thus if achieving success in Afghanistan is dependent on a strong partnership with Pakistan, how can the United States convince Pakistan that cooperation with the US/Coalition forces is in their best interest and encourage them to take actions against terrorist networks inside their own border.

Globalization has allowed non-state actors such as Al Qaida (AQ) to incite violence in the cause of a religious jihad.⁶ Osama bin Laden's statement issued in

September 2007 sought to rally Islamic true believers against a series of globalized related grievances, while at the same time using it to market his ideology.⁷ The basis of open⁸ society perpetuated through globalization tools: the internet, cell phones, and satellite communications, electronic funds, and international trade have given AQ the tools to lend creditability to their cause- to incite a jihadist movement against the western world. While speaking out against globalization AQ actually has been very successful using the tools of globalization as offensive means to attack the West. As a larger Islamic cause represented by Al Qaida, they are using all means at their disposal, to pursue their total war, while Americans experience a limited force effort now labeled as COIN.

The difficulty in the situation in Afghanistan for President Obama will be signaling resolve to the international community while at the same time assuring the American people that this is not an open-ended commitment.⁸ While estimates and options in troop requirements from General McChrystal vary, and controversy has been generated in the media by the disagreement from Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal, the President, demonstrated the resolve needed as exemplified in his statement, Tuesday 24 November 2009. He said “After eight years—some of those years in which we did not have, I think, either the resources or the strategy to get the job done—it is my intention to finish the job.”⁹

Challenges Defined and Supported by History

Sir Winston Churchill once said “the further back in history you look, the further into the future you can see”. One only needs to look at the history surrounding Afghanistan to understand that the precarious situation facing the United States.

There is no piece of land in Afghanistan that has not been occupied by one of our soldiers at some time or another,” he said. Nevertheless, much of the territory stays in the hands of the terrorists. We control the provincial centers, but we cannot maintain political control over the territory we seize.

Our soldiers are not the blame. They've fought incredibly brave in adverse conditions. But to occupy towns and villages temporarily has little value in such a vast land where the insurgents can just disappear into the hills. He went on to request extra troops and equipment. Without them, without a lot more men, this war will continue for a very long time, he said.¹⁰

While General McChrystal could have easily spoken these words to President Obama, they are in fact the words of Sergi Akhromeyev, the commander of the Soviet forces, to the Soviet Politburo on November 13, 1986. While there are many challenges seen in pursuit of the current strategy in Afghanistan this paper will concentrate on outlining the seven most significant.

First, can any military strategy penetrate the tribal lineage of Afghanistan to provide some sort of stabilization required to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state? Basically, the Taliban are all actually tribes locked in a struggle for loyalty or Pashtun honor, and to profit their tribe. This very basic right of self determination is what Americans call democracy, whereas Afghans call it survival, not extremism. They do however face terrorism by the religious fanatics, terrorists, and people allied to the Taliban leadership. As such, the tribes are afraid to provide overt support to the government of Afghanistan. In order to win them over, you must first protect the tribe, and prove that the extremist can not hurt them, if they come to the side of the government. “The tribal system is weak in most parts of Afghanistan and cannot provide alternatives to the Taliban or U.S. control. The Pashtuns generally have a tribal identity. Tribal identity is a rather flexible and open notion and should not be confused

with tribal institutions, which are what establish enforceable obligations on members of a tribe.”¹¹ The important idea is that there is a difference between tribe as an identity and tribal institutions or organizations that enable tribes to impose obligations on their members and to enforce those obligations. The abilities to obligate and enforce are needed in order for tribes to act as cohesive political units and provide their own security.

Second, instability in Afghanistan is a far broader problem than insurgency. Currently the rise of the non-state actor or globalized insurgency described as the “War on Terror” suggests that AQ seeks to lead “an organized movement that aims at overthrowing the political order within a given territory, using a combination of subversion, terrorism, guerilla warfare and propaganda.”¹² The essential strategic problem for the United States in Afghanistan is therefore less about directly defeating the Taliban, and more about providing security to allow the development of an Afghan state co-exist and re-integrate the Taliban without permanent large-scale international assistance.

