ROADMAP FOR A NEW COMMAND:

LESSONS FROM STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND AND AIR COMBAT COMMAND

BY

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This thesis seeks to answer the following question: Given the challenges of major organizational change, how can the Air Force successfully create Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC)? This study is an analysis of three case studies using a 4-phase model as a lens to outline implications for AFGSC during its early development. To find these implications, the stand up of Strategic Air Command (SAC) and Air Combat Command (ACC) are used as the two primary case studies. The third case study looks at AFGSC itself, or at least what has occurred to date. This thesis derived the 4-phase model used in this analysis from an 8-step process created by John Kotter in his book, Leading Change. Through this exercise, Kotters business experience-based model is adapted to a military context and used as an analytical tool to provide AFGSC principles to create an organization that has a culturally rooted set of behaviors that sustains the organization and ensures it meets its objectives in the most efficient and effective way. By using a military-specific model derived from Kotters 8-stage process for leading change, AFGSC can learn from the past and provide a more certain and successful future for its organization. Some lessons are unique to the nuclear mission, others unique to a globally focused command, but the goal is to find lessons applicable to AFGSC. Some factors critical to the success of the organization may be out of the control of the leadership of the organization. Those factors need to be identified and considered. But an organization postures itself for success focusing on that which it can control; namely the people, processes, and vision for the new command. This all begins with leadership because leadership can affect each of these factors. Effective leadership can mitigate many of the roadblocks that beset an organization. It can provide a sense of urgency when one does not exist. It can provide clear guidance, a vision, and a strategy for success. Militaries will adapt to the changing environments in which they operate. Sometimes that adaptation will lead to organizational change. What these three case studies show is that effective leadership can overcome many of the problems related to this process. When leadership is absent, however, organizations often suffer until a change of command occurs. AFGSC will need to overcome the past inattention to the nuclear mission by providing clear vision and guidance to their nuclear forces. That critical task will depend on the leaders of the new command.

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The undersigned certify that this thesis meets masters-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to answer the following question: Given the challenges of major organizational change, how can the Air Force successfully create Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC)? This study is an analysis of three case studies using a 4-phase model as a lens to outline implications for AFGSC during its early development. To find these implications, the stand up of Strategic Air Command (SAC) and Air Combat Command (ACC) are used as the two primary case studies. The third case study looks at AFGSC itself, or at least what has occurred to date. This thesis derived the 4-phase model used in this analysis from an 8-step process created by John Kotter in his book, *Leading Change*. Through this exercise, Kotter's business experience-based model is adapted to a military context and used as an analytical tool to provide AFGSC principles to create an organization that has a culturally rooted set of behaviors that sustains the organization and ensures it meets its objectives in the most efficient and effective way. By using a military-specific model derived from Kotter's 8-stage process for leading change, AFGSC can learn from the past and provide a more certain and successful future for its organization. Some lessons are unique to the nuclear mission, others unique to a globally focused command, but the goal is to find lessons applicable to AFGSC.

Some factors critical to the success of the organization may be out of the control of the leadership of the organization. Those factors need to be identified and considered. But an organization postures itself for success focusing on that which it *can* control; namely the people, processes, and vision for the new command. This all begins with leadership because leadership can affect each of these factors. Effective leadership can mitigate many of the roadblocks that beset an organization. It can provide a sense of urgency when one does not exist. It can provide clear guidance, a vision, and a strategy for success. Militaries will adapt to the changing environments in which they operate. Sometimes that adaptation will lead to organizational change. What these three case studies show is that effective leadership can overcome many of the problems related to this process. When leadership is absent, however, organizations often suffer until a change of command occurs. AFGSC will need to overcome the past inattention to the nuclear mission by providing clear vision and guidance to their nuclear forces. That critical task will depend on the leaders of the new command.

CONTENTS

TABLES

Introduction

There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. Because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new. This coolness arises partly from fear of the opponents, who have the laws on their side, and partly from the incredulity of men, who do not readily believe in new things until they have had a long experience of them.

- Machiavelli

Organizational change is difficult and success depends on many factors, leadership being one of the most important. As organizations change, they redesign and shift their missions. The process can be chaotic and disorienting, leaving even the most grounded individuals groping for solutions. A roadmap for the organization is the responsibility of the commander and how that leader presents, gains support for, and executes his plan depends on the quality of the roadmap, the followership of the masses, and on the leader's own skills. John Kotter, in his book *Leading Change*, outlines a process for looking at organizational change that focuses on leadership, rather than management, as the decisive tool for helping ensure success when creating new organizations.

This thesis seeks to answer the following question: Given the challenges of major organizational change, how can the Air Force successfully create Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC)? The Air Force is redesigning the force structure that organizes, trains, and equips combat air forces for the President of the United States. This is no small task for a budget-constrained force looking to accomplish the change without a significant investment of cash or personnel. Any time a service implements an organizational change of this magnitude, it needs to plan effectively to prevent the compromise of mission effectiveness during the transition. The nuclear component of this transition makes this requirement even more important. From Kotter's 8-step process for "leading change", this thesis derives a 4-phase model to analyze selected case studies to provide lessons for AFGSC.

Business models are a tough sell when it comes to military crowds. There are always naysayers out there who do not think the military can adopt business models wholesale; the ghosts of TQM and the quality movement come to mind. There are differences in the way business leaders and military commanders frame problems and draft solutions. For that reason, this paper redesigns Kotter's 8-step framework from a military perspective.

This thesis uses Kotter's framework in a more streamlined, four-phased model to analyze three organizational change case studies: Strategic Air Command (SAC), Air Combat Command (ACC), and the early months leading up to the creation of AFGSC. This paper then applies that analysis to AFGSC's future to determine how best the Air Force should go about standing up this new organization.

To begin, one needs to understand the foundations of Kotter's 8-steps. Chapter 2 explains and modifies Kotter's model to fit the military organization. His 8-steps are refined into a 4-phase process that accomplishes the same goal of providing a framework for creating a successful organization. This paper uses the resulting model to look at three case studies, SAC, ACC, and AFGSC. The first two were selected because of their similar missions to AFGSC. Both were Air Force organizations tasked with securing the United State's nuclear enterprise. Their successes and failures should provide guiding principles for the Air Force's next organizational iteration, the stand up of AFGSC. AFGSC provides a shorter case study, since the Air Force has already done much to stand up the new command. The task of this paper is to derive lessons applicable to the current challenge of creating AFGSC.

Chapter 3 uses the 4-phase approach to analyze the creation of Strategic Air Command. SAC occupies a unique place in Air Force history. The War Department created SAC before the Air Force was its own separate service; it had roots in the Continental Air Forces and continued down a road focused on a new weapon, the atomic bomb. Nuclear expertise is at the center of the modern debate on security and training of nuclear forces. An analysis of SAC at its origin provides a look at the fundamental difference between the distant past and the modern application of nuclear forces. SAC focused solely on the nuclear mission; AFGSC focuses on nuclear and global strike missions.

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Chapter 4 applies the model to Air Combat Command. ACC emerged at the end of two significant events, the Cold War and the 1991 Gulf War. ACC combined two combat communities in the early 1990s as bomber forces grappled with their role following the Cold War. The Gulf War showed many leaders that the bombers were not prepared for a conventional fight.[1] This unique case provides clear lessons when viewed through our 4-phase model. This more recent example has unique characteristics that make it different from the creation of SAC and through this analysis we learn the importance of balance between two drastically varied missions (conventional and nuclear operations). AFGSC will have similar struggles, first because it must coexist with ACC and second because it must balance nuclear and conventional mission sets. The mixed focus and "organize, train, and equip" functions make AFGSC more like ACC, than SAC.

Chapter 5 uses the first two phases of the model to analyze the months leading up to the official activation of AFGSC. One lesson from the first two case studies is that much of a command's success depends on events that occur before the Air Force activates a new command. New commands set their foundations during the period of their provisional commands and even in the months before the Air Force creates a provisional command. It was only fair to analyze AFGSC's provisional command during its lead-in period.

Chapter 6 outlines some of the lessons derived from the case studies and applies them to AFGSC. By paralleling the three case studies, some common themes emerge that shed light on how much work remains for the AFGSC as it approaches formal activation. The intent is to offer AFGSC with some guiding principles and potential pitfalls to avoid while creating the large organization that will be crucial for the safety and security of nuclear assets. The United States has created commands with this vital mission before and lessons from their creation should provide important insights into the challenge of creating such a large organization.

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[1] General George Butler, as CINCSAC in 1991, used his personal observations of bomber performances in the Gulf War to recommend reorganization of the Air Force, in essence dissolving SAC. George L. Butler, "Disestablishing SAC," *Air Power History* (Fall 1993).

Conclusion

  The Air Force is in the process of implementing Program Action Directive (PAD) 08-04 to create a new organization called Air Force Global Strike Command. This will not be an easy endeavor, particularly in a fiscally constrained environment with numerous challenges to the nuclear mission, including adversaries, technical issues, and institutional realities. Through this exercise, a business experience-based model is adapted to a military context and used as an analytical tool to provide AFGSC principles to create an organization that has a culturally rooted set of behaviors that sustains the organization and ensures it meets its objectives in the most efficient and effective way. By using a military-specific model derived from Kotter's 8-stage process for leading change, AFGSC can learn from the past and provide a more certain and successful future for its organization. Some lessons are unique to the nuclear mission, others unique to a globally focused command, but the goal is to find lessons applicable to AFGSC.

Chapter 1

Four Phases to a "Happier" Organization

Whenever human communities are forced to adjust to shifting conditions, pain is ever present. But a significant amount of the waste and anguish we've witnessed in the past decade is avoidable.

- *John Kotter, Leading Change*

In his book, *Leading Change*, John Kotter created a framework that organizations can use to adapt to changing conditions and to clear hurdles when starting a new endeavor. Kotter derived his principles from the business world and they are adaptable to any endeavor that relies on leadership and management skills. To Kotter, organizations fail even with the best of intentions because of "inwardly focused cultures, paralyzing bureaucracy, parochial politics, a low level of trust, lack of teamwork, arrogant attitudes, a lack of leadership in middle management, and a general fear of the unknown."[1] Kotter designed a process that accounts for most of these shortfalls, and even though his target audience was the business world, military transformations can fail for similar reasons.

This chapter begins with a look at Kotter's 8-steps. Kotter's model is important because it forms the foundation of a new 4-phase model used throughout the remainder of this paper to analyze the three case studies and as a test bed for ideas for AFGSC. Synthesizing 8-steps into 4-phases requires taking the good aspects of Kotter's model, explaining why those aspects apply in a military situation, and modifying the not-so-good aspects to fit. The results are a sleeker, phased approach that is applicable in the military setting.

Kotter's 8-steps

Kotter breaks his process into three stages--each stage has several steps. He designed the first stage to "defrost a hardened status quo", the second stage to introduce new practices, and the final stage to root new practices in the culture of the organization.[2]

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[1] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 20.
[2] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 22.

Kotter addressed a situation where organizations skip the first four steps (the defrosting stage): "When you neglect any of the warm-up, or defrosting, activities, you rarely establish a solid enough base on which to proceed."[3] As described later, we will see that most constructive change occurs in the first few phases of the 4-phase model, which corresponds to Kotter's first stage (defrosting). Kotter's process begins with a sense of urgency.

Establishing a Sense of Urgency

For Kotter, the first step to transforming an organization involves establishing a sense of urgency in order to reduce complacency. Complacency in an organization can slow the organization down and make it unresponsive to a changing environment. The sources of complacency include: absence of visible crisis, low standards, narrowly focused goals, incorrectly focused goals, and lack of feedback.[4] Kotter believed that bold initiatives were the most effective way of instituting change, primarily because complacent organizations would "find a thousand ingenious ways to withhold cooperation from a process that they sincerely think is unnecessary or wrongheaded."[5] He concluded, "Never underestimate the magnitude of the forces that reinforce complacency and that help maintain the status quo."[6]

Kotter's way of combating complacency was to establish a sense of urgency. To do that, he simply reworded the sources of complacency list found above. For example, a way to establish a sense of urgency is to create a crisis. For the purposes of this paper, crisis is the focus of the first phase of the 4-phase model. In the military, organizational change occurs most often because of an outside stimulus (or emergency), not a manufactured crisis. A few examples of external stimuli that cause change include war, threats of war, failure of an organization, and technological innovation. As we see in the case studies, events that trigger change also produce a level of urgency commensurate with the perceived seriousness of the event. A threat of war could produce drastic changes compared to a simple change in policy that might produce only a small change. In either case, the organization must assess an event's potential to produce change and

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[3] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 23.
[4] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 40.
[5] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 36.
[6] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 42.

understand the correlation of that potential to the perceived sense of urgency it creates. The challenge for leadership is harnessing the power of the crisis and not allowing the sense of urgency to wane over time. The sense of urgency motivates individuals and unites them in purpose. A sense of urgency can sustain the transformation and may ward off complacency. If the perceived sense of urgency is low, complacency and apathy will take over, hindering transformation.

