

# **Operational Art and the Clash of Organizational Cultures: Postmortem on Special Operations as a Seventh Warfighting Function**

**A Monograph  
by  
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## **Abstract**

**OPERATIONAL ART AND THE CLASH OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES:  
POSTMORTEM ON SPECIAL OPERATIONS AS A SEVENTH WARFIGHTING FUNCTION**  
by Lieutenant Colonel Jan Kenneth Gleiman, U.S. Army, 68 pages

As the United States Army stands in the midst of a transitional period, it must determine what type of Army it will be. In doing so, the Army must come to grips with new realities of the strategic context that demand a capability to use “Engagement” as defined in the National Security Strategy and an inculcation of “Operational adaptability” as defined in the Army Capstone Concept.

Recently, the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) proposed a change to Army doctrine that would have made Special Operations a seventh warfighting function for the Army. The proposal failed to pass and the Army is now taking a much slower approach to changes.

This monograph uses this failed proposal as a singular case study, or micro-event that illuminates a macro-phenomenon, which could be preventing the Army from meeting its challenges of engagement and operational adaptability. Using key elements of organization theory as a lens for understanding why the proposal failed, this monograph applies process tracing and argument mapping. It demonstrates that the fragmented organizational sub-culture of SOF may have influenced not only the failure of the proposal, but also continues to prevent the Army from leveraging the institutional strength of the SOF community toward engagement and operational adaptability.

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## Introduction

The Army of the United States is in the midst of an important transition. As we begin drawing down forces in Afghanistan and complete the withdrawal of major formations from Iraq, the Army is once again challenged to determine what type of Army it will be. While policy makers continue to set the demands for the force in our national strategy, the Army must introspectively examine itself and then determine if it has the capabilities necessary to conduct operational art in the future within the confines of that strategy. One particular aspect of national strategy that is central to the current strategy and will remain part of our strategic context in the future is “Engagement.”

The National Security Strategy uses the word “Engagement” 43 times and clarifies its definition based upon elements of national power.<sup>1</sup> Simply put the Army, like all services, must expect to use allies, partners, indigenous forces, and populations to undertake tactical actions where the United States cannot.<sup>2</sup> This is true, not just because it is now a dictated “way” in the current national strategy, but because the strategic context demands it. The relative power of the United States appears to be shrinking and the national debt is the single biggest threat to national security.<sup>3</sup> Combine these two observations with an understanding that prosperity is increasingly reliant on a global interconnectedness and that non-state actors and the use of irregular warfare is

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<sup>1</sup>National Security Staff, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America, May 2010* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2010), 1. This is not the tactical term engagement from FM 1-02 which refers (1) In air defense, an attack with guns or air-to-air missiles by an interceptor aircraft, or the launch of an air defense missile by air defense artillery and the missile’s subsequent travel to intercept. (2) A tactical conflict, usually between opposing lower echelon maneuver forces.

<sup>2</sup>Tactical actions here are defined as in Unified Operations pre-decisional draft. Tactical Action is a battle or engagement, employing lethal and/or nonlethal actions, designed for a specific purpose relative to the enemy, the terrain, friendly forces, or other entity. Tactical actions include such widely varied activities as an attack to seize a piece of terrain or destroy an enemy unit, the defense of a population, and the training of other militaries to assist security forces as part of building partner capacity.

<sup>3</sup>Michael J. Cardin, “National Debt Poses Security Threat, Mullen Says,” *Armed Forces Press Service*, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=60621> (accessed 16 June 2011).

currently growing.<sup>4</sup> Thus, we must conduct engagement with adversaries, neutrals, and partners because the socio-cultural, economic, political, and technological elements of our strategic context have necessitated this shift in grand policy.<sup>5</sup> How is the Army leveraging its existing ability and experience to conduct such engagement actions? The brief history of a recent bureaucratic proposal within the Army's organization tells a story that is both enlightening and troubling. A careful examination also reveals the emergence of a clash of organizational cultures.