In his book, *Of Paradise and Power*, Robert Kagan asserts that Washington’s tendency toward unilateral action stems from its position of power, and conversely, Europe’s penchant for international law and institutions rests in its position of relative weakness in the world today.¹³ One may argue that this is the benefit from having fought two world wars , and that Europe now realizes how self-defeating war is. The third challenge is defined in terms that to many states, the U.S. is alone atop a uni-polar world and, if Kagan is correct, this accounts for differences that make cooperation within bodies such as NATO more and more difficult. The United States has a vital national

security interest in addressing the current and potential security threats posed by extremists in Afghanistan. The core goal of the United States must be to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda and its safe havens in Pakistan, and to prevent their return to Pakistan or Afghanistan. "ISAF's efforts to support this accelerated process are mainly provided by Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs). These mentoring teams are fielded by NATO Allies and partners. As of mid-March 2009, NATO-ISAF has 52 OMLTs fielded. The higher ANA ceiling requires an increase in the ISAF OMLT commitment from 62 to 84 OMLTs by December 2010."¹⁴

Fourthly is the key and yet complex challenge of Pakistan in relation to the solution in Afghanistan. From a peripheral viewpoint, Pakistan has an aggressive campaign to counter Taliban encroachment within its' territory. However, is what they are accomplishing sufficient to ward off an overthrow of their government and for another party to take possession of their nuclear arsenal? The obvious danger is that Pakistan's nuclear arsenal might fall into extremist hands, which could be disastrous for US/Coalition efforts in the region. While the Pakistan government announce to the international community that their arsenal is secure, there is a seed of doubt as to whether this is actually the case, due to the increasing internal tensions in Pakistan. It is therefore imperative that the US/Coalition has a military expansion plan ready to implement for securing Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, if intelligence assessments indicate Pakistan's WMD are on the verge of falling into the wrong hands.

Fifth, the United States must execute and resource an integrated "whole of government" counterinsurgency strategy applying diplomatic, information, military and economic means to address the Afghanistan issue over the next twelve months in order

to regain the initiative to safeguard and support the Afghan population. Safeguarding the population is key for meeting the objective of the current strategy to achieve a recognizable turn by July 2010. Diplomatically the U.S. must de-emphasize the American version of democracy, and focus on the importance of preserving free elections. Then by creating a secure environment for the Karzai government, concessions can be built among the tribes. "No doubt, the Pashtun tribal system does have an eminent political relevance; although only in exceptional cases do Pashtun tribes form actual social groups or organizations which are able to act collectively as political units."¹⁵ Strategically, The Karzai government must take the lead to solve Afghan problems.

Sixth, the complexities of Afghanistan's problems are rooted in terrain, population, and terrorist that make Afghanistan a difficult, dangerous, and complicated environment. The largest concern and threat to the United States national security is the use of Afghanistan by global terrorist, in particular, the western involvement that may be playing into the AQ exhaustion strategy. Because of Al Qaeda's role in several ongoing conflicts and the influence of terrorist threats in current American thinking about national security, it is essential to understand AQ's strategy and tactics. AQ's strategy in summary is to become the leading player in a loose coalition of takfiri extremist movements, to become the vanguard of the world's Muslim population that is free from Western influence, with religion and under shri'a law. As such, AQ seeks to use the tools of globalization to aggregate the effects of diverse actors separated in time and space in order to create a powerful movement that portrayed as a widespread globalized insurgency rather than a traditional terrorist movement.¹⁶

We can begin by examining the basic tactics definitions of the insurgency in Afghanistan as described by David Killcullen as PIPE, in his lecture on “Small Wars”.

Provocation- Carry out atrocities that prompt opponents counterinsurgents, government or sectarian opponents to react violently, in ways counter to their interests

Intimidation- Terrify and coerce members of the insurgent’s own community who cooperate with, or support the government .Terrify and coerce members of the security forces and civil administration

Protraction- Draw out the conflict to avoid strong counterinsurgent forces, control own loss rates, enhance the exhaustion effect, and preserve strength after setbacks

Exhaustion- Soak up counterinsurgent forces and government agencies in actions that require major effort but do not advance their mission (e.g. garrison, guard, convoy, or FOB tasks.¹⁷

In part, AQ’s strategy appears to be aimed at bleeding the United States to exhaustion and bankruptcy, forcing America to withdraw in disarray from Afghanistan and the Middle East. This would mean that US allies would also collapse without our support, which would allow AQ to use the United States intervention as a form of provocation to incite a mass uprising within the Islamic World, or to at least generate and sustain popular support.