Creating the Guiding Coalition

In a hierarchical organization, the commander is responsible for the implementation of change. Is the commander capable of leading lasting change? Kotter wrote, "Because major change is so difficult to accomplish, a powerful force is required to sustain the process. No one individual, even a monarch-like CEO, is ever able to develop the right vision, communicate it to large numbers of people, eliminate all the key obstacles, generate short-term wins, lead and manage dozens of change projects, and anchor new approaches deep in the organization's culture."[7] According to Kotter, a guiding coalition is a group of people dedicated to the organizational change underway. For the military, the commander needs help in instituting change and most organizations have a staff directly tasked with implementing change. How the commander builds that staff is important to the organization's success. In essence, he wants the right people, those that have enough power to make meaningful decisions, decisions that will stick.

Developing a Vision and Strategy

Kotter defined vision as "a sensible and appealing picture of the future."[8] He argued that an effective vision has the power to break through the status quo and is crucial for implementing substantial change. The vision clarifies the course ahead, it motivates individuals to act, and it aligns motivated individuals. The synergistic effect of the vision outlasts different leadership styles such as micromanagement and authoritarianism. An effective vision must have six characteristics: imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and communicable.[9] While one person usually begins the process, a group of people is usually more effective. A mechanism for feedback also helps refine the vision and increases the vision's effectiveness.

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[7] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 51-52.
[8] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 71.
[9] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 72.

Modern military organizations define themselves with vision and mission statements. Vision and mission statements for ACC and AFGSC can be found on the commands' individual web pages. A good definition of vision is a statement that "identifies the desired ideal future." A mission statement provides a "fundamental purpose or reason for existence."[10] The levels of detail in each vary by author but usually include a short vision statement followed by a more detailed outline comprising the mission statement. The distinction between the vision and mission statements will be useful later in the thesis.

Communicating the Change Vision

Effective organizations communicate their vision to the masses to make sure they understand and act on it. Getting there is the tough part. Kotter explained that most visions are lost in the clutter of an individual's daily life. We often read and hear that the critical pieces of information sometimes get lost in the noise of daily life. To break through this noise, the vision must have seven key elements. First, the message must be simple and easy to explain. Highly technical visions are not exportable beyond a select few. Every member of the group must be able to view clearly the road ahead. Second, effective visions use some form of metaphor, analogy, or example. Doing so articulates the vision in fewer words, or as Kotter said, "A verbal picture is worth a thousand words."[11] Third, the organization must disseminate the vision in multiple forms for multiple readers. The fourth aspect is repetition. Members of the organization need to hear consistency of purpose. The fifth key element is leadership by example. The sixth element involves inconsistencies. To be effective the vision must be unambiguous. The organization must address and explain any inconsistencies to remove avenues for dissent in the group. The bottom line for this step is that a commander is not only responsible for creating the vision but also for the transmission of that mission. Both must be effective to achieve success. The last element is a give-and-take attitude.

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[10] T.F. Cawsey and Gene Deszca, *Toolkit for Organizational Change* (Sage, 2007), 111.
[11] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 90.

Empowering Broad-Based Action

Military organizations pride themselves on initiative and the leadership opportunities available for those at lower echelons or ranks. Kotter outlined four barriers to broad-based action. His barriers are structures, skills, systems, and supervisors.[12] The first, structures, is evident in any hierarchical organization. Every military organization relies on the chain of command. However, there are situations where those at lower echelons have better ideas and a better view of the problem. The organization needs to include feedback loops, a crucial part of any organization.

The second barrier, skills, is important in any new endeavor. For transformation, the organization can transfer most bureaucratic skills, but a new mission may require different training or expertise. Getting the right training to those that need the expertise is important.

The third barrier, systems, relates to structures. For our purposes, this paper translates 'systems' into 'processes'. The organization needs to tailor its processes to the new vision and mission. A mismatch can be counterproductive.

The last barrier, supervisors, can be difficult to deal with in a military setting. There is no doubt that supervisors at every level of the organization are important. Those supervisors who do not believe in the vision or mission may undercut the efforts. The organization must therefore convert or eliminate this resistance for the new organization to succeed.

Generating Short-term Wins

Kotter explained that short-term wins can do several things for the organization. He observed that short-term wins provide evidence that sacrifices are worth it; to reward change agents; to help fine-tune vision and strategies; to undermine cynics; to keep bosses on board; and to build momentum.[13] Early successes are important for new organizations. The binding nature of success adds credibility and helps convert the remaining non-believers. How the organization orchestrates those wins is one area where the new model below will differ from Kotter's view.

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[12] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 102.
[13] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 123.

Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

For Kotter, this step is mostly about reducing interdependencies. At this point in the process, the transformation has gained some momentum, enough momentum that further analysis is possible by members of the organization. The members of the organization look at the structures and systems that comprise the organization and begin to look for efficiencies. This is the stage where change begins to look permanent because successes reduce the non-believing part of the organization. The important point for Kotter was that this was not the time to relax. Leaders needed to harness the momentum for further change and for a transition to the last step, making the change permanent.

Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

Lasting change occurs once the behaviors of the individuals of the new organization support and defend the new vision and mission. The change is complete once processes are in place and the culture supports the new organization. This can take time because behaviors are difficult to effect. Some individuals are incapable of cultural change, so the organization must learn to live with those individuals or phase them out. Anchoring can be difficult and this step may not occur until the organization has phased out those that are incompatible with the new framework. The reality is that the leadership has the ability to anchor change in the culture and in doing so makes the change permanent. Any change model must include some consideration of culture.

Translating 8-steps into 4-phases

The intent of the 4-phase model is to incorporate the important aspects of Kotter's 8-steps while at the same time reducing the complexity to four simpler phases more attuned to military units. The 4-phase model reflects the lifecycle of an organization and mirrors the development that Kotter envisioned in his 8-steps. The end state of the process should be a stable organization with behaviors rooted in the culture of the organization. In essence, the members of the organization should believe that "this is just how we do things here" when asked about their roles.

Our new model begins with the Chaotic Phase. This phase and its associated concepts, help describe some of the uncertainty and fears of the unknown that dominate early stages of transformation. This phase describes a period where commanders are

trying to transform their organization without losing focus on the desired end state. If the commander successfully weathers the storm, the organization proceeds to a phase defined by relative stability, the Stabilization Phase. In this phase, things become routine even though localized crises may frequently happen. But, the organization adapts to localized crises and displays some resiliency. From this phase, the organization moves to the Momentum Phase. Processes now become more formal and lower echelons are able to handle tough questions. Mid-level commanders can tackle problems because members of the organization should understand, and have internalized the organization's vision and

Table 1: Comparison of Kotter's Model to the 4-Phase Model

Kotter's 8-Steps	The 4-Phased Model
• Sense of Urgency • Guiding Coalition • Vision / Strategy • Communicate the Vision • Empower broad-based action • Short Term Wins • Consolidate Wins • Anchor in Culture	• Chaotic Phase • Stabilization Phase • Momentum Phase • Anchoring Phase
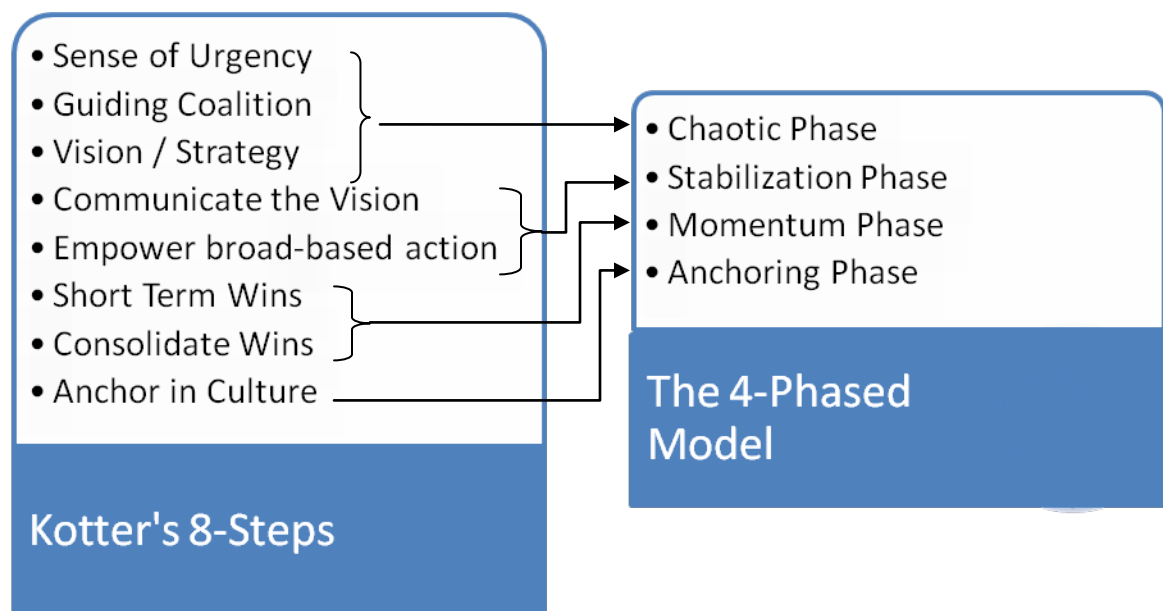
Source: Kotter's 8-steps from *Leading Change* by John Kotter, page 21

mission. The last phase, called the Anchoring Phase, is identical to Kotter's last step. Long-term success defines this phase; the organization's processes are now part of the behavior of the organization. The organization reacts intuitively in line with the vision and mission communicated by the commander.

The Chaotic Phase

The essence of this phase is somewhere between chaos and anarchy. Webster's defines anarchy as the "absence of government, a state of lawlessness or political disorder

due to the absence of government authority."[14] It defines chaos as "a state of things where chance is supreme, a state of utter confusion."[15] Both describe the initial period of change in an organization. However, the essence of activity in this phase is harnessing the positive attributes of the situation, which relates to complexity. Somewhere on the edge of chaos is complexity where "new ideas and innovative genotypes are forever nibbling away at the status quo, and where even the most entrenched old guard will eventually be overthrown."[16] This description, from M. Mitchell Waldrop, an expert on complexity, accurately depicts this phase.

The Chaotic Phase roughly incorporates Kotter's first three steps, a sense of urgency, the guiding coalition, and creating a vision. In the case studies selected, and for AFGSC, some event triggers organizational change. The magnitude of each event that caused the change influences the long-term effectiveness of the command. A significant event first causes change and then should sustain that change. By using the sense of urgency concept, an organization can assess whether an event has the potential to cause and sustain change. There may be situations that do not warrant change. Organizational change is often a very visible way to signal resolve and dedication to a problem, but it may not be the right decision for a given context.

A coalition can be very important to unit change. For the military, coalitions occur both outside and inside the organization. In military contexts, what the service leadership believes an organization should do often matters more than what the organization itself thinks it should do. For these reasons, leadership is both more diverse and yet singular; singular in terms of individual commanders with more power and diverse because of command relationships up and down the chain of command. Studying the guiding coalition requires a look at both internal and external factors.

Vision and mission are critical for organizations. The organization begins with a vision. How this vision is created shapes the organization and is little different from the mechanisms that Kotter described. If and how the vision is created and promoted has a profound effect on early successes and long-term results. Investigating this aspect of

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[14] Merriam-Webster Inc., *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster Inc., 2003), 45.

[15] Merriam-Webster Inc., *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 206.

[16] M. Mitchell Waldrop, *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 12.

standing up a military organization sheds light on the long-term predictions for success of the organization. In some instances, an informal vision may emerge, or in the absence of vision, members may make-up their own. Regardless of the source, the command's vision shapes the decisions individuals make.

The Stabilizing Phase

During the Stabilizing Phase, the organization transitions from the upheaval of the Chaotic Phase to steady state operations. This phase incorporates the concepts from Kotter's model that he labeled as barriers. Kotter described those barriers as structures, skills, systems, and supervisors. The Stabilization Phase focuses on structures, training, processes, and leadership, which roughly correspond to Kotter's barriers. These four concepts define the Stabilization Phase. Throughout the case studies, this paper examines the change context in order to describe some of the barriers to empowerment. A few examples of barriers discussed later are personnel problems, resource constraints, and a lack of a cohesive strategy.

The Momentum Phase

If the organization is stable and uses well-designed processes, the organization's leadership can build momentum. Early successful execution by an organization produces some optimism about the hard work that has occurred. The 4-phase model looks at an organization's ability to produce wins, rather than manufacturing surprise wins (like Kotter's 8-steps described). The commander can design a strategy that targets early wins; reaching early milestones successfully will build respect for the organization's strategy. In fact, success enhances confidence because the organization has achieved predicted gains. Confidence thus grows in the organization, the leadership, and the strategy in place.

The Anchoring Phase

The anchoring phase is identical to the last step of Kotter's 8-step process. Organizational culture is important, but takes time to change and may take up to a generation to affect. The Anchoring Phase most likely will be the longest phase and often is the most critical one. Having successfully navigated the previous three phases, individuals that believe the organization is on the right path now dominate. The minority of folks that remain loyal to older causes become fewer and less powerful. Refinement of

the processes and structure shows dedication to the vision and mission and proves to the minority that the new framework is not fleeting. Those who are against the organization are eventually either converted or eliminated.

Conclusion

The 4-phase model reflects the essence of Kotter's 8-steps tailored for military organizations. This model more accurately describes the life cycle of transformed military organizations. This paper next applies the tailored model to three case studies, analyzing the beginning years of SAC, ACC, and AFGSC. The 4-phase model serves as a lens to focus on common concepts that emerge during the transition from one command organization to the next. Observations drawn from this analysis should be useful for AFGSC or any other military organization undergoing transformation.