In response to recent growing concerns over the friction between special operations forces (SOF) and general purpose forces (GPF), the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) submitted a proposal to the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) to add Special Operations (SO) to its current doctrinal list of six warfighting functions.<sup>6</sup> In Army doctrine, a warfighting function is a group of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives. Commanders of Army forces use warfighting functions to help them organize their staffs and exercise command and control. According to current doctrine the warfighting functions are mission command, movement and maneuver,

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<sup>4</sup>Colin S. Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations: An Introduction to Strategic History*, (London: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 10-11. This further necessitates shifts in policy and strategy.

<sup>6</sup>GEN (Ret) Gary Luck and COL (Ret) Mike Findlay, *Joint Operations, Insights and Best Practices* (Best Practices, Professional, Joint Warfighting Center, US Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, VA: Joint Warfighting Center, 2008). "Despite major increases in transparency and synergy of SOF operations in JTF battlespace, we still see challenges in tactical level coordination and integration. We still see cases where the brigade or battalion level battlespace owners are not fully aware of rapidly developing SOF operations in their battlespace, and at times, SOF operations may disrupt battlespace owner operations and relationships with the population."

intelligence, fires, sustainment and protection.<sup>7</sup> Thus, adding Special Operations to this list seemed a viable course of action to fix a perceived problem.<sup>8</sup> The Army Special Operations Capabilities Integration Center (ARSOCIC) developed the proposal in winter of 2010 based upon the results of a working group that USASOC convened to respond to a question posed by then Chief of Staff of the Army General George Casey. His question was simple: “After nine years of war, what have we learned about General Purpose Forces and Special Operations integration.”<sup>9</sup> The working group consisted of individuals representative of both SOF and GPF. It contained individuals from TRADOC, ARSOCIC, and the Army Capabilities and Integration Center (ARCIC). Together, the group arrived at four recommendations, the primary one being that Special Operations become a seventh warfighting function in Army Doctrine.<sup>10</sup> USASOC staffed and submitted a proposal for a doctrinal change to TRADOC as part of a planned update to FM 3.0 *Operations* scheduled for release in October 2011. After some generally positive reception of the idea, TRADOC and the Combined Arms Center (CAC its subordinate Command) decided to reject the proposal after a General Officer Review Board (GORB) conducted on 23 March

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<sup>7</sup>Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3.0, *Operations*, 2010 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), C1 4-3. Decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations combine all the warfighting functions to generate combat power. Additionally, all warfighting functions possess scalable capabilities to mass lethal and nonlethal effects. No warfighting function is exclusively decisive, shaping, or sustaining. The Army’s warfighting functions are fundamentally linked to the joint functions.

<sup>8</sup>The terms “special operations forces” (SOF) and “special operations” SO are not interchangeable terms. For the purpose of this monograph it is important for the reader to understand the difference. Special operations forces (SOF) refers to specific units that are funded under MFP-11 and are designated as SOF by their service or the Joint Force. Special Operations (SO) refers to particular capabilities usually associated with SOF units. The joint definition of SO is presented in this monograph. It is also the term chosen for the proposal that is the subject of this case study.

<sup>9</sup>Brian Petit, email with author 21 Jun 2011, Fort Leavenworth, KS. Confirmed content of Information Paper on Integration of General Purpose Forces and Army Special Operations.

<sup>10</sup>Other recommendations were, (1) USAJFKSWCS develop and produce a Functional Concept to support Army DOTMLP development. (2) Army recognizes USAJFKSWCS as the repository for issues regarding special operations for inclusion in the development of all related concepts and doctrine. (3) AIWFC develop paper on distinguishing between SFA and FID looking at unity of effort between GPF and ARSOF.

2011.<sup>11</sup> The sudden death of the idea was puzzling to members of the SOF community who had worked on the proposal and viewed it as a critical first step in ensuring that commanders and staffs of the Army's major formations understand and integrate the capabilities of SOF in their plans and operations.<sup>12</sup> The Army and TRADOC have not dropped the issue entirely and are instead working on changes at a much slower, less visible pace.