Finally, the American public and national will must sustain support for a long-term engagement in Afghanistan in the midst of a struggling economy. In his State of the Union Address President Obama called for a \$3.1 trillion dollar budget, of which \$1.8 trillion represents the current deficit. The United States military that has faced deployment OPTEMPO over nine sustained years of combat in the Middle East which while maintaining an all volunteer force could face significant recruiting challenges if the economy improves. And if in the sake of national security, can the US government convince the American public that its safety on the home front is increasing in light of

terrorist attempts such as the Christmas day plane bombing attempt? By announcing a drawdown in 2011 from the current promised surge in his address, the President has drawn a line in the sand, but has he also placed the mission at risk given the AQ tactic of exhaustion?

Defining an Effective Afghanistan Strategy

In light of all of this, what would define an effective Afghanistan strategy? General McChrystal has clearly defined three cornerstones to his approach to the war in Afghanistan. The military aspect of the strategy centers on security and building trust. First, the most important aspect of the strategy as stated by President Obama must center on building the political legitimacy and effectiveness of the Afghan government, not only in the eyes of its own people, but also in the views of the international community. There is a tribal aspect to this: President Karzai has tended to appoint provincial governors who would be unlikely to threaten building strong tribal basis of their own. Thus, especially in the south, he appointed tribal leaders from the minority tribes. Additionally, these minority leaders have funneled aid to their minority tribes versus the entire province further weakening government support from the majority populated tribes in the region.¹⁸

The Taliban exploited the appointment of provincial governors that were from minority tribes in the regions by inciting the local tribes against the government. In areas where local Afghan government representatives have shown themselves to be efficient and trustworthy, displaying a genuine concern for the people, this tactic has failed. For example, when Colonel John Nicholson commanded his brigade from the 10th Mountain from 2006-2007, he based his strategy on four key operational effects: securing the people, separating them from the enemy, helping them choose their own

local leaders, and connecting to the government via those leaders. That aspect brought about a level of commitment and consistency which has enabled the region to enjoy success. The Taliban are attempting to apply the AQ exhaustion strategy to consume the resources, energy, and support of the Afghan government and the United States to cause the withdrawal of Western influence and thus succeed in having the Afghan government collapse under the weight of its ineffectiveness and lack of legitimacy. This coupled with the core of the AQ leadership and nuclear weapons in Pakistan make the Pakistani Taliban an extremely serious strategic threat to the international community. Despite the importance as a terrorist safe haven, Pakistan is a problem, but not the problem. The key to fixing Afghanistan lies in Afghanistan, by aiding the governance of an unstable nation.

Second, strategy and policy decisions require that the Afghan government must be placed in the lead, even in instances where it must be forcibly placed in the lead whether through diplomatic or informational means. While the international community would certainly help in constructing such a strategy, with inputs through NATO, the EU, and the United Nations, the building of the planning and oversight capability of the newly elected Karzai government is a key component of this approach. The United States is making strides in this area, that of building international support. The new engagement with the United Nations and paying its obligations are in fact helping build world-wide improvement to the American hegemonic arrogance.¹⁹

Next a regional approach is key, because of the active sanctuary that terrorist enjoy in neighboring countries and the support they receive from the transnational terrorist organization such as Al Qaeda. The U.S. must focus on disrupting insurgent

safe havens, controlling borders to lessen the porous frontier regions, and building regional and international support that makes it inhospitable for terrorists and insurgents. Thus a strategy must reflect a collaborative effort between Afghanistan and Pakistan due to the transnational threat. While an increase in United States forces in Afghanistan will assist, the diplomatic emphasis must be placed on Pakistan to pursue the Pashtun nationalists, dispossessed tribes, and Islamic extremist that seek to control the Pashtun majority in both regions. Without a collaborative effort in the region, a victory in Afghanistan would only mean a shift in the problem to the east. This in essence would exacerbate the threat of non-state Islamic fundamentalist and their quest to acquire WMD materials.

Third, the security of the Afghan population is critical.²⁰ This entails what many have referred to as a “Vietnam Hamlet strategy” and immediately incites visions of United States failure.²¹ Providing security, 24 hours a day, living with and gaining trust, are the key to winning the counterinsurgency, not destroying the enemy. What demands a continued presence and a renewed emphasis on building the Afghan National Army and Police forces to protect local population centers? It demonstrates United States resolve and more importantly will demonstrate commitment of the Karzai government to the tribal leaders and people of Afghanistan. This commitment, in fact will marginalize the political, economic, and protective allure of the Taliban, because it hardens the Afghanistan people against their tactics of provocation and intimidation. To aid in this, the legitimization of the local security forces must be presented as the Afghan solution to the problem. While this takes time, the coalition forces must be willing to close with the Taliban and defeat them in direct combat, and the action must

be followed up with rapid political and economic actions by the Karzai government. Failure to do so would only allow the Taliban to achieve driving a wedge between the people and legitimizing the government of Afghanistan.