Chapter 2

Strategic Air Command

Who would you want in command of SAC if war broke out tomorrow? The chief of staff quickly replied: LeMay.

- General Norstad's question to General Vandenberg, 1948

Strategic Air Command (SAC) operated as a major combatant command from 21 March 1946 until 1 June 1992. This chapter examines the period from the convening of the Spaatz Board in September 1945 to the SAC change-of-command on 19 October 1948. This three year and one month period saw the conversion of the command from the Continental Air Forces (CAF) and ended with the then commander of SAC, General George Kenney, replaced by General Curtis LeMay. This period best displays a strained organization during its infancy, struggling as much with its identity as its context. The result was a command unprepared to meet its worldwide commitments in 1948.

The SAC culture that emerged during the LeMay years continued well beyond his tenure. General LeMay's own ideas and culture became those of SAC. Before LeMay however, the command struggled with its mission and requirements, primarily because of a lack of consensus in the military about what the future of airpower would look like. Major General Streett, SAC's deputy commander in 1946, commented in July, "No major strategic threat or requirement now exists, in the opinion of our country's best strategists nor will such a requirement exist for the next three to five years."[1]

It was General Kenney's job to stand up this command and make it successful. There are many reasons he failed; many are apparent under the lens of the 4-phased model. Ultimately, this case study shows the failure of an organization to meet its charter, but failure can often provide more insight than success. During General Kenney's command, the emerging culture became a self-defeating culture. Correcting this culture required the dominating personality of General Curtis LeMay.

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[1] Walton S. Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force* (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1996), 78.

Political and Military Context

The end of World War II produced political conditions that shaped the world for 45 years. The Soviet Union rapidly shifted from ally to enemy as Stalin announced that the cause of World War II was not Hitler, but the capitalist system.[2] Further galvanizing the situation was the development of the atom bomb. Reacting to the bomb and Soviet threats, George Kennan devised the strategy of containment that shaped American policy throughout the Cold War.[3] A key element of what became the US containment strategy was that, "American military strength was essential and had to be maintained…such a defense posture would demonstrate American resolve, deter aggression, encourage free nations to resist Soviet encroachment, and enable the United States to fight if deterrence failed."[4]

Post-war politics directly influenced the military with demobilization and shrinking budgets. Demobilization occurred simultaneously with reorganization. Also complicating this issue was the idea of unification of the services under what became the National Security Act of 1947. In this complicated political and military environment, the Army Air Forces (AAF) considered how best to organize its assets to meet the new demands of national security. How the new SAC leaders reacted to this dynamic environment is part of the story.

<center>SAC's Early Development</center>

Pre-History: September 1945 – March 1946

Many factors led to the creation of SAC in 1946, but none is second to the fact that the US military needed to stand up a force to employ atomic weapons. To some, the atomic bomb represented a new potential for strategic bombing. According to Lieutenant General Ira Eaker, the bomb offered the "opportunity to put warfare on an economical, sensible, reasonable basis."[5] Atomic weapons offered an opportunity for airpower to become truly decisive. In fact, General LeMay argued that the atomic bomb was primarily an air weapon. For many early air leaders, the atomic bomb justified an independent air service and was a primary reason the AAF created SAC.

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[2] Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 440.
[3] Campbell Craig, *Destroying the Village : Eisenhower and Thermonuclear War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 4.
[4] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 217.
[5] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 55.

Several key decisions in 1945 and 1946 drove the institutional development of SAC. Two of these included outcomes from the Spaatz Board and a directive written by General Vandenberg. General "Hap" Arnold tasked General Spaatz on 14 September 1945 to chair a board with Generals Norstad and Vandenberg to "study the question of atomic weapons in the AAF."[6] The board's recommendations were that atomic weapons would not dramatically affect the post-war air force. The board summarized that while technology would improve the size and reliability of nuclear weapons, the weapons themselves would remain "bulky, heavy, expensive, and in short supply."[7] Under those conditions, the board assumed heavy bombers would be the best delivery platform for the near future. Limited nuclear weapons meant that SAC could destroy only a few, vitally important, targets; less significant targets would require conventional munitions. The small numbers of atomic weapons would also require that the Air Force maintain conventional capabilities. In sum, the board concluded, "The atomic bomb has not altered our basic concept of the strategic air offensive but has given us an additional weapon."[8]

Lieutenant General Eaker, the deputy commander of the AAF, asked General Vandenberg to study the issue of atomic weapons and the Air Force. In January 1946, General Vandenberg drafted a directive for an "atomic striking force."[9] In that directive, General Vandenberg outlined an organization made up of the best people and equipment that could deliver the most sophisticated weapons. Due to the nature of the threat, the force needed to be constantly at the ready; there would be no time to mobilize in the event of war.[10]

General Vandenberg's directive also identified the 509th Composite Group as the core unit for the new atomic striking force. The 509th was the group that had delivered the atomic bombs on Japan. He wrote that this unit would train two other bomb groups. He also described some of the tactics SAC would use. "The group could penetrate enemy airspace in a mass as had been common in the European war; a single aircraft could

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[6] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 56.

[7] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*.

[8] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 57.

[9] Phillip S. Meilinger, *Hoyt S. Vandenberg: The Life of a General* (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2000), 65.

[10] Herman S. Wolk, *The Struggle for Air Force Independence, 1943-1947* (Washington, D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), 132.

attack at night or in bad weather; or individual aircraft could be launched simultaneously in a widely dispersed strike. The unit should be prepared for all such methods, but it was imperative that the actual bomb drop be carried out under radar conditions – visual drops were inadequate."[11] General Vandenberg's memo added more credibility to strategic forces and provided the framework for a new mission.

In early 1946, General Spaatz served as General Arnold's deputy. General Arnold was in ill health, so General Spaatz acted as the commanding general. The AAF was in the midst of justifying itself as a separate service and a prime concern was tactical aviation. General Eisenhower was concerned about a duplication of effort if the Army kept responsibility for tactical aviation. General Spaatz was a firm believer in the consolidation of airpower and feared that the Army would commandeer tactical aviation after World War II. Because of the close relationship between the two, General Spaatz was able to convince Eisenhower that the AAF would continue to "meet its commitment to the Army and provide strong tactical air forces."[12] With Eisenhower's blessing, General Spaatz decided to stand down CAF to create three functional commands: strategic, tactical, and defense.[13] The AAF ordered Strategic Air Command to activate on 21 March 1946 using assets from the disbanded CAF. General Spaatz tapped General Kenney to be its commander and Major General St. Clair Streett, the deputy of the CAF, became the deputy of SAC.

General Kenney appeared the most logical choice to command SAC. At the conclusion of World War II, the AAF had four full generals: Arnold, Spaatz, Kenney, and Joseph T. McNarney.[14] General Arnold had already selected General Spaatz to be the next commanding general of the AAF and McNarney was the acting supreme allied commander in the Mediterranean. General Kenney had distinguished himself in the Pacific as General McArthur's airman.[15] After the war, the War Department named General Kenney the special advisor on military affairs to the US delegation to the United

[11] Meilinger, *Hoyt S. Vandenberg*, 66.

[12] Wolk, *The Struggle for Air Force Independence, 1943-1947*, 141.

[13] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 63.

[14] Harry R. Borowski, *A Hollow Threat : Strategic Air Power and Containment before Korea* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 33.

[15] Thomas E. Griffith, *MacArthur's Airman : General George C. Kenney and the War in the Southwest Pacific* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1998), xi.

Nations. He departed for London on 3 January 1946 to take over his new post.[16] When General Spaatz made the decision to create SAC, the War Department did not have anyone to replace General Kenney at the UN. General Kenney therefore assumed his command at SAC while still assigned duties at the UN. These duties forced him to balance his time between New York, London, and Washington.

Despite the problems that plagued the AAF in 1946, SAC stood up on 21 March 1946. The command inherited various CAF units from across the AAF. The command "was a hodgepodge of organizations, as lacking in capability as in orderly structure."[17] The bomber groups were undermanned and poorly equipped. The 509th had only 20 SILVERPLATE aircraft. SILVERPLATE aircraft were bombers configured to drop atomic bombs.

The groups could barely maintain half of their bombers or their aircrew. As the 449th group historian commented, "Due to the fact that there are but 17 enlisted men assigned to Aircraft Maintenance Division instead of the 473 authorized, efficient maintenance has been impeded, to say the least."[18] General Kenney bemoaned, "The Strategic Air Command was largely a name on a piece of paper." Major problems included, "a lack of money and a lack of almost anything that we needed," especially "flying personnel. [I was] swapping non-flyers so I could get somebody to fly the airplanes."[19]

General Spaatz articulated the initial mission statement for SAC on 12 March 1946. The mission statement reflected the ideas conveyed in the Spaatz Board Report and General Vandenberg's memo from January 1946.

> The Strategic Air Command will be prepared to conduct long range offensive operations in any part of the world either independently or in cooperation with land and Naval forces; to conduct maximum range reconnaissance over land or sea either independently or in cooperation with land and Naval forces; to provide combat units capable of intense and sustained combat operations employing the latest and most advanced weapons; to train units and personnel for the maintenance of the Strategic

[16] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 36.
[17] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 65.
[18] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*.
[19] Edward G. Longacre, *Strategic Air Command : The Formative Years (1944-1949)* (Offutt AFB, Neb.: Office of the Historian Headquarters Strategic Air Command, 1990), 7.

Forces in all parts of the world; to perform such special missions as the Commanding General, Army Air Forces may direct.[20]

On 10 October 1946, the command was given an updated mission which stated that SAC forces should standby for "immediate operation, either alone or jointly with other forces, against enemies of the United States. Specific responsibilities included those covered under the interim mission, with an additional requirement to develop, test, and improve strategic bombardment tactics."[21]

Activation of SAC and Early History: March 1946 – October 1948

The leadership of SAC, during its first few months, fell primarily on its deputy commander, Major General Streett, as General Kenney was still assigned dual responsibilities at SAC and the UN. Stuart Symington, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, thought General Kenney's talents for speaking and his wartime reputation could help the Air Force attain independence. Symington instructed General Kenney to accept speaking engagements to support the creation of an independent Air Force. According to General Kenney, "Symington wanted me to accept all invitations to make a speech…so I accepted them all…I had a sort of blanket instruction from Symington to accept everyone of them, or within the realms of possibility and time."[22] As Walton Moody observed in *Building a Strategic Air Force*, "Kenney himself decided to continue his work at the United Nation."[23] According to other accounts however, General Kenney had requested relief from his UN duties, although this was because of disillusionment with the UN concept and not a desire to get to SAC.[24] In General Kenney's defense, he originally anticipated that the UN would produce its own air component. If that force materialized, General Kenney would have been in a powerful position to serve as its commander. Because support for a UN air force never gained traction, the job turned out to be a dead end.

Personnel issues, such as the quality and quantity of people, affected planning for SAC and Air Force reorganization. In terms of quality, the shortage of qualified

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[20] J. C. Hopkins and Sheldon A. Goldberg, *The Development of Strategic Air Command, 1946-1986* (Omaha, Neb.: Office of the Historian Headquarters Strategic Air Command, 1986), 2.

[21] Longacre, *Strategic Air Command* 2.

[22] Dr. James C. Hasdorff, "Interview #806 of Gen George C. Kenney," ed. United States Air Force Oral History Program (1974), 135.

[23] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 78.

[24] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 141.

personnel for SAC was a major problem. From its activation in March until June 1946, SAC had cut its enlisted total personnel in half. "Nearly half the enlisted men were not qualified in any specialty. Many new recruits had marginal scores on the Army General Classification Test – meaning that they were thought to be unteachable in any but the most menial skills."[25] Shortages of specific career specialties, such as radar, power plant, and aircraft maintenance, compounded the fact that there were shortages of people. They also had many specialists they did not need. Until SAC could retrain enlisted members, the command was unable to expand or train effectively.

In terms of the quantity of personnel, the drawdown after World War II hurt every organization within the military, and SAC was no exception. In 1946, SAC suffered from significant manpower shortages. Throughout the year, its authorized levels of personnel decreased steadily, but its actual numbers decreased drastically. In 1946, SAC manning decreased by 12,478 people. Its civilian strength dropped from 12,144 to 4,902. SAC prioritized personnel and equipment to their Bikini Atoll mission, depleting the rest of the force. Project WONDERFUL, the expansive exercise to deploy five B-29 groups to Europe that was "postponed, cut to two groups, and finally cancelled," was another drain since it tied up personnel and monopolized assets.[26] By the end of 1946, SAC was 7,000 men short of its authorized strength.[27]

The basing for SAC's headquarters was another factor contributing to discontent during the first few years. SAC initially took over the headquarters of the CAF at Bolling Field. After World War II, the military attempted to move many organizations out of the Washington, DC area. The debate centered on whether SAC should be close to the capital or in a more centrally located city. General Spaatz decided to send SAC to Colorado Springs, CO and ordered them to move on 15 July 1946.[28] SAC's staff, both military and civilian, began moving their families to Colorado. Within a month however, General Kenney cancelled the order. The result was that many people had already found new housing and had even shipped their household goods. SAC's civilian staff was particularly affected by the change of bases. Some civilian staffers moved to Colorado,

[25] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 81.
[26] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 80.
[27] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*.
[28] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 82.

while others found jobs in the Washington area. When the AAF cancelled the order, SAC was unable to reclaim most of its civilian staff because many decided to either stay in Colorado or found other jobs. The situation also forced returning military members to find new homes in an already crowded city. The circumstances "wrought maximum disruption of headquarters operations and private lives and necessitated a new hiring program."[29] SAC moved to new offices at Andrews Field later in 1946, further complicating personnel issues. SAC's final move was to Offutt Air Force Base, NE in November 1948.