Changes to doctrine alter the conceptual framework through which planners and practitioners of operational art see the operational environment and the way in which commanders exercise mission command.<sup>13</sup> Such changes to doctrine often require adaptations to organization, training and education, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF). This is the Department of Defense's (DOD) construct for force design and for understanding capabilities integration as part of the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS).<sup>14</sup> Correspondence between the author and ARSOCIC indicated that an analysis of the proposal and the resistance it received from various elements of the GPF community would be valuable.

This project began with a simple research question as to the efficacy of the ARSOCIC/USASOC proposal to the Army's ability to conduct operational art. If operational art

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<sup>11</sup>Clint Ancker, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 28 April 2011.

<sup>12</sup>Glenn Thomas, "Special Operations as a Warfighting Function," *Special Warfare Magazine* (Jan-Feb 2011).

<sup>13</sup>Department of the Army, FM 3-0, *Unified Operations* (Pre-decisional Draft) version 9.3 (Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Military Studies, 4 May 2011). Operational Art is the pursuit of strategic objectives through the arrangement of tactical actions in time, space, and purpose. Mission Command is the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commanders intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of full spectrum operations. It is commander-led and blends the art of command and the science of control to integrate the warfighting functions to accomplish the mission.

<sup>14</sup>Department of the Army, Field Manual 1-02, *Operational Terms and Graphics*, 2004 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 2-9. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instructions 3170-01G, 1 March 2009.

is the pursuit of strategic objectives through the arrangement of tactical actions in time, space, and purpose, then it would seem that giving commanders a doctrinal tool added to an existing doctrinal framework might act as a forcing function for the integration of SO. Doctrine would initiate change in the way that staffs organize and alter the process for thinking about operations. This study also began with a thesis: Making “Special Operations” a seventh Army Warfighting function will improve SOF and GPF integration in the contemporary operating environment without serious negative effects to the ability of both SOF and GPF to operate as intended and guided by the current U.S. national strategy.”

This study further began with some simple assumptions. The first assumption was that both the SOF and GPF communities agreed upon a problem that needed to be addressed. That problem was SOF and GPF integration in contemporary and future operating environments. There has been plenty of historical evidence on unsuccessful SOF and GPF integration.<sup>15</sup> The second assumption was that SOF (represented by the force generating command of USASOC and its subordinate entities) proposed the addition of SO as a warfighting function in order to act as a forcing function toward better integration. The subsequent primary source research for this monograph indicated that both of these assumptions were either wrong or incomplete. In truth, the SOF and GPF communities agree that challenges and problems exist between the two communities, but key members of each community have a vastly different understanding of the nature of those problems. In fact, the communities have different points of view and do not share a common understanding of the environment. As to the second assumption, USASOC designed the proposal as a forcing function, but intended to force more than just operational and planning

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<sup>15</sup>Thomas, “Special Operations as a Warfighting Function,” 8-11. MG Bennett Sacolick, interviewed by author, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 10 May 2011. COL Charles Flynn, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 11 May 2011. Ancker, interview. Luck and Findlay, 45-47.

integration of capabilities. In truth USASOC bristled at the very term “integration” and further designed the proposal to help SOF influence the ways in which the Army approached its missions and practiced operational art. Using the useful lexicon and corollaries of organization theory, one could say that the proposal sought to integrate the divergent and counterculture of SO with the Army’s in order to improve the Army’s ability to conduct operational art and play a key role in the future of national security. Simply put, the proposal and its failure may have more to do with organizational culture than anyone involved cared to admit.

With the research demonstrating a change in basic underlying assumptions of the study, the thesis also had to change. Thus, the thesis now is that SOF represent an organizational subculture within the greater Army organizational culture that is dominated by GPF. SOF within the Army represent a subculture that is often fragmented and counter to the Army’s organizational culture. This fragmentation prevented and continues to prevent doctrinal and structural changes that could make SO a key part of the integrated subcultures that make-up the Army’s organizational culture. Can the Army be operationally adaptable if it is not institutionally adaptable? Recognizing this situation, will allow Army and SOF leaders to develop doctrinal, structural, and educational ways to make SO an integrated and enhancing subculture in the greater Army organization that improves overall operational adaptability and the ability of the Army to conduct operational art as part of a joint or combined force.