Prioritization is also critical, given the limited resources. While in the midst of our domestic problems at home, President Obama may be forced to deliver some messages to different players domestically, internationally, and to the enemy that are contradictory and hard to do because of globalization and instant media. President Obama must place emphasis that the United States must act as part of a broader international community, in order to build international support for the efforts in Afghanistan. As professed by Clausewitz, the first supreme and far reaching act of judgment is to determine the type of war to fight²² which depends largely on the policies that dictate military objectives and resources.²³

Can America win the war in Afghanistan? Is it truly a war of necessity? Will the American people continue to support a protracted conflict, and now demands the necessity of additional forces? Only time will tell, but if history holds true, the domestic interests of the American people will eventually converge to demand an exit from the conflict, until the next time the US is attacked.

Mitigating Risk to the Force

The larger question or the greater risk is what effect has the protracted conflict of fighting a counter-insurgency had on the United States Army? In short, COIN has become the Achilles heel of the United States Army. The protracted warfare has increased technologies within the Army, but in the same breath has caused an atrophy of the force, which in the future could mean a force of mediocrity. The 2010

Quadrennial Defense review released 1 February, 2010 cites specific examples in developing future military leaders:

Building expertise in foreign language, regional and cultural skills. Focus placed during the pre-accession training.

Recognizing joint experience whenever and wherever it occurs in an officers career.

Recognizing the critical role that professional military education plays in development of military officers.²⁴

What must be done in part to the Officer Professional Military Education system to account for this shortfall? One recommendation is that the Army must be careful not to over specialize in COIN only and Middle Eastern culture. While programs such as the AFPAK Hands program for Afghanistan and Pakistan are essential and crucial for the cultural expertise and consistency needed to succeed in the Afghan culture, to require it of all majors considered for battalion command and future brigade commands, could threaten an already scarce resource- the captain and major level officers in the Army.

Atrophy is already inherent in Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), especially in terms of gunnery, training management, and understanding of high intensity operations for full spectrum operations, due to an over-emphasis on COIN, and could have a far reaching effect of marginalization. The education system must remain focused on full-spectrum operations, while at the same focusing on current theater requirements. To solidify a common core across the Captains Career Courses and the Intermediate Level Education, a scenario was developed based upon the Caspian sea. Development of a fictional, non-existent common scenario, is both resource wasting and reflective of a post-cold war strategy.²⁵

Most recently, in 2008-2009, General Dempsey, ordered the development of a Captains Career Course Common Core (C5), designed to provide a baseline of cultural education to the Force. The changes equated to 235 hours, approximately 8 weeks of instruction²⁶ integrated into a 5 month course. Could building strategic leaders at the organizational level compromise the functional training for junior officers?

In seeking to develop and enhance these capabilities, the Army must inculcate these skill sets in officers early in their developmental process. The question is how, when, and most importantly to what degree without degradation of the force? The institutional side of the Army, responsible for the professional military education, is a slow and cumbersome bureaucratic side of the Army. As Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) to fight an adaptive, and determined enemy develop, globalization facilitates the almost instantaneous knowledge sharing for the forces in theater. Conversely, Programs of Instruction (POIs), which drive resourcing for TRADOC Schools, reflects an outdated process that is cumbersome, and monolithic for adapting knowledge management.

In another area of concern, the Vice Chief Of Staff, General Chiarelli, currently initiated a virtual study to look at revamping the Officer Corps Strategy, from a Cold War era management system, to a Talent based system proposed by the April 2009 Strategic Institute Study- "*A Proposed Human Capital Market Focused Upon Talent.*" In the study, the monograph identifies the root causes in terms of poor officer retention of an all volunteer force, as the failure of the officer management system to adapt to the effects of technology and globalization.

Next, there are examples of lists for professional military education deferrals because of operational requirements. One need only examine the list of principal selects deferred from Senior Service College since 2005, and the impact it has on future year selections quotas to see the downward slide in education at Senior levels. A recommendation to correct the problem would be the allowance of one operational deferment from primary selection, but after that deferment, the officer should either attend or be deleted from the list to allow for the future of the Army.