General Kenney's leadership during SAC's first year contributed to the command's problems. Lieutenant General Enis Whitehead, a former subordinate of General Kenney's in the Pacific, did not think General Kenney's assignment to the UN would result in the predicted UN air force.[30] In July 1946, Whitehead had one of his officers, Major General Clements McMullen, hand carry a letter to General Kenney that concluded with "If anything should happen and units of the Strategic Air Command be called upon for combat operations, the only thing which people would remember would be that George Kenney was the commander." In November, Lieutenant General Harold George arrived at the UN to relieve General Kenney. This allowed General Kenney to assume full-time responsibility at SAC. General Kenney finally began to influence SAC with his arrival at SAC headquarters at Andrews Field on 15 October 1946. At Whitehead's urging, General Kenney agreed to select General McMullen as his deputy at SAC, but General McMullen was unable to report until January 1947.[31] Because General Kenney continued to keep speaking engagements on behalf of the Air Force, the newly appointed General McMullen took responsibility for day-to-day operations of the command. His ideas about reorganization and training would shape the command for the next two years.

General McMullen faced the same two challenges SAC had struggled with throughout 1946. Assuming that SAC would not receive significant numbers of additional personnel, he recognized that the command would have to reorganize forces

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[29] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 82.
[30] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 40.
[31] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 53.

and command structures to achieve efficiency.[32] General McMullen began several initiatives that ultimately resulted in degraded mission performance at SAC. He first reduced the number of people assigned to the staff at both SAC and the numbered air forces.

General McMullen based his policy on pre-war observations. Before the war, he saw staffs operate smoothly with fewer officers than SAC currently had. If SAC staff officers took on more responsibilities, he would be able to free up pilots and navigators for the bomb groups. If staffs operated before the war this way, than surely they could do so now. General McMullen wanted individuals to take on more responsibilities to help the command's manpower problems.

This led to his second initiative that caused manning problems for SAC. General McMullen attempted to solve SAC's manpower shortages by cross-training individual crewmembers to do other jobs. By reducing the staffs to minimum levels, the command could use more aviators to train and fly. With cross-training, pilots could act as navigators or crew chiefs, etc.

General McMullen designed the program to save personnel. The program allowed bomber squadrons to operate with 34 officers instead of the authorized number of 81. Command-wide, the program was supposed to save 2,300 officers.[33] The term "McMullen Ceilings," which limited strength below officially authorized levels, came from this initiative. The reality, at the squadron level, was that cross-training received low priority because of a shortage of instructors. The combined negative effects of reduced staff and cross-training set the tone for the organization.

The Air Force began to lose confidence in SAC in 1948; problems mounted and the ability of the force to meet its mission requirements was thrown into doubt. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) raised a significant issue when they began war planning for possible Soviet aggressions in Europe. Planning committees concluded that logistical deficiencies would prevent offensive bomber operations from employing atomic weapons. There were several problems, one of which was a shortage of loading teams for the weapons. The Berlin Crisis tested some of the JCS's planning and confirmed deficiencies in the

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[32] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 53.
[33] Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force*, 87.

ability of SAC to employ atomic weapons.[34] The crisis also highlighted a low "index of aircraft in commission."[35] The Air Force detected these problems command-wide and some perceived the low level of proficiency stemmed from the cross-training concept. The Air Force had approved the cross-training program in 1947, but now doubted its effectiveness.

In the spring of 1948, Air Force leadership tasked Charles Lindbergh to "examine Air Force combat capability, specifically that of the atomic squadrons, and to offer recommendations for improvement." Lindbergh's report to General Vandenberg was particularly damning for the commander of SAC and his command's readiness. Lindbergh's report concluded, "That a great and almost immediate improvement in the striking power of our atomic forces can be made through attention to personnel." He added, "Personnel for atomic squadrons were not carefully enough selected, the average pilots [sic] proficiency is unsatisfactory, teamwork is not properly developed, and maintenance of aircraft and equipment is inadequate."[36]

Some generals concluded that SAC's problems stemmed from two issues: "General Kenney had made a poor choice in selecting General McMullen as his deputy, and neither commander really understood strategic bombing." Many viewed General McMullen as a superior maintenance and supply officer, but he had never commanded a large organization. The Pacific theater during World War II, in some minds, had been a tactical war until General LeMay launched strategic strikes against Japan.[37] A lack of strategic bombing experience accounted for poor training programs under General Kenney and General McMullen. Harry Borowski concluded that "The change of leadership at Strategic Air Command came principally out of one consideration: after two and one-half years, the organization still lacked the combat capability expected of the nation's most crucial military force. The difficulties lay beyond shortages of resources and men; the responsibility rested also on the command's top leadership."[38] In August 1948, General Vandenberg and Symington decided to replace General Kenney with General LeMay after a visit to Europe where both were impressed with General LeMay's

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[34] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 124.
[35] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 145.
[36] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 146.
[37] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 147.
[38] Borowski, *A Hollow Threat*, 149.

actions during the Berlin Crisis. General LeMay took over from General Kenney on 19 October 1948.

<div align="center">**Analysis**</div>

The Chaotic Phase

The initial period before a command formally activates is normally chaotic. SAC was no different. What is unique about this case study is that many of the Chaotic Phase factors evident for SAC were unique to the context of post-war demobilization. Shrinking budgets and personnel issues affected both ACC and AFGSC, but post-World War II demobilization created resource constraints of a significantly higher order of magnitude. Two concepts, a sense of urgency and the effectiveness of the guiding coalition, or leadership, are especially important in this case.

There was a distinct lack of urgency at SAC in 1946. The lack of a defined threat or strategy provided most of the indifference at SAC. The mission of SAC, during its early period, was concerned with containing the chaos of demobilization. The problem was that the context did not initially provide a purpose, nor did AAF or SAC leaders. To make matters worse, the AAF's fight for independence monopolized the service's attention. These factors essentially combined to preoccupy the AAF (and later the Air Force) leadership during SAC's standup. SAC's *leaders* were even more distracted, especially General Kenney who was often called upon to lecture on the virtues of an independent Air Force. The atom bomb was an important factor, but not important enough to guide successful change. It appears that technological innovation (the bomb) combined with contextual factors, did not provide the necessary urgency required to successfully sustain change during SAC's first few years.

Leadership, both external and internal to the organization, directly influenced SAC and had a hand in its success or failure. Leadership external to SAC was competent and determined. Generals Spaatz and Vandenberg were thoroughly involved during the design phases of SAC and provided much of the direction though reports and memoranda. As two of the AAF's top generals, they could have provided a more positive influence; however, the fight for independence derailed this possibility. Internally, SAC had to rely on Generals Kenney and McMullen. Although General Kenney may have been the obvious choice to lead SAC given the pool of generals

available, his leadership skills were inadequate for SAC. His lack of experience with strategic bombing and lack of vision for how SAC should posture itself in the post-war environment degraded SAC's effectiveness. His absence was another contributing factor.

General McMullen was a proficient manager, but a poor leader. He attempted to produce the required quantity of groups dictated by AAF plans for 70-group (and later 55-group) plans, despite severe resource shortages. General McMullen is equally to blame for the state of SAC in 1948 because he blindly pursued his policies without regard for the context or the resources he was given. Much can be blamed on the chaotic context that existed from 1945 to 1948, but at some point, SAC's leadership should have identified the glaring problems and addressed them.

The Stabilization Phase

According to the 4-phase model, the Stabilization Phase should be a period where the organization accepts its mission, organizes itself to succeed, and progresses to the next phase where it builds on its success. SAC did not progress according to this framework. Therefore, this phase, as a lens, is most useful if we look at some of the barriers to stabilization. To be successful, an organization should be able to eliminate barriers to its progress towards a stable organization. The analysis of this period, however, shows that the command was unable to overcome the barriers it faced. Four barriers are outlined below, two structural, one related to SAC's processes, and a final barrier tied to leadership.

The two structural barriers to stabilization for SAC were manpower shortages and basing problems. Demobilization complicated the first few years for SAC. Manpower problems were particularly acute for two reasons. The first reason is that SAC had little hope of attaining its authorized personnel totals in the near term because of service-wide shortages. The other problem involved the quality issue. SAC had a poor mix of required specialties for both officer and enlisted career fields.

Basing decisions affected the personnel SAC did have. Numerous changes caused aircraft and personnel to shuffle during the first few months of SAC. The most obvious example of problems with basing was the location of the headquarters staff. The debate between General Kenney and the AAF on where SAC should be located caused many problems. Because the AAF cancelled the first move to Colorado Springs, SAC

lost a significant portion of its civilian force. This also caused hardships for military members who were forced to move yet again and find new housing.

The most significant barrier to stabilization for SAC was the cross-training policy enacted by General McMullen. SAC had a choice in 1946 to either strive for the total number of groups outlined in the 70-group plan or to field groups as they became operational with authorized aircraft and personnel. To meet the needs of the service, General McMullen decided to field the maximum number of groups, even before they were operational. To do that, General McMullen designed his cross-training programs to outfit squadrons with fewer officers. This program was not sustainable and caused low proficiencies across the command. The blame does not fall solely on SAC. The drive by the service to achieve its total number of groups was politically driven to prove to the other services that the Air Force could influence national security. They needed groups, not proficient crews manning those groups. The decision to short change bomber groups was not a plan SAC could recover from, however. The institutional hangover from this period created cultural perceptions that lingered well beyond General Kenney's tenure.

The Stabilization Phase provides an opportunity for the organization to convert mid-level managers that do not buy-in to the command's vision or mission statement. Eventually, the command needs to reassign those leaders that are not in line with the direction of the command. In SAC's case, its commander was not in line with the direction of the command. General Kenney's performance, when combined with the factors above, compounded the situation. His absence from the daily operations of SAC contributed to its problems and his stand-in, General McMullen was an adept manager but a poor leader. General Kenney might have corrected some of SAC's early problems had he been more in tune with the problems that were eroding SAC's effectiveness. After SAC activated however, the command was unable to recover from its early missteps and major change was needed to stabilize the new organization.

In sum, SAC could have rectified three of the four barriers that existed from 1946 to 1948. For leadership, the problem existed at the command level. General Kenney's inattention to SAC's problems resulted in General McMullen having carte blanche over SAC's operations. Senior Air Force leaders should have identified earlier that SAC was not accomplishing its mission and should have stepped in. General Kenney himself could

have made changes had he known how deep the problems went. For the basing problem, the headquarters issue caused undue hardships and stressed the organization during a critical period. General Kenney should have assessed the situation and moved to Colorado Springs as ordered. Cross-training programs, as the third barrier, degraded proficiency across the command. SAC should have decided to outfit fully operational groups. Instead, they chose to activate more groups than they had resources for, which led to low proficiency across the command. The last barrier, a shortage of resources created by demobilization, may have been insurmountable for SAC; the only way to deal with this barrier would have been to devise a strategy that accounted for the resource constraints.

The Momentum and Anchoring Phases

The 4-phase model uses the Momentum and Anchoring Phases to describe a period where an organization begins to achieve wins and start to anchor its processes in an established organizational culture. Early on, SAC did not overcome barriers from the Stabilization Phase as they should have. Instead, SAC continued to operate with the barriers in place, striving to meet its goals despite those barriers. General McMullen's reaffirmation of his cross-training initiatives confirmed this point.

In 1948, General McMullen established cross-training as the second priority for SAC, right below training for overseas deployment. He even suggested SAC should expand aircrew to include ground duties in jobs like maintenance and supply. When commanders complained that cross-training and manpower shortages were hurting mission effectiveness, General McMullen replied that they should simply work harder, showing a rigid dedication to his training philosophy. Numerous problems and few noticeable victories riddle the early history of SAC. The end result was a stagnant culture that needed a vector change.

SAC's culture in 1948 was very unlike the culture we associate with the SAC of the 1950s; highly professional and dedicated to the mission. Before General LeMay, the command was spread too thin, was undermanned, and dominated by self-defeating management practices. General McMullen's unwillingness to deviate from his policies created a difficult environment, one unable to produce proficient operational bomber groups. SAC culture from 1946 to 1948 was also a product of its environment, a

combination of cultures from the Army, the 509th Group, and the strategic bomber culture of World War II. The bomb groups knew how to train for World War II scenarios. The reality was that future delivery tactics would be incompatible with their experiences. The atomic bomb and the new target set required different ideas and tactics. The context required that culture change, but the conditions set by SAC's leadership did not foster such a culture. The change of command provided the needed vector change.