## **Methodology**

This study uses the SO as a warfighting function proposal of USASOC as a singular case study in the effects of organizational cultures and shared understanding on decision-making and organizational change. Research and analysis for this monograph sought to answer and clarify three general sub-research questions. They are: (1) What are the differences in the perception and understanding of problems between the Army SOF community and GPF community? (2) How do

organizational culture and structures affect the issues? (3) What can organization theory tell us about integrating SOF and GPF toward improving the practice of operational art?

Answering these questions can be done methodically by first discussing the literature and associated typologies of organization theory. This literature review will first cover organization theory concepts in general and then focus on how these concepts are manifested and refined in literature about government bureaucracies and military organization in particular. The study will then proceed to SOF and GPF in the context of organizational structures and subcultures. This will be followed by a brief review of the Army's framework for organizational change and a short discussion of doctrine as it pertains to the case study of the USASOC proposal.

The study then proceeds to analyze the case study and its very brief history from great idea to tabled afterthought. This study will use thick description and process tracing comparing the opinions of those involved in the proposal and highlight their subcultural tendencies. In order to do this, this study uses supporting documentation surrounding the proposal as well as primary source oral history interviews conducted by the author with key individuals from both communities who were involved in the proposal. This study conducted five interviews with SOF personnel and three interviews with individuals from organizations that, in the end, were generally opposed to the proposal and represent the GPF community. This section will describe the perspectives, goals, equities, and arguments used by those people and groups that support or oppose the proposal. This analysis will answer the three research questions above and provide insight into how organizational cultures help frame our perceptions of problems and then further compound the influence upon solutions.

The conclusions serve as value added to our understanding of organization theory as it applies to the military, but also has utility in understanding and moving forward with future measures to address some of the perceived problems that triggered the proposal, which serves as the case study. The conclusion offers some important observations about organizational culture in

general and about SOF and GPF in particular. Additionally, it explains the relationship of this clash of cultures to the Army's efforts at transitioning and transforming into a post OIF/OEF Army.

## **Literature Review and Definitions**

In order to understand the context of this proposal it is helpful to review some of the relevant literature and other background information. First, it is important to cover some key concepts from organization theory that pertain to this case study and to the dynamics of government and military organizations in general. Second, it is also important to explain how SOF and GPF fit into the Army, Joint, and interagency context. Third, because this study examines a proposal designed to address a perceived problem of SOF and GPF friction, it must provide a review of key military doctrine and terms that put the proposal in context, especially the concepts of warfighting functions and core competencies.

### **Organization Theory**

Organization theory attempts to explain how organizations function and change. Organizations, in their most simple definition, are groups of people connected by a common purpose.<sup>16</sup> The fact that organizations consist of human beings and their relationships makes the typology of the subject very complex. Yet, a few general definitions and concepts are useful in this study. These concepts include, organizational culture and subcultures, integration and fragmentation, and conflict.<sup>17</sup> This study must also briefly discuss the concept of organizational structure and how it pertains to integrating culture and efficacy of an organization.

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<sup>16</sup>Jessica Glicken Turnley, "Retaining Precarious Value as Special Operations Go Mainstream," *JSOU Report 08-02* (Hurlburt Field: JSOU Press Printing Office, 2008), 2.

<sup>17</sup>Mary Jo Hatch, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 41-44, 225-227, 309-315.