In order to begin to examine this identified risk to the force it is important to consider the role strategic leaders have in our Army as this will assist in identifying what core competencies are critical for strategic leaders to possess. Strategic leaders are the Army's ultimate multi-skilled pent-athletes.²⁷ They are stewards of Army culture with an enormous scope of responsibility for spearheading institutional change and communicating future vision to a wide array of audiences. "In our contemporary operating environment, increased interdependence as a result of globalization, coupled with challenging alliances reacting to differing threat perceptions, makes the search for an effective strategy extremely challenging."²⁸

Strategic leaders' knowledge base is deep and varied, ranging from understanding organizational culture and climate to being keenly aware of both national and international security environments and factors that influence those environments. They must understand the art of negotiation and consensus-building among a myriad of actors, and as a result must extend influence beyond the internal Army.²⁹ Strategic leaders must also master team building and set command climates that enable

subordinates to achieve success and meet intent by conveying guidance and vision that facilitates critical and creative thinking vice constraining individual initiative.

Other differences lie in the generational tendencies between Generation X and Generation Y officers. Mid-level officers, (Captains) interviewed at the Maneuver Captains Career Course cited that one of their major shortfalls with senior officers, was their failure as mentors.³⁰ These same officers are also struggling to understand a system of promotions based on merit versus seniority, tenure, and age, and are willing to seek other avenues of career outside of the Army.³¹ In order to develop strategic leaders for tomorrow, then the Senior Leaders of today need to invest time conducting a critical talent evaluation. In terms of talent evaluation, a recommendation is to re-establishing the “block-check on the Officer Evaluation Report, at all levels to differentiate talent.

As the past 9 years of conflict in both Afghanistan and Iraq have exemplified the Army must expose leaders early to different organizations, and assign leaders to areas out of their comfort zone where the vast majority of people they interact with think differently than Army leaders. For example, at the rank of major once Battalion Command Boards have met, consider a non-selected officer for assignments to an interagency or industry positions for Strategic development because not everyone will command at the highest levels of the Army. This assignment process could have beneficial effects. The incredibly complex nature of the 21st century exemplified by the war on terror will require leaders to possess an in depth knowledge base across a vast spectrum of areas of emphasis to effectively lead the Army. Single dimensioned,

technically skilled officers are no longer relevant in the current and emerging world environment.

Next, in an attempt to avoid the development of a marginal force in the future, the Army must expand a tiered and nested educational system by consistently integrating subject matter associated with strategic leadership into existing leader development programs. In doing so, the Captain's Career Course and Intermediate Level Education programs emerge as targets for implementation. Two common denominators that underpin methods of accomplishment associated with developing these competencies are exposure to diversity and opportunity through experience, while maintaining the focus required on functional training at the mid-career level.

The Army must provide consistent opportunities for leader development as they apply to education, rewards for promotion, and assignment exposure to diverse agencies and organizations to demonstrate a long term commitment to the development of emerging strategic leaders. These considerations for maintaining the Army Force of the future reflect the need for an accelerated shift in culture on the generating force side of the Army.

In conclusion, the Afghanistan war is a grave concern of the state requiring extensive study because armed strife is not a transitory aberration but a recurrent conscious act and therefore susceptible to rational analysis.³² British General Rupert Smith argues that war between nation state armies, where the outcome of the clash decides the future no longer exists; that instead, we are in an era of "war among the people"³³ in a complex environment against a non-state actor under the watchful eye of global opinion.

The challenge COIN poses to the future of the Army is an overspecialization of a marginal force capable of winning the current war in Afghanistan, but ill prepared for a possible high intensity conflict with China, Iran, Korea, or some other globalized power that is still in development. Without that end state in Afghanistan, United States security is threatened because its isolation relative to geographic location is no longer valid in the age of the transnational non-state actor such as AL Qaeda. While the troops deployed fight the current fight in the non-contiguous battle space defined as COIN, the institutional and generating force of the Army must rapidly adapt without an over correction of the Professional Military Education in TRADOC and initial entry system in Accession Commands in order to prevent an Army such as a post Vietnam 1973-1984 era from becoming a reality- an Army that could not adapt rapidly enough to deal with the current nor a future threat, and even worse an all volunteer force that cannot be maintained or grown through current recruiting and retention practices.

Endnotes

¹ FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*, (Headquarters Department of the Army, Washington D.C. October 2006), 1-1

² Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (New York: The Free Press, 1985), 273.