The barriers from the Stabilization Phase interrupted the process outlined by the model and therefore, the last two phases of the 4-phase model are incomplete. The command was simply unable to move beyond the problems created by demobilization and cross-training. The Anchoring Phase was incomplete because the organization was mired in its World War II strategic bombing experience. The evolution to a nuclear bomber force did not occur until after General LeMay took over. The change of course in October 1948 therefore, interrupted the anchoring phase for the better of SAC.

Conclusion

Charles Lindbergh identified the 'hollow threat' of SAC in 1948 when he lifted the veil to reveal a command unable to meet its combat mission. General Kenney's lack of leadership aggravated this situation. Although SAC could not control many factors, such as budgets, personnel, and politics, the scorecard for SAC's early years was dismal. The bottom line for SAC was that the atomic bomb and the AAF rhetoric of 1945 and 1946 provided insufficient urgency to overcome the challenges of demobilization and ineffective leadership.

Chapter 3

Air Combat Command

The point is, why have two Air Force force providers doing essentially the same thing-putting airpower at the disposal of a theater/JTF warfighter.

- *General George L. Butler, CINCSAC, 1991*

The USAF officially activated Air Combat Command (ACC) on 1 June 1992. This activation marked the largest reorganization of the Air Force since it was birthed as a separate service in 1947. Recent experiences from the 1991 Gulf War and the end of the Cold War were two prime factors leading to the organizational change. Because of a changing security environment and budget considerations, the Air Force needed to reassess the way it organized, trained, and equipped. In the summer of 1991 at a lessons learned conference on the Gulf War, General Butler, Commander-in-Chief of SAC (CINCSAC), presented a historic brief at Maxwell AFB. General Butler proposed to dissolve SAC and merge the missions of TAC and SAC into a new command. General Butler's brief and a letter to General McPeak, the service's Chief of Staff, initiated the transition from SAC to ACC.

The resulting command performed admirably in the 1990's in the Balkans and over Iraq. Today ACC faces its toughest organizational challenge with the proposal to split off Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC). Compared to the SAC case study, ACC provides a positive example of the early stages of a command's reorganization.

Political and Military Context

The political context of the early 1990s saw the end of the Cold War and the prosecution of a successful air campaign in the Gulf War against Iraq. These two events shaped the discussions that led to the creation of ACC.

SAC had organized and trained for a Cold War scenario. When the threat of war with the Soviet Union dissolved, so too did SAC's primary mission. The command was suddenly over-prepared and excessively equipped for the new world order. During the Gulf War, SAC's contribution was substantial but severely lacking. Bomber crews,

trained primarily for one-pass efforts across a target while dropping a single warhead, were ill equipped for dynamic conventional missions. The dynamic environment of the Gulf War required those crews to integrate into strike packages, a situation the command had not adequately prepared them for. The fact that SAC crews had trouble delivering weapons effectively got the attention of its new commander, General Butler.

The decision to create ACC from SAC and TAC created many challenges. The organization that emerged had to account for the roles and missions previously assigned to SAC and TAC. The Air Force stood down SAC and TAC and stood up ACC while simultaneously the US military stood up US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) to consolidate command and control of missile, bomber, and submarine nuclear forces. This required detailed planning to ensure there was not a lapse in responsiveness of nuclear assets. The merger of two mission-focused commands had cultural implications. The bomber community was now married to the fighter world in a new command. Furthermore, all of this had to occur in a short amount of time. The hard work put forth by the transition teams paid great dividends for the provisional command.

ACC's Early Development

Pre-History: July 1991 – January 1992

According to the ACC historian, "Perhaps the most influential factor [in creating ACC] was a movement…to streamline, rationalize, and unify roles and missions."[1] As the Cold War ended, the military confused the roles and missions of "strategic" and "tactical" assets. Tactical fighters could be used to destroy strategic targets; strategic bombers were used in tactical roles; and the military aligned forces by mission type. Over time, strategic came to mean nuclear, tactical was linked to conventional targets. General Butler commented in July 1991, "The terms 'strategic' and 'tactical' were rendered essentially moot…Perhaps targets are strategic or tactical in time/space value, but certainly not platforms or weapons, per se."[2] To General Butler, these definitions and perceptions needed to change so that bomber forces could contribute to conflicts in

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[1] Edward Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command* (Office of History Air Combat Command, 1992), 1.

[2] SAC Office of the Historian, *History of the Strategic Air Command: 1 January - 31 December 1991* (Office of History Strategic Air Command, 1991), 1.

the future. If conventional conflict was to be more prevalent, the bomber force needed to become relevant to that fight.

The changing national security environment and the need for the military to reorganize to meet new challenges inspired several calls for reorganization. First, the CSAF had his vision for reorganization of the military following the Cold War. General McPeak wanted to streamline the chain of command, reduce organizational layering, eliminate ambiguous and conflicting responsibilities, and decentralize authority down to the wing level. Second, in June 1990 the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF) wrote a policy paper titled, "*The Air Force and U.S. National Security: Global Reach—Global Power*," which outlined a new direction for the Air Force. Lastly, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, had an initiative to streamline the Unified Command Plan.[3] His plan was to establish two unified commands, one of which was USSTRATCOM. In General McPeak's words, "Make no mistake, international events and internal pressures will reshape the military services. The Air Force must adapt or go the way of the dinosaurs."[4]

In concert with these initiatives was the placement of General Butler as CINCSAC in January of 1991. His experiences on the Joint Staff proved to him the "Cold War was over and that the West had in fact won."[5] He took this idea and reexamined SAC's ability to meet the demands of the warfighter in current conflicts. The Gulf War showed serious deficiencies for the bomber force in employing weapons in Iraq, as he explained in a briefing he gave at Maxwell Air Force Base.

The initial thrash by the leadership of the Air Force began with General Butler's brief on 12 July 1991.[6] In this brief, General Butler outlined internal and external factors that contributed to SAC's inability to meet the needs of the modern warfighter. His recommendation was to restructure the forces to provide better capabilities for conventional operations. He believed "If bombers/recce from this Command are to make a meaningful contribution to future Air Force conventional warfighting capabilities, then major restructuring (and, rethinking) is essential. My concern is that we have so

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[3] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 1-4.
[4] Office of the Historian, *History of the Strategic Air Command: 1 January - 31 December 1991*, 13.
[5] Butler, "Disestablishing SAC," 6.
[6] Butler, "Disestablishing SAC," 4.

stovepiped ourselves as between SAC and TAC that we are not only failing to get the potential out of present systems, but we are going down separate, uncoordinated paths toward the future."[7] In sum, SAC was not organized, trained, equipped, nor tasked for sustained conventional operations. Strong systemic biases, internal and external, constrained SAC's forces. These factors had profound implications for the Air Force.[8]

By the end of July, General Butler's statements produced movement at TAC. General Loh initiated an internal study to quietly explore options for a restructuring of the commands. This effort proved fruitful for General Loh, who traveled with General McPeak to Canada in early August for a conference. The conference provided General Loh with an opportunity to pitch his concept to the CSAF. At this meeting, Generals Loh and McPeak addressed and incorporated two important points into the plan. The first was the perception issue. General McPeak was concerned with the perception of combining the two commands, a perception later described as solving the "us versus them" issue of the merger. General McPeak described this as "the problem of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs…There is going to be one great big cohuna [sic] four-star…commander of Air Command[9], and then the Seven Dwarfs are all the other four-stars."[10] SAC also needed to reassign tankers, which created another issue. General McPeak wanted to involve Military Airlift Command (MAC) to include the tankers. Including MAC in the process helped with the perception problem because it expanded the reorganization beyond just TAC and SAC.

In August and September 1991, planning efforts at TAC accelerated, the number of people assigned to the effort increased, and the CSAF brought MAC into the process. The teams heavily contested two issues during the planning: tankers and command relationships. The placement of tankers for nuclear roles was important for MAC and ACC. Both issues depended on whether or not the new command would activate as a specified command and the staff built plans for either case. The staff resolved these issues in principle in time for the CSAF to brief the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Dick Cheney on 13 September. Cheney liked the proposal and authorized the Air Force

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[7] George L. Butler, "Lessons from the War," ed. Merrill McPeak.
[8] George L. Butler, *Lessons from the War [Slide Presentation Given at Maxwell July 1991]* (1991).
[9] "Air Command" was renamed "Air Combat Command" during the planning stages.
[10] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 6.

to continue planning and to announce the broad outlines of the plan at the upcoming annual Air Force Association (AFA) conference.[11]

The next major event was the Air Force's official announcement of the sweeping changes at the annual AFA conference. At this conference, both Secretary of the Air Force Donald Rice and General McPeak addressed the conference and outlined plans for the creation of ACC from SAC and TAC.

In his 27 September address to the nation, President George H.W. Bush introduced a sense of urgency in the form of a time crunch. During that speech, the President discussed nuclear alert postures and changing command structures in a post-Cold War world. He also announced the formation of USSTRATCOM and set the date of its activation for 1 June 1992. SAC and TAC teams had agreed on a 1 July 1992 activation and the President, probably inadvertently, pushed the timeline up a month.[12] The commands had many things to do in a short amount of time.

Detailed planning started officially on 25 September when the TAC Transition Team organized. This group considered holistically the myriad tasks assigned. They structured themselves to mirror the organization and functions for the new command and included missions assigned to SAC. They began their efforts by first studying the requirements as outlined by the CSAF and considered numbered air forces, bases, aircraft, command relationships, and impacts on SAC, TAC, and MAC.

General Loh provided his personal guidance to the team on 2 October. He had three main points for the group. First, they were to consider their duties on the Transition Team their primary responsibilities. Second, it was important for the group to consider ACC as a whole, not just the command headquarters. The most important guidance, however, was his final point that the group was creating a new organization, not a merger of two commands. General Loh's vision of this new command played an important role throughout the planning period and enabled the transition teams to get buy-in from SAC, TAC, and MAC.

On 15 October 1991, General Loh approved ACC's initial mission statement. The provisional command did not publish this initial statement or an approved mission

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[11] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 14.
[12] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 17.

statement until after ACC was activated. The initial mission was simply "Force provider to warfighting CINCs."[13] Obviously, there was much more to the organization than these five words. The reason the transition teams worked so well was because the guiding coalition led by Rice, General McPeak, General Loh, and General Butler provided clear guidance to the teams. The efforts of the Transition Team culminated in the completion of the basic plan to the USAF Program Action Directive (PAD) 92-2. The Air Force released PAD 92-2 on 25 November and the Secretary of the Air Force signed it on 4 December. With the PAD, the Air Force thus activated the provisional headquarters, which stood up on 15 January 1992.

Prior to the official stand-up of the provisional headquarters, the transition teams made command-level decisions. One of those decisions was whether the provisional command should be a direct reporting unit (DRU) or operate as detachments from the old commands. The CSAF decided that a DRU was more effective because it removed any sense that the members of the provisional command served two bosses. Major General Stephen Croker, the provisional ACC commander, believed "the organization did not have to spend time trying to define the new command, a task that had been satisfactorily completed prior to 15 January 1992. Rather, the provisional headquarters was able to concentrate on 'housekeeping' chores and to ensure that Langley AFB was ready to receive the influx of personnel in the months before the command stood up."[14]

Provisional Command: January 1992 – June 1992

During this short period, the provisional staff worked at a frantic pace. Many tasks remained to be accomplished before the activation date and the transition teams were still separated amongst the three commands (SAC, MAC, and TAC). Members of the provisional command, however noted that this period of time was less hectic because, "the presence at Langley of senior officers who were highly motivated, who possessed strategic as well as tactical expertise, who were adept at expediting the program plan implementation process, and who were able to work harmoniously with the TAC and SAC Headquarters staffs, eased the burden of restructuring."[15] The provisional

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[13] TAC/XP, *Air Force Restructuring Update 28 October 1991 [Briefing TAC/XP to CSAF]* (1991).
[14] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 42.
[15] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 32-33.

command also had the benefit of the solid organizational work completed by the TAC transition teams.

The first task of the provisional staff was to create a concept of operations (CONOPS). The staff had to establish connections with the SAC and MAC transition teams. The CONOPS established structure for the interim command so that decisions could be made by a minimally manned provisional staff at the center of the discussion and the satellite transition teams (SAC and MAC) providing input. All decisions went through ACC (P) and this set-up worked effectively. One aspect that aided the staff was General Croker's managerial style, which was to "accomplish tasks with a minimum of bureaucratic inertia."[16] The general would often confer with members of his staff on an issue and render a decision on the spot. His guidance allowed his action officers to address issues, reach a solution, and move on to other issues with minimal delays.

Two dominant concerns that complicated ACC activation were facilities and personnel. A shortage of office space and late arriving personnel from SAC hampered early operations. ACC handled the office space issues by housing the command in temporary facilities, but ACC could not remedy the shortage of action officers in time. Some offices were moved off base to accommodate the shortage of space, which totaled 75,000 square feet.[17] Without a dedicated staff to orchestrate this process, the command would not have been able to operate on 1 June. The other dominant issue was the personnel problem.