Perhaps the most relevant organization theory concept to this study is organizational culture and subcultures. Mary Jo Hatch, in her definitive text on organization theory, explains that organizational culture is difficult to define, but something that anyone observing an organization will be able to identify. While citing several definitions used in the field, she emphasizes that organizational culture may be a particular way of life, assumptions, shared meanings, beliefs, understandings, norms, values or knowledge which are held in common by members of a defined organization.<sup>18</sup> Organizational culture is merely a derivative of the anthropological notion of culture in broader communities. This abstract concept is used by scholars and practitioners of organization theory who need to frame these commonalities that affect how an organization operates, how it changes and the options and perspectives it will develop when addressing problems or conducting operations. Yet, organizations, especially large ones that exist to accomplish complex tasks also have levels of diversity and differentiation. Therefore organization theory provides the concept of subcultures. A subculture is a subset of an organization's members that identify themselves as a distinct group within the organization and routinely take action on the basis of their unique and collective understanding.<sup>19</sup> Hatch further breaks down subcultures into the categories of dominating, enhancing, orthogonal and countercultures. Enhancing subcultures enthusiastically support the dominant culture of the greater organization, orthogonal subcultures hold independent values that are largely neutral to the dominating culture, and countercultures are subcultures that hold values, beliefs, and perspectives that actively challenge the dominating culture.<sup>20</sup> Subcultures are neither good nor bad even if they are countercultures, but their value to the greater organization depends upon their

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 177.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 176.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

influence over the greater organization and may depend on structural systems designed to integrate their ideas and forge adaptations to challenges. Diversity in beliefs and perspectives can be valuable to an organization that requires adaptability and creative imagination in the face of unique situations and complex problems. For such an organization, integrating the subcultures through influence and reinforcing structures is necessary.

Another useful corollary of organizational culture that further dissects the concept comes from Peter Checkland and John Poulter and the theory of soft systems methodology (SSM). Soft systems methodology theory is a prescriptive conflict resolution methodology but is grounded on the idea that individuals who are involved in problem solving have roles, norms, and values that help define where they will stand on issues and what actions they are likely to take.<sup>21</sup> If using Hatch's typology, Poulter and Checkland would say that individuals from a singular unified organizational culture will share the same norms and values and may even have very similar roles with respect to the greater organization. Their roles may affect how they view a perceived problem, but norms and values of their organizational subculture would be strongest. Those individuals that share an orthogonal or counter sub-culture will differ in terms of their norms and values and may view their roles differently than those in the dominant culture.

The Army, however, is a government organization. Morton Halperin and John Q. Wilson provide some classic insight into these elements of organization theory, but with particular emphasis on the wide range of organizations that comprise the US government and the whole national security bureaucracy, of which the Army and its SOF elements are a part. If organization theory were biology, the US government would be a diverse ecosystem wide open for study. These authors examined several organizations and their organizational cultures and subcultures as

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<sup>21</sup>Peter Checkland and John Poulter, *Learning for Action* (West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2006).

part of their classic works. John Q. Wilson defines organizational culture as the persistent, patterned way of thinking about the central tasks of human relationships within an organization.<sup>22</sup> In the US government, organizations like the military services are endowed with a sense of mission that defines and shapes the organizational culture. In making some generalizations about the effects of culture, Wilson notes that tasks that are not part of the culture or central to the perceived sense of “mission” will not be attended to with the same energy as tasks that are. Wilson further notes that in an organization where two or more cultures struggle for supremacy, conflict will result, and finally, organizations tend to resist new tasks that seem incompatible with its dominant culture.<sup>23</sup> These generalizations are useful in explaining why some proposals within large organizations fail to gain traction and why inter-organizational conflict exists. These generalizations provide a framework for understanding the key case study in this monograph.

Morton Halperin and his co-authors use slightly different terminology to describe the same phenomenon. Halperin calls this, “organizational essence” and defines it specifically as the view held by the dominant group in the organization of what the mission and capabilities should be.<sup>24</sup> Thus, organizational essence, as defined by Halperin, is generally synonymous with, or at least inextricably connected to the organizational culture of the greater organization. Units, communities, and sub-organizations that are part of a greater organization may have different and competing sub-cultures that would define their essence differently than that of the dominant group. Halperin, writing in 1974, actually uses the organizations that are the subject of this study

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<sup>22</sup>John Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 91.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 101.