³ General Stanley MCChrystal, COMISAF's Initial Assessment, 30 August 2009.

⁴ "Karzai is Wild Card for U.S. Strategy" by Scott Wilson and Rajiv Chandrasekan, *The Washington Post*, November 3, 2009.

⁵ Helene Cooper and Eric Schmitt, "Obama May Add 30,000 Troops In Afghanistan", *The New York Times*, November 25, 2009. <http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20091125718636.html> .

⁶ Krause, BG Michael G. "Square Pegs for Round Holes? Current Approaches to Future Warfare and the Need to Adapt", (In Department of National Security and Strategy Theory of War and Strategy Volume II) U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, .686.

⁷ <http://www.dissidentvoice.org/2007/09/bin-laden-a-lefty>

⁸ David E. Sanger, "U.S. Strategy On Afghanistan Will Contain Many Messages", New York Times, November 25, 2009, <http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20091125718649.html>.

⁹ Micheal M. Phillips, "Surge Targets Taliban Bastion", Wall Street Journal, November 25, 2009, <http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20091125718657.html>.

¹⁰ Victor Sebastyen, "Transcripts of Defeat". The New York Times, October 29, 2009.

¹¹ Gilles Dorransoro, *The Taliban's Winning Strategy in Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009).

¹² FM 3-24.2, *Tactics In Counterinsurgency*, April 2009, p 1-1 defining insurgency.

¹³ Kagan, Robert. *Of Paradise And Power. America And Europe In The New World Order*. Vintage Books. New York: 2004. The difference lies in the growing "transatlantic disparity of power" (Kagan, 11). The U.S., Kagan argues is only behaving as a nation with a preponderance of power will (Kagan, 10-11). On the political level, America's choice of unilateralism and the greatest possible freedom of action are ill-adapted to the rules of collectivity and permanent negotiation which, conversely, govern the operation of the Alliance.

¹⁴ "Afghanistan 2009 Report", NATO, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/_afghanistan_report_2009.

¹⁵ Bernt Glatzer, "The Pashtun Tribal System," in G. Pfeffer and D. K. Behera, eds., *Concept of Tribal Society* (New Delhi: Concept Publishers, 2002).

¹⁶ David Killcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* `28, 4 (August 2005): 597-617.

¹⁷ David J. Killcullen , <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/10/coin-seminar-dr-david-kilculle/>, October 1, 2007.

¹⁸ William Maley, *Rescuing Afghanistan* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2006), 34-35.

¹⁹ This conclusion is base upon a greater engagement by the United States in the United Nations exemplified when President Obama chaired the Security Council meeting in October 2009.

²⁰ General Stanley MCChrysal, COMISAF's Initial Assessment, 30 August 2009.

²¹ This conclusion is based accusations from Congressmen that we are merely re-inventing the Vietnam story again where A-teams built firebases near villages and sought with the help of the people to keep support from the North Vietnamese. In fact though it a fundamental principle of COIN, that the population must be secured to allow the process of governance or rule to occur.

²² Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), .88.

²³ Ibid., 81.

²⁴ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, Feb 2010, .54.

²⁵ For example, the ILE Scenario for training, is based upon "Caspian Sea Scenario" and it was to have been adapted for the Captains Career Course.

²⁶ From 2007-2009 The author served as the Chief of Tactics at Fort Benning, responsible for the Maneuver Captains Career Course. The 8 weeks of instruction for common core, 235 hours were implemented on 1 October 2009. The POI has been approved, but resources are lacking. Confirmed with phoncon with COL Mark Suich, Director of CATD, Fort Benning, Georgia 9 October 2009.

²⁷ Ibid, 12-1

²⁸ *Strategic Leadership Primer , 2d Edition, Department of Command, Leadership, and Management*, United States Army War College, Colonel Stephen A Shambach, Editor, p6.

²⁹ Ibid, 12-3 through 12-12

³⁰ 2009 Study conducted by author at the Maneuvers Captains Career Course, to search for answers as the Why Captains were attending the Maneuver Captain Career Course as Geographic Bachelors, especially in light of 80% attending from a combat rotation to OIF or OEF.

³¹ Robert J House, Paul J. Hanges, Mansour Javadan, Peter W. Dorfman, and Vipin Gupta, *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004).

³² Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, edited and translated by Samuel B. Griffith, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, London New York 1963, 1971, .39.

³³ Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Knopf, 2007).3-28, and .269-335.