Two personnel issues complicated the stand up of ACC: staffing levels at Langley and assignment notification timelines. The new command added roughly 1,200 authorized positions to Langley AFB; however, manning levels at Langley appeared to be over the official AFMPC authorized limits. This occurred because the eventual ACC staff would include both TAC and SAC staff elements with SAC personnel from Offutt AFB supplanting some of the established TAC staffing. While outbound TAC personnel waited for their next assignments, AFMPC counted that manning as a surplus. On paper, AFMPC was unable to add personnel to Langley until TAC personnel left the base. This prevented Air Force Military Personnel Center (AFMPC) from assigning SAC personnel

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[16] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 32.
[17] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 36.

to ACC. The second issue involved notifications for assignment. Regulations dictated that 90-days notice be given to personnel before they were moved. The provisional staff timeline required only a 60-day notification period.[18] The disparity caused delays in moves and reduced the efficiency of the ACC staff throughout the provisional headquarters timeframe and the early days of ACC. Leaders could have solved both with more direct communication between the provisional command and AFMPC. The same issues with the personnel system would affect not only the provisional command, but also the formal command later. General Croker identified personnel issues and the inflexibility of the AFMPC as issues he would have handled differently.

Related to the notification problems was the apparent shortage of SAC personnel willing to move to ACC. Up to this point, action officers involved with the transition teams had been motivated and influential in the planning process. SAC teams outperformed MAC efforts and appeared to be fully engaged in the creation of ACC. When it came time to move people, there was reluctance by SAC to give up its best people. Many offices refused to give up their best military officers until forced to do so. Staff agencies seldom want to give up their workhorses. Civilian personnel were also an issue throughout this time. According to General Croker, "the civilian personnel system appeared inadequately designed to identify and transfer large numbers of people in a very compressed schedule. In future large reorganizations, civilian positions must be identified, validated, and approved for assignment action earlier in the planning process."[19]

The transition teams accomplished the heavy lifting of the provisional command throughout March, April, and May 1992. "The staff concentrated on a variety of actions that had to be completed before ACC could stand up; these included…program plan implementation…headquarters organization, manning, and beddown issues; force structure distribution; financial activities and funding programs; the issuance of base signs, aircraft decals, and uniform patches…and preparations for command standup ceremonies."[20] To wrap up the formation of the new organization, the command focused on strategic communication and proceeded with a series of roadshow briefs. These

[18] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 37.
[19] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 38.
[20] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 41.

briefings were given across the command in April to inform the members of the soon to be ACC, of how the command would organize and operate itself to meet new challenges.

Activation of ACC: 1 June 1992

The most difficult aspect of activating ACC was avoiding the perceptions of winners and losers. General Loh's guidance continued to emphasize that the emerging command was a new entity, not a merger of SAC and TAC. The teams worked General Loh's directive into the design of emblems, briefings, and the activation ceremony itself. The ACC (P) staff was careful during the days leading up to the activation not to hold commander's conferences or offsite meetings until the command officially activated. All of these efforts targeted perceptions and the residual cultures of SAC and TAC. General Loh needed to merge the two cultures into a single one within the new command. Lingering loyalties to past organizations would be harmful and counterproductive to the new culture.

How General Loh arrived at the mission statement gives a prime example of how he solved this problem. General Loh solicited recommendations for the mission statement from units throughout ACC. The CSAF paired down their recommendations to eight candidates. They then reduced the candidates to six at an ACC commander's conference. General Loh merged those six into the resulting mission statement. The ACC mission statement, published in July 1992, read: "Air Combat Command Professionals…providing the world's best combat air forces—delivering rapid, decisive airpower—anytime, anywhere."[21]

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Analysis

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The 4-phase model is now used as a lens to analyze ACC's beginning period. Much like SAC, the analysis identifies lessons that apply to AFGSC. The main difference between the analysis of SAC and ACC is the negative versus the positive aspects of the lessons. While the SAC analysis identified barriers unsurmounted, the ACC analysis shows a command that was able to account for and overcome barriers.

The Chaotic Phase

Organizations rely on a sense of urgency to implement and sustain change. For ACC, two concepts influenced the decision to reorganize. First, senior leaders intended

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[21] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 43.

to streamline and consolidate military command relationships because of the "heightened significance [of] the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, the continued growth of the federal deficit, and the many other political and economic changes reshaping the world in the last decade of the 20th century."[22] This movement began in the late 1980s and was firmly evident in the sentiments of senior military leaders to include Colin Powell, Donald Rice, and Merrill McPeak. The other catalyst was SAC shortcomings as a conventional force provider, which General Butler identified during and after the 1991 Gulf War. The appointment of General Butler to command SAC was a timely move by the Air Force because General Butler was capable of changing SAC to meet the current needs of the military. These two imperatives, institutional change created by context and the perceived failure of SAC as a conventional force provider, supplied the Air Force with the sense of urgency it needed to merge SAC and TAC.

The guiding coalition that began this process included the Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) and the commanders of SAC and TAC, Generals Butler and Loh respectively. This coalition worked well together and was crucial to the successful reorganization. According to General Croker, "The new structure will last because the commander's cooperation and trust has been evident at all levels."[23] Internal coalitions were not created until the provisional command was established on 15 January 1992. The staff created agencies to handle transition issues at both SAC and TAC before this date. A group of senior officers called the General Officer Steering Group (GOSG) observed and guided these groups. The CSAF tasked the GOSG with monitoring the transition teams and reporting on progress to the CSAF. This group "played a significant role in the restructuring effort; it constituted the primary avenue of communications between the Headquarters USAF officials who established restructuring policies and the command-level planners who would devise methods of carrying out those policies."[24] The most effective of these groups was the TAC Transition Team. By organizing itself to mirror a staff organization and establishing relationships with SAC and MAC transition staffs, the TAC team became the focal point during ACC's beginning months. It also had

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[22] Office of ACC History, "History of Strategic Air Command 1 January - 31 May 1992," (1993), 1.
[23] History, "History of Strategic Air Command 1 January - 31 May 1992," 8.
[24] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*.

the benefit of General Loh's direct influence. His guidance was crucial to the smooth transition and the vision he imparted shaped the attitudes of the combined organizations.

During an organization's Chaotic Phase, a vision and/or mission for the organization should be evident. ACC was to be a new command, not a merger of TAC and SAC or worse, the consumption of SAC by TAC. General Loh remained consistent with this vision from his initial meetings and discussions relating to reorganization. To succeed, ACC needed to provide a stable foundation for the nuclear mission while integrating bomber forces into conventional operations and plans. General Loh, through his guidance to the Transition Teams, outlined a powerful vision for the staff that effectively guided their planning and accounted for SAC's proud legacy.

The Stabilization Phase

The Stabilization Phase should be a period where the organization accepts its mission, organizes itself to succeed, and progresses to the next phase where it builds on its success. The analysis of SAC focused on the barriers that *prevented* that command from accepting its mission, organizing itself to succeed, and progressing towards a stable organization. ACC was able to progress during its first months because it successfully overcame barriers similar to those faced by SAC. The analysis of ACC, through the lens of the Stabilization Phase, identifies four barriers for ACC, three were overcome, one remained a challenge. The challenge that remained was the personnel issue.

Combining two commands into one seamless organization is one of the barriers that ACC successfully overcame. SAC and TAC focused on two different modes of airpower and flew different types of aircraft. Bringing these two groups together was a challenge that the transition teams addressed early using the guidance from Generals McPeak and Loh. General Loh's guidance to the TAC Transition Team provided the informal vision for ACC that made the difference. The Air Force made another crucial decision when Air Force leadership allowed ACC (P) to activate as a DRU. This allowed the command to start out as a new command with a clear division between the new command and the old SAC and TAC organizations.

The second barrier that ACC overcame was the separation of the various planning staffs. A contributing factor to ACC (P)'s success was the CONOPS created by the TAC Transitions Team. The CONOPS enabled the provisional commander to make quick

decisions and served to provide guidance for the flow of information between geographically separated transition teams. By centering the command decisions with General Croker, yet utilizing the teams abroad, the ACC (P) staff was able to use its resources more effectively and make decisions faster and more accurately. General Croker's leadership also aided this process--he was able to make quick decisions with actionable guidance from his staff.

The third barrier was the facility problem. Again, ACC successfully overcame this barrier with an efficient staff. Facilities will always be a problem for new organizations. Even if sufficient office space is available, moving people around can create confusion. ACC had a dedicated staff that handled the beddown of ACC, operating as a central location to handle issues as they arose. That the Air Force chose Langley as ACC's base also solved many of the problems from SAC's early years. Since TAC was already at Langley, a significant portion of the staff for the new command did not have to move and some facilities already existed.

The last, and most disruptive, barrier for ACC was the personnel problem. As already noted assignment notifications and manning authorizations were two issues related to personnel problems. General Croker remarked he should have engaged with AFMPC earlier to eliminate any confusion between ACC and the personnel system. The reality, however, was that the assignment system was unable to deal with the conditions created by the activation of a new command. The problems that arose seemed simple, but common sense rarely trumped the rigid assignment process. The inflexibility built into the personnel system should be the commander's first concern when undergoing reorganization. ACC struggled most with this one barrier, although the Air Force mitigated the problem by activating ACC at Langley, which provided a pool of TAC officers able to operate effectively ACC until sufficient officers from SAC arrived.

In chapter three, this paper identified leadership as a barrier for SAC. For ACC, the story was quite different. ACC's provisional commander actively engaged in the stand up of ACC and his effective leadership eliminated certain barriers. A dedicated provisional commander can make all the difference during the first months of work. Without clear vision from the CSAF, ACC would not have been successful during this period. General Croker's presence and expertise throughout the provisional command

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days was pivotal. During this time, he was repeatedly called away to consult on B-2 issues; however, his deputies were up to the task of continuing the tough work of creating a command. Even while away, General Croker retained his decision-making authority because he was in constant contact with his staff. This differed from SAC because while General Kenney was away General McMullen made most of the decisions for SAC regardless of General Kenney's location.

General Loh's guidance during this process is also worth noting. From the beginning, he declared that the stand-up of ACC was not a "we/they" thing and he stressed that integration of two teams was important.[25] Whether this perception is true today is another story, but at the time the action officers responsible clearly believed that ACC was a new entity that combined missions of two previous commands. The lesson here is that leadership can overcome many of the barriers that emerge during the stand up of a new organization.

The Momentum and Anchoring Phases

Because the transition teams and the provisional command were effective, ACC had an easier time after it activated on 1 June 1992. Using the Momentum Phase, this paper looked for indicators that the command was achieving wins in the short term. A good indicator for ACC was that the hard work of the provisional staff culminated in making the activation deadline of 1 June. Despite some of the issues leading up to its activation, ACC began to operate as an effective organization because it was able to provide combat forces to the warfighter. Operational deployments to the Middle East and Balkans were testament to this fact. The command also met its goals by integrating fighter and bomber assets into training scenarios and exercises such as Red Flag. The transition of the Fighter Weapons School to the United States Air Force Weapons School was another instance where ACC consolidated its resources more effectively. What remained was the organization's culture.

In 1992, ACC anchored its organization in the culture that existed in the fighter and bomber communities that had won the Cold War and fought in the Gulf War. Even with a focus on avoiding the "us versus them" attitude during the creation of ACC, the culture of the new command was destined to be rooted in the fighter culture, which was

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[25] Longacre, *Establishment of Air Combat Command*, 33.

primarily engaged in conventional missions. The reason the Air Force created ACC was to bring bombers into the conventional arena, to better integrate bomber firepower into the CAF. The real question today is whether the resulting culture caused the incidents that led to AFGSC.

Nowhere during this process did ACC address how the command would sustain its nuclear proficiency over the long run. ACC assumed that this capability would naturally transfer to ACC and be resident in the bomber culture. Over time, a different attitude emerged. According to the Schlesinger Report, "The elimination of SAC training and the subsequent change in training focus marked a transition in culture throughout the bomber communities as the problem-solving and flexibility typical of fighter pilots were rewarded and mind-sets characteristics of those with nuclear experience were devalued."[26] The command relegated the nuclear mission to second tier status as a training priority. That culture caused systemic problems discussed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

For ACC, the successful implementation of the new command can be reduced to a simple equation. Clear guidance combined with solid leadership and a well-organized staff led to successful organizational change. Clear vision, offered by Generals McPeak and Loh, provided the guidance necessary for the Transition Teams to design a functioning organization that combined the mission sets of two drastically different organizations. The leadership of the Air Force and the provisional staffs created an organization that met challenges and cut corners when necessary. General Loh's vision told everyone that the Air Force was standing down both TAC and SAC and it was building a new organization in its place. In the end, ACC provides a positive example of how the Air Force can successfully reorganize. The process, however, was not flawless, as the degradation of the nuclear mission proves. The challenge next is to determine how best to tear apart ACC to create two air components, similar to TAC and SAC, without suffering the same consequences that led to the decision to create ACC.

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[26] This also assumes that flexibility and problem solving skills are not desired in nuclear or bomber operations. Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management: Phase I: The Air Force's Nuclear Mission* (2008).

Chapter 4

Air Force Global Strike Command

> [I am] *very comfortable that just by establishing this command, just by getting a smaller span of control, moving the leadership closer to the action, that you're going to get, just by the nature of leadership and organizations, a much better focus on your nuclear mission. But at the same time you've created this conventional seam because you've removed the B-2s and B-52s from ACC.*
>
> - *Brigadier General James Kowalski, AFGSC (P)*

Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) is in the process of standing up as a new organization. Much of the historical narrative discussed for SAC and ACC has already occurred for AFGSC. This chapter, therefore, outlines and then analyzes AFGSC's early development, to include the sense of urgency in its formation and the leadership that will shape its future.