<sup>24</sup>Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1974), 28.

as an example to clarify this concept. He states that the inception of the “Green Berets”<sup>25</sup> represented, “The most determined challenge to the Army’s definition of its essence since the separation of the Air Force from the Army.” He further stated that:

The effort to enhance the role of the Green Berets, though it had much high-level support, was considerably less successful. President Kennedy came into office believing that American security would be challenged by guerilla forces against whom American power would have to be used in limited and quite special ways. He therefore began an effort to develop such a capability within the Army. This ran contrary to the Army’s definition of its essence, which involved ground combat by organized regular divisional units, and the Army by and large was able to resist.<sup>26</sup>

The “Green Berets” (Army Special Forces) are a major part of the Army SOF community and help define the essence of Army SOFs organizational subculture, as it exists apart from the more dominant groups (combat arms) that make up GPF of the Army. This study will demonstrate that some of those cultural issues from the 1960s still exist today.

Another organization theory concept important to this study is the scale of integration versus fragmentation. This spectrum concept provides understanding of how well various organizational subcultures work together. This particular scale runs from one extreme of unitary culture to disorganized. An organization that is too unitary will be limited as to what tasks it can accomplish and under what conditions. If its mission involves familiar tasks in well-understood and consistent environments with minimal need for operational adaptability, then a uniform and unitary culture might be preferable. An organization with disorganized subcultures is an oxymoron and cannot accomplish anything in a coordinated manner, but rather acts as independent, unitary organizations. The diagram below provides some symbolic visual idea of the concept.

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<sup>25</sup>Halperin’s book uses numerous examples from across the complex bureaucracies and organizations that affect national security in the United States. In this example, he refers to “Green berets” meaning the Army Special Forces.

<sup>26</sup>Halperin, 35.

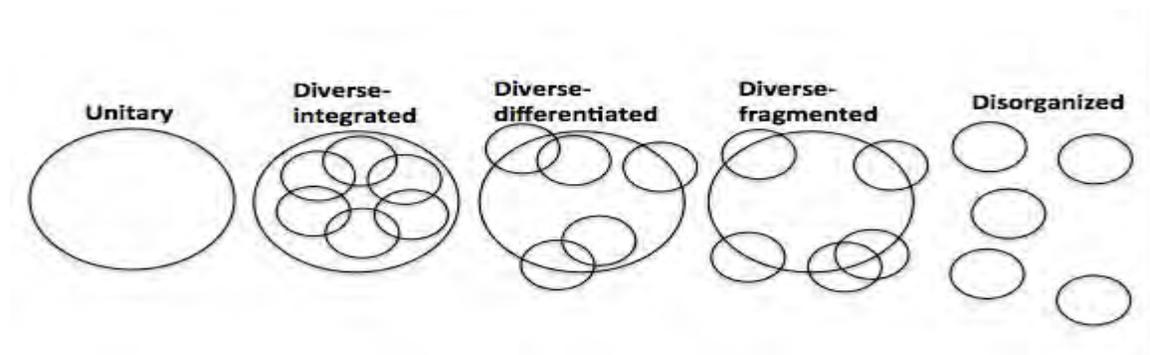


Figure 1. Spectrum of Organizational Cultures

Source: Mary Jo Hatch, *Organization Theory: Modern Symbolic and Postmodern Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 226.

In his literature, Wilson makes it clear that the design of an organization is optimized when it is constructed to impact its critical tasks. Thus, a school will have a different organization than a prison, an army, or a police force. Key to designing, changing, or building an organization is to effectively identify and communicate the fundamental purpose and associated critical tasks to the organization.<sup>27</sup> The Army does this through its doctrine and through supporting documents endorsed by senior leadership like the Army Capstone Concept and the Army Operating Concept.