Political and Military Context

The end of the Cold War decreased the probability of nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union and the US, but it did not make nuclear weapons irrelevant for national security. Despite the trends towards conventional and irregular conflicts, roughly 30 countries depend on the security of the US nuclear umbrella. The Schlesinger Report concluded in 2008, "The end of the Cold War has clearly reduced the salience of nuclear weapons. However, the continuing need for nuclear weapons to ensure the security of the United States and its allies has not abated. The character of the threat, advanced weapons systems, and the geopolitical situation have all changed, but the nuclear deterrence mission remains an essential component of the nation's defense strategy."[1] Coercing or deterring smaller states from acquiring nuclear weapons will remain crucial to the political environment. The Air Force must balance nuclear and conventional requirements without losing credibility in either area. Conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan for example require different missions from some nuclear components, namely the

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[1] Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, *Schlesinger Report*, 18-20.

bomber force. Balancing conventional needs and nuclear deterrent needs will be the major challenge for Air Force strategists in the 21st century.

What complicates this situation is the political environment that surrounds nuclear weapons. Currently, several major policy documents are up for review. The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) will shape the nuclear arsenal of the US. Strategic weapons negotiations with Russia will influence the nation's attitudes on nuclear weapons. Funding and emphasis may shift away from nuclear weapon systems, but nuclear weapons will not just go away. In fact, as General Kowalski noted: "[a drawdown of nuclear platforms] is all the more argument for putting them in one command."[2]

AFGSC's Early Development

Pre-History: October 2006 – 12 January 2009

The Air Force did not create AFGSC around a new weapon system (as with SAC), nor did it create it because of a perceived deficiency in war (as with ACC). The Air Force created AFGSC because of a systemic degradation of the nuclear mission in the Air Force. This degradation manifested itself in two events in two separate nuclear communities: the bomber and missile communities. The first event was the shipment of sensitive missile components to Taiwan in 2006. The US did not recover these components until 2008. The second event was the flight of nuclear warheads from Minot AFB to Barksdale AFB in August of 2007.

These two events, according to the report from the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management (referred to as the Schlesinger Report), were indicators of systemic problems resulting from the atrophy of the nuclear mission by the Air Force. The task force summarized the key problems and concluded that there was an underinvestment in the nuclear mission; fragmented authority and responsibility; ineffective processes; eroded expertise; a lack of a self-assessment culture; and a lack of advocacy for the nuclear mission.[3] The Schlesinger Report released their results on 12 September 2008.

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[2] Brigadier General James Kowalski (AFGSC(P)), interview by the author, 28 Apr 2009interview.
[3] Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, *Schlesinger Report*, 13-21.

The report concluded that these events occurred because of organizational changes made in the 1990s. Those changes produced five shortcomings: nuclear functions were embedded in non-nuclear organizations, diminished senior leader focus on nuclear role, fewer experienced personnel, overwhelming focus on conventional warfighting, and a "general devaluation of the deterrence mission and those who perform it."[4] These factors contributed to the eventual culture that permeated the bomber community. According to the report, "the Air Force now lacks a culture that is internally driven to address systemic weaknesses."[5] The task force concluded that organizational change could remedy this problem. In sum, the organizational construct created in 1992 was insufficient to meet the demands of the nuclear environment. The focus shifted to conventional missions despite the fact that nuclear deterrence was still a critical component of US national security strategy. The failures that resulted removed a layer of trust and confidence in the Air Force's ability to execute the nuclear mission.

In response to the Schlesinger Report, two conferences of senior leaders met to discuss the Air Force's role in addressing nuclear issues. Only a few days after the report was released, a Nuclear Summit convened to discuss the Schlesinger Report's findings. Less than a month later at the fall 2008 CORONA, the Air Force's top generals decided to implement one of the report's major recommendations, the creation of a new command focused on nuclear and global strike operations.[6] As Major General Alston recalled, "We didn't all agree on how we would quantify that sense of urgency; but I think the Chief and the Secretary [of the Air Force], by every one of their actions gave a clear indication of where nuclear stood. And that helped normalize everyone having a common view of the sense of urgency."[7] The result of these two conferences was a consensus that the Air Force was committed to addressing concerns highlighted by the Schlesinger Report.

After the Air Force leadership made the decisions at CORONA, the next step was to articulate those decisions. The Air Force formally announced this decision on 24 October 2008 and released the Air Force's nuclear roadmap titled "*Reinvigorating the Air*

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[4] Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, *Schlesinger Report*, 22-23.
[5] Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, *Schlesinger Report*, 33.
[6] "Corona Fall 2008 Decision & Tasker Review," ed. US Air Force (2008).
[7] Major General Donald Alston (HAF/A10), interview by the author, 28 Jan 2009. Major General Alston leads the AF/A10 directorate of the Air Staff. A10 is tasked with strategic deterrence and nuclear integration.

Force Nuclear Enterprise." This roadmap made a wide range of changes, but the most substantial was the decision to create AFGSC. Another important decision was to create an air staff directorate focused on nuclear matters. This led to the activation of the A10 staff on 1 November 2008.

During this initial period, the Air Force drew up a list of potential bases for the new command and the A10 staff produced the Program Action Directive (PAD) for AFGSC. The CSAF approved the PAD on 9 January 2009 and three days later activated the provisional command at Bolling AFB in Washington, D.C. The Air Force tapped Brigadier General James Kowalski to command the provisional headquarters.

Provisional Command: 12 January 2009 – 30 September 2009 (projected)

During an interview, General Kowalski indicated that he attempted to have a professional program management assessment completed for AFGSC. His vision was that a private contractor could outline the activation process and highlight key milestones and other "showstoppers" for the command. He was unable to convince the Air Force of the utility of such a study, which forced the command to identify showstoppers as they occurred. In some instances, such as activation of the provisional command, there were converging political factors that hurt the progression of AFGSC, such as the CSAF announcement of the provisional headquarters for AFGSC.[8] Those factors led to a delay and created ripple effects during the process.

AFGSC (P) is currently developing the details for the organization whose formal activation is planned for September 2009. The command is refining their guidance in Programming Plan (PPLAN) 09-01. This plan includes detailed instructions for individual staff agencies and augments the guidance provided by the PAD. A critical part of the PPLAN is the phased timeline for the command's activation. This timeline includes milestones, objectives, and assumptions for each phase, providing guidance for action officers and staff functions.

Basing for AFGSC is critical, and any delays associated with a final beddown location will cause delays in achieving full operational capability. On 3 April 2009, the USAF announced that Barksdale AFB, LA was the preferred location for the headquarters of AFGSC. Upon completion of an environmental impact study, AFGSC

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[8] Kowalski.

plans to begin moving personnel during the summer of 2009. The command hopes to have the final basing decision by 27 June 2009.[9]

The process used to select Barksdale as AFGSC's base and the way this decision was announced created one complication for the command. ACC completed a report for the CSAF that investigated the possible locations for the command. The report created a weighting system that compared different attributes of each base and totaled up points in different categories to arrive at a composite score. ACC gave the report to the CSAF, who made the basing decision in conjunction with the Senior Basing-Executive Steering Group.[10] After the Air Force announced Barksdale as the location, Congressional delegations from states that were not selected for the base requested justification for the Air Force's decision.

The data the Air Force released showed that Barksdale scored 81 points compared to Offutt AFB's 89 points, using ACC's weighted composite scoring method.[11] Immediately after this release, the Nebraska congressional delegation challenged the Air Force's decision based on the service's own scoring. The governor of Nebraska sent a letter to President Obama questioning the "ethical standards" of the administration.[12] It is not clear if these protests will result in a further delay for AFGSC. If President Obama or the Nebraska delegation forces the Air Force to reassess its basing choice, AFGSC's activation would be significantly delayed. What is clear is that the Air Force lost the strategic communication battle because it failed to outline the reasons why Barksdale was a better location, even though it scored lower than Offutt in ACC's report to AFGSC.

Nebraska's challenge to the Air Force's basing decision could cause personnel problems that will ripple through the command for at least a year. The delay caused by the requirement for an environmental impact study has already delayed the assignment process to the point where it effects the summer 2009 assignment cycle, a prime move time in the Air Force. Some officers assigned to AFGSC are likely to remain at their current locations and will be required to travel in temporary duty (TDY) status to Barksdale without moving their families. Certain people are in 'must move' situations

[9] "Air Force Global Strike Command (Provisional) Mission Brief," ed. AFGSC(P) (2009), slide 13.
[10] Michael Hoffman, "Gates Asked to Overturn Choice of Base for GSC," *Air Force Times*, 10 Apr 2009.
[11] Hoffman, "Gates Asked to Overturn Choice of Base for GSC."
[12] Hoffman, "Gates Asked to Overturn Choice of Base for GSC."

and but are unable to get orders. Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) is considering alternatives that will allow those personnel to move to Barksdale AFB, which shows that AFGSC is reacting to events similar to those experienced by ACC. AFGSC is suffering from the effects of a rigid personnel system designed for long-term sustainment and not short-notice and necessary taskings.

The personnel issues create one of the biggest challenges for AFGSC, which will be handling the operation of the command before all personnel arrive at Barksdale. The AFPC assignment cycle, combined with the timing of the command's activation, will not allow all the critical members of the staff to move at the same time. To combat this problem, General Kowalski envisions a "distributed and collaborative" command network enabled by modern collaborative tools, such as video teleconferencing and network solutions.[13] These same tools were not available during ACC's provisional days. This is possible, not only because of technological solutions, but because the culture is different today. According to General Kowalski, the current culture is comfortable with terms like "reachback and IT solutions" unfamiliar to older generations. Technology and culture will allow AFGSC to operate before all personnel are on hand and facilities are prepared.

AFGSC (P) is designing and revising, while simultaneously executing, the PPLAN. Part of that plan involves strategic communications. The provisional commander began a series of roadshow briefings in April 2009. These roadshow briefs target professional military education and individual units that will transfer to AFGSC. The roadshow briefly outlines the way ahead and what remains to be done. Most of the brief focuses on the reasons for the command and the structure that it will provide. It also addresses the conventional mission. AFGSC will be responsible for the platforms that have a conventional as well as nuclear role. General Kowalski placed great emphasis on the balance between these two missions observing, "We can get a few things wrong, but the nuclear and conventional missions are two things we cannot get wrong."[14]

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[13] Kowalski interview.
[14] Kowalski interview.

Analysis

It is premature to judge the outcomes of the early events that led to the AFGSC, but there is utility in objectively applying the first two phases of the 4-phase model to the brief history that has occurred thus far. Much like the SAC and ACC case studies, the Chaotic and Stabilization Phases align roughly with the pre-provisional and provisional command periods respectively.

The Chaotic Phase

A sense of urgency must exist that is sufficient to sustain organizational change. The two incidents that caused the chain of events that resulted in the decision to create AFGSC are, on the surface, relatively simple to correct. ACC and AFSPACE have addressed the issues that contributed to the mishandling of nuclear hardware and these types of incidents are not likely to be repeated. The deeper, systemic problems outlined in the Schlesinger Report, however, are more difficult to resolve. The DoD created a sense of urgency when it replaced the SAF and CSAF because of a failure of leadership in the nuclear mission. The Air Force created a sense of urgency when it decided to use organizational change to solve systemic failures. The question that remains is how a change of leadership and a perceived systemic failure compares to the motivational context used to create SAC and ACC.

AFGSC may struggle because it does not have the same motivational context of SAC and ACC. The sense of urgency for AFGSC is evident on two levels. At the command-level, there is a definite sense that change is required. Command-level guidance has been clear and is dedicated to reinvigorating the nuclear enterprise. At stake is the nation's trust in its nuclear arsenal and the value of the nuclear force as a deterrent. Reinvigorating the nuclear mission does not mean the Air Force is looking for more counties to target or new models for deterrence. AFGSC simply needs to return credibility to US nuclear options.

At the unit-level, organizational change is not quite as clear of a solution. In the absence of a defined threat of war or a perceived failure in war, reorganization does not have the same sense of urgency at the unit level. Without sufficient motivation, the

command will need to rely on the vision of its commanders. Dominant leadership, clear guidance, and a unifying vision have been instrumental in the past.

In terms of the guiding coalition, both external and internal leadership influences AFGSC. The CSAF, General Schwartz, and the head of the Air Staff's A10 directorate, General Alston, comprise AFGSC's external leadership. The CSAF has provided guidance for AFGSC and has directed the implementation decision contained in the PAD. The A10 staff is responsible for monitoring the PAD's execution by the AFGSC (P) staff.

Internal leadership for AFGSC comes from its provisional commander, General Kowalski. General Kowalski sought guidance from General Croker, ACC's provisional commander to learn from his experience. General Croker's lessons are evident in what General Kowalski has done thus far, most notably in the area of personnel issues. General Kowalski's ability to meet his objectives and cut through red tape depends on his access to senior leaders. Because he reports directly to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, he has access that enables him to act effectively in his current capacity. That access allows him to contribute to senior leader discussions at four-star General conferences and it removes layers of bureaucracy between AFGSC and the CSAF. This access is critical.