In the case of the US Army, it is important to note that adaptability is the central idea of the Army's Capstone Concept, which is the key document that describes what the Army as an organization requires for capabilities in the near future. According to the document:

Operational adaptability requires mastery of the operational art, or the ability to link the tactical employment of forces to policy goals and strategic objectives. It also requires Army forces that are proficient in the fundamentals and possess common understanding of how to combine joint, Army, interagency, and multinational capabilities to assist friends, to protect and reassure indigenous populations, and to identify, isolate, and defeat enemies under uncertain and dynamic conditions.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Wilson, 25.

<sup>28</sup>Department of the Army, TRADOC Pam 525-3-0, *The Army Capstone Concept Operational Adaptability—Operating Under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 16, 3-3 b.

Thus, one must conclude that the Army, at its most senior levels has determined that adaptability is one of the critical tasks required to be an effective army in the future.

An organization that can call itself diverse –integrated or at least diverse-differentiated is generally more able to integrate various types of tasks into more complex efforts and is also able to consider more options and courses of action. Thus if an organization desires “operational adaptability” as its central, idea as the Army does, it would do well to achieve a diverse-integrated or diverse-differentiated existence with respect to the subcultures, organizations, and communities that exist within it or are associated with it.

Orthogonal or counterculture subcultures may tend toward fragmentation, but it is leadership, education, and organizational structural mechanisms that hold them together and facilitate integration and cooperation. From a DOD perspective, the DOTMLPF construct, which begins with doctrine, provides the framework for generating the things that facilitate integration, cooperation, and adaptability if that is central to the purpose of the organization. An important question of this study is to determine where the SOF subculture falls in relation to the rest of the Army and GPF. Is it enhancing, orthogonal, or counterculture? Remembering that neither of those is necessarily bad, in relation to the Army, is SOF fragmented, differentiated, or integrated? The fact that the Chief of Staff posed the question, followed by evidence of friction in studies and the comments of experts quickly leads one to believe that it is not enhancing. It would seem that some level of integration is desirable and that some either orthogonal or counterculture tendencies would facilitate the adaptability the Army is seeking. Would the proposal to make SO a warfighting function have achieved the desired level of cultural and operational integration?

Before this study can examine SOF and GPF in organizational context, it must discuss the concept of conflict in organizations. Organization theorists have long recognized that conflict,

which is most simply defined as the struggle between two or more groups in an organization, is a natural state in organizations.<sup>29</sup> Conflict must exist at some level and just because there is conflict, one must not jump to the conclusion that there is a problem. It is widely accepted in modern organization theory that there are extremes of too little or too much conflict in an organization and both extremes result in poor performance. Performance is theoretically maximized when organizations reach an intermediate level of conflict that allows for different perspectives and fresh points of view, but also has mechanisms for conflict resolution built into the organizations social structure, design, hierarchy, and of course leadership.<sup>30</sup> Hatch lists nine conditions, which may be indices for conflict in an organization. Although she refers specifically to localized conflict within an organization, these can be easily related to SOF and GPF since the contemporary (and presumably future) operating environments have brought SOF and GPF together in the same areas of operations and thus spurred what could be called (local) conflict. All nine of the conditions apply to some degree, but those that are particularly applicable are (1) group characteristics resulting from differentiation, (2) operative level goal incompatibility, (3) task interdependence, (4) common resources, (5) communications obstacles, and (most central to this case study) (6) jurisdictional ambiguities.<sup>31</sup>

Both Halperin and Wilson address organizational conflict throughout their works, but not to the degree of specificity or the combination of description and prescription done by Hatch and other organization theorists like Checkland and Poulter. Halperin and Wilson attribute conflict in government organizations to organizational essence, common views of core tasks and missions,

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<sup>29</sup>Hatch, 279.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 282-285. Other conditions listed by Hatch include individual differences, reward and performance criteria, and status incongruity. Though not particularly related to this study, these indices could also be measured between SOF and GPF and may be a topic of further study.