The Stabilization Phase

AFGSC has two obvious barriers that will hinder the command's activation. Those barriers are personnel and basing issues. Neither of these issues is unique to AFGSC, as these issues influenced both SAC and ACC. These two issues are intertwined because the basing decision affects the ability of the personnel system to move military members. General Kowalski has prepared for this issue by working with AFPC directly, a lesson learned by General Croker at ACC. Even with this lesson however, AFGSC will not receive the people it needs in the short-term because of the delay caused by the requirement for the environmental impact study. The Air Force will not be able to make the final basing decision until after the summer assignment cycle.

The command will partially mitigate these two interrelated issues by using modern collaborative tools. This is not an optimal solution however, because commanders still need face-to-face access to their people and people need access to their commander. Technology will help initially, but eventually people will have to move.

The emphasis, during the first phase of operations at AFGSC, will be to move the division chiefs and other key headquarters staff members. The goal of these early moves is to limit the distributive and collaborative tools to the divisions. Each division would be responsible for collaborating within their divisions amongst geographically separated units. At the headquarters level, the commander would have direct access to his immediate subordinates and be able to meet with division chiefs face to face.

Conclusion

Related to a sense of urgency, factors outside the control of AFGSC will more than likely influence whether the command succeeds or fails. As General Alston put it, "The reality is the nation needs to reevaluate its nuclear deterrence strategy and policy. That could get into force levels and depending on where those decisions go could have a consequence on Global Strike Command that could, not so much undo the command, but could put the Air Force on a different footing with regard to nuclear deterrence, or the Navy too. That conversation is going to take place and that is outside of our lane. So as the secretary has said, it does not matter. With the number of weapons we have, we have to continue to have a mindset that has perfection as its standard. That is just what it takes to do this job well."[15] Three events will influence AFGSC: the QDR, the NPR, and nuclear weapons reduction talks with Russia. Each event could change the value associated with nuclear weapons to the national security strategy. How the Air Force leadership reacts to these external factors will ultimately determine AFGSC's fate.

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[15] Alston interview.

Chapter 5

Implications and Conclusions

If your large organization does not have a common view and value, in some common way, what the challenges are that have beset the large organization it is hard to get consensus on an appropriate course of action. More importantly, it is not had to get consensus that can be forced, but hard to get enthusiastic support for your way ahead.

- *Major General Donald Alston, Air Force A10*

This paper sought to answer the following question: Given the challenges of major organizational change, how can the Air Force successfully create Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC)? To do that it investigated the two previous large-scale major commands created: first, the Strategic Air Command, and later the Air Combat Command. In the process, it was determined that successful military reorganization begins long before the formal activation of the command and that transition teams and provisional commands set the foundation for successful organizational creation.

The Air Force has already activated AFGSC (P), so this paper also documented its brief history as a case study. Each of the three case studies addressed in this paper have something to offer for future organizations that propose major changes; each tells a very different story with different insights for our consideration.

To analyze the three case studies a 4-phase model was designed from a business model. John Kotter's 8-step process, articulated in *Leading Change*, was the source for the 4-phase model. The intent of the 4-phase model is to incorporate the important aspects of Kotter's 8-steps while at the same time reducing the complexity to four simpler phases more attuned to military units. The 4-phase model reflects the lifecycle of an organization and mirrors the development that Kotter envisioned in his 8-steps. The end state of the process should be a stable organization with behaviors rooted in the culture of the organization. The following implications emerge when using the 4-phase model as a lens to study each of the cases.

The most significant implication of this analysis is the importance of leadership. Both external and internal sources of leadership play significant roles in the successful creation of a major command. This final chapter includes one major implication and two minor implications. The major implication, leadership, has three subcomponents, which roughly correspond to phases of the 4-phase model. The last two phases, the Momentum and Anchoring Phases, are combined in the last subcomponent of the major implication related to leadership. Collectively, AFGSC can use these implications as it stands up as a new organization.

Major Implication:

Leadership plays a vital role in the stand-up of a major command.

Implication from the Chaotic Phase: *A sense of urgency may not be sufficient to ensure successful organizational change.*

A sense of urgency can initiate and sustain organizational change, but it may not be not be sufficient to ensure successful change. The case studies provided examples where the events that caused the organizational change were not sufficient to sustain the organizational change over the long-term. Without that sense of urgency, some other facet needs to fill the void to sustain prolonged change. For Strategic Air Command and Air Combat Command, the actions of their senior leaders affected the early years of their respective organizations. SAC leadership provided negative effects, while ACC's example was more positive. For AFGSC all indications are that leadership has so far positively affected the organization.

The Army Air Forces organized SAC to consolidate forces for the use of nuclear weapons. SAC organized in an environment with few resources, scant foreign threats, and untested nuclear doctrine; the command was competing with itself for reorganization. These factors all combined to produce a low sense of urgency that hurt SAC early on. The command's leadership did not offset this lack of urgency as General Kenney, SAC's first commander, was not involved with his own command and General McMullen, General Kenney's deputy, operated as an effective manager, not as a leader. Eventually the lack of urgency and mediocre leadership led to the Lindbergh Report and the hiring of General LeMay.

The Air Combat Command case study showed that the Air Force created ACC after the end of the Cold War and after a perceived failure of the bomber community to meet effectively its conventional tasking during the 1991 Gulf War. Beginning in the late 1980s, senior leaders began thinking of ways to streamline and consolidate military command relationships with institutional change across the Department of Defense. These two factors, institutional change created by context and the perceived failure of SAC as a conventional force provider, supplied the Air Force with an adequate sense of urgency to merge SAC and the Tactical Air Command. ACC's effective external and internal leadership enhanced that sense of urgency, as did General Loh's vision for the command. Superior leadership, coupled with a more robust sense of urgency, allowed ACC to succeed early on.

The Air Force created AFGSC to correct a perceived systemic degradation of its nuclear capacity that arose after two isolated incidents in the bomber and missile communities. The Air Force made the decision to create a new command to signal resolve and dedication to nuclear weapons. These decisions have created a sense of urgency at the command-level but not at the unit level. Airmen at the unit level do not feel that same sense because inspection and deployment cycles dictate their operations tempo. The political uncertainty that surrounds the nuclear mission combined with constant demands for conventional capabilities unite to lower the perceived importance of the nuclear mission. In the future, AFGSC's success will depend on the ability of its senior leaders to fill the void created by a lack of a sense of urgency with superior leadership. This can be done through clearly communicated vision, guidance, and support.

Implication from the Stabilization Phase: *Successful change relies more on leadership than management.*

Kotter described functions of management as: planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem solving. He described leadership with terms like: establishing direction, aligning people, motivating, and inspiring. Management produces short-term results, while leadership "produces extremely useful change."[1]

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[1] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 26.

General McMullen's experiences with SAC in 1947 support this claim. General McMullen was a superior manager of SAC's day-to-day operations, but he lacked a vision for the command's future. His cross-training concept and staff reduction policies produced short-term management gains while disregarding long-term vision that could produce mission effectiveness.

The policies General McMullen created were inconsistent with long-term success because he attempted to field bomber groups regardless of their readiness levels or mission capabilities. He was unable to establish direction or motivate the members of his command beyond his disruptive policies. General Kenney abdicated himself from this role, which also hurt SAC during its first two years. SAC as a case study shows that in the absence of leadership, management is often incapable of filling the void. There are two different voids to fill, both are needed, but the latter cannot substitute for the former. Organizations need both management and leadership to succeed, but the ratio of the two should favor leadership over management.

Many management functions are required during the Chaotic and Stabilization Phases of an organization and AFGSC is no different. Management functions have created the bureaucracy that will enable the command to function. As the command gets closer to formal activation however, only leadership can translate those management functions into a functioning command. While management has allowed the command to plan, budget, organize, staff, control, and solve problems, its success will be determined by how well its leadership establishes direction, aligns its people, motivates, and inspires.

Implication from the Momentum and Anchoring Phases: *Dominant leaders, with a defined vision and strategies to achieve their goals, successfully produce new commands in the Air Force.*

A guiding coalition, i.e. dominant senior leaders in the early stages of the command, can overcome many shortfalls. The leader is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the plan for organized change. Solid vision enables leadership to succeed. In the three commands studied, leadership either drove or impaired organizational change.

In both the SAC and ACC examples, the groups of officers, both internal and external to the organization undergoing change, were crucial to the success of those

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organizations. General Kenney is not solely to blame for SAC's early problems. The lack of guidance from external leaders was also causal. General Kenney was however to blame for his failure to identify the problems brewing for SAC and his inattention to those problems once identified. Meeting the steep expectations placed on SAC was nearly impossible given the many shortfalls facing the command. Stronger leadership could have identified these issues earlier.

For ACC, it was a different story. Leadership drove the changes that led to ACC. The mission was clear and the organization changed to meet more effectively the demands of modern war. The consensus of senior leadership resulted in guidance that General Loh accurately interpreted and acted on. General Croker's attitude as the provisional commander also ensured ACC would succeed when activated. The effective transition teams and provisional command staff turned actionable guidance into reality that would not have been possible without a clear vision from the senior staff. The clear vision that Generals McPeak and Loh had for ACC allowed two unique commands to combine into one combat air force.

There is a strong sense of commitment to AFGSC as the solution to atrophied nuclear expertise. Analyzing the guiding coalition or the aspects of leadership that contributed to organizational change instructs that dominant leaders, with defined vision and strategies to achieve their goals, successfully produce new commands in the Air Force. This paper uses names like Arnold, Vandenberg, LeMay, Powell, McPeak, and Loh to tell the story of SAC and ACC. These iconic leaders defined the changes that the Air Force went through during their tenure. It is too early to tell whether Secretary Donnelly, General Schwartz, General Alston, and General Kowalski will leave a similar legacy, but if AFGSC is to succeed, they will need to play a dominant role.

Minor Implication #1: *Transition teams and provisional commands determine how successful a new organization will be.*

ACC was successful during the transition because of dedicated teams at SAC, TAC, and the Military Airlift Command. Those teams eventually fed into the ACC Transition Team at Langley AFB that became the provisional command for ACC. The centralized structure used to funnel information during the transition allowed the provisional commander to make accurate and timely decisions. The staff also created a

CONOPS, which outlined the command's processes. This helped delineate duties during the busy early months of the command. Because ACC sought to create linkages between each of the legacy commands, they were able to use the resident knowledge that existed outside the provisional command.

It appears that AFGSC has learned the lesson from ACC and is beginning early to organize under PAD 08-04. The implication is that well designed command relationships and processes are critical to reorganization. This is not a surprising revelation, but it is important to highlight, as the SAC case study shows what results when effective transition teams are absent.

Minor Implication #2: *Personnel and facility problems will play a prominent role in the stand up of new organizations; organizations should deal with these issues first.*

Reorganization that involves multiple commands often results in personnel moves between geographic locations with insufficient or inadequate facilities for the new command. This implies that either new facilities are required or existing facilities need to be modified to accommodate the new organization. These issues created problems for SAC and ACC and are already creating problems for AFGSC. With this is mind, transition teams and provisional commands should make personnel and facilities top priorities. ACC created a separate team to deal with these issues and this helped mitigate some problems.

Both SAC and ACC dealt with personnel and facility issues. The most disruptive example from the SAC case study was the attempted move of the headquarters staff to Colorado Springs. The disruption caused by the canceling of this move exacerbated an already difficult time for SAC.

For ACC, the personnel system was more to blame because of its inflexibility. General Croker lamented that he should have engaged with AFMPC earlier so that they would have been able to understand his unique problems and time constraints. ACC was able to deal with delays in the personnel system because they were activated at Langley, where half the staff was already located, and because the provisional command had created an effective CONOPS. The CONOPS streamlined the processes for the new command and utilized the staff personnel at each of the SAC, TAC, and MAC headquarters.

AFGSC faces similar problems but is adapting to this problem more effectively. General Kowalski has engaged with this problem early and is already creating 'work arounds' for officers that need to move before the final basing solution for AFGSC is made. Internet and network collaborative tools will also allow AFGSC to operate more effectively with its detachments at ACC and AFSPACE, which cannot replace face-to-face communication, but does allow the command to operate in the interim. None of this is possible, however, without a CONOPS similar to the document created by ACC in 1992. The PPLAN for AFGSC must include such provisions.

Conclusion

The Air Force is in the process of implementing Program Action Directive 08-04 to create a new organization called Air Force Global Strike Command. This will not be an easy endeavor, particularly in a fiscally constrained environment with numerous challenges to the nuclear mission, including adversaries, technical issues, and institutional realities. Some factors critical to the success of the organization may be out of the control of the leadership of the organization. Those factors need to be identified and considered. But an organization postures itself for success focusing on that which it *can* control; namely the people, processes, and vision for the new command. This all depends on leadership because leadership can affect each of these factors. Effective leadership can mitigate many of the roadblocks that beset an organization. It can provide a sense of urgency when one does not exist. It can provide clear guidance, a vision, and a strategy for success. Militaries will adapt to the changing environments in which they operate. Sometimes that adaptation will lead to organizational change. What these three case studies show is that effective leadership can overcome many of the problems related to this process. When leadership is absent, however, organizations often suffer until a change of command occurs. AFGSC will need to overcome the past inattention to the nuclear mission by providing clear vision and guidance to their nuclear forces. That critical task will depend on the leaders of the new command and the support provided by the Air Force's Secretary and Chief.

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