and desires for turf and autonomy. Yet the implicit, and in Wilson's case somewhat explicit, prescription for managing culture and conflict in government and national security organizations is dependent on leadership, the articulation of vision and purpose for the organization, and reinforcing organizational structures, authorities and techniques.<sup>32</sup> Wilson illustrates these techniques through examples, which focus on articulating and gaining buy-in on a vision, empowering leaders to enforce that vision, and designing organizational structure that reinforces necessary tasks and interactions. In the case of the US Army, one must again conclude that a common doctrine between SOF and GPF that gives cognitive structure to the roles, missions, and relationships is a key tool in integrating the capabilities and cultures of SOF and GPF. If Halperin and Wilson are right, then leadership of the greater organization must also articulate a vision that unifies subcultures with a common understanding and leverages the value of the subcultures that are orthogonal and counter.

## **SOF and GPF in Organizational Context**

The notion of SOF as a subculture of the greater Army belies the complexity of the greater organizations involved. It is difficult to talk about the Army as a singular, monolithic organization. The Army is part of the joint force and as a service is part of DOD. The Army as a service is a force provider to the joint commands. Special operations forces are even more complex and far from monolithic. While Army SOF are part of the Army, they are also part of the joint SOF community. The joint SOF community also has subcultures that can be identified studied and compared. Within Army SOF there are separate and distinct cultures that could further be identified, studied, and compared. For example, within Army SOF there are direct action units such as the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment and there are Special Forces (SF) units who focus

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<sup>32</sup>Halperin, see Table of Contents. Wilson see Parts 1, 2, 4, and Chapter 20.

less on direct action and more on unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense. There are SOF Aviation units, Civil Affairs units, and Military Information Support Operations (MISO) units.<sup>33</sup> While it is important to recognize and even describe some of these organizational relationships, this monograph deals primarily with Army SOF as part or and relative to a greater Army organization. Implications on the joint force and joint SOF will be addressed as necessary but are not the subject of this monograph.

If one considers the Army as an organization with a dominant organizational culture, then one can readily frame various subcultures. The maneuver combat arms (Infantry and Armor) likely represent the dominant subculture of the Army.<sup>34</sup> Several of the subcultures within the Army are also delineated by structural elements of the organization. These could be commands, functional branches, or warfighting functions. Army SOF is easily identifiable as a subculture within the Army, but sub-organizations and units within the Army, having structural arrangements that serve to separate and integrate their activities to varying degrees, also represent them.

Special operations forces within the Army are the responsibility of the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). As a Major Army Command, USASOC is responsible for the Title 10 management, training, and equipping of all Army SOF. Army SOF (under USASOC) consist of several component elements that provide forces with various capabilities. These elements define their nine core tasks as foreign internal defense (FID), unconventional warfare (UW), counter-proliferation (CP) of weapons of mass-destruction (WMD), counterterrorism (CT), direct action (DA), special reconnaissance (SR), information

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<sup>33</sup>Formerly Psychological Operations.

<sup>34</sup>This is generally considered to be true. For confirmation, one can simple check the number of general officers coming from each community. There are perhaps other measures that could be used as well.

operations (IO), civil affairs (CA), and military information support operations (MISO).<sup>35</sup> USASOC is responsible for generating Army SOF and specifically the professional branches of Special Forces (SF), Civil Affairs (CA), and Military Information Support Operations (MISO). Additionally, USASOC has Title 10 responsibility for Special Forces Regiment, the active duty CA and MISO brigades, the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, Special Operations Aviation, and Special Operations support elements. Unlike other specialties within the Army, SOF by and large do not serve under the command of the Army's primary operational units of Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), Divisions, Corps, or Theater Army elements.

The structural and cultural separation of SOF is further extended by the service-like responsibilities of the U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM). Special Operations Command is one of eight Joint Combatant Command that exercises authority over the SOF forces of all of the services. This command further determines the allocation of SOF to the theater special operations commands (TSOCs), which are sub-unified commands that are subordinate to the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs). While SOCOM plays a significant role in uniting a joint SOF culture, the service SOF forces still rely on their service for just about everything. SOCOM's special major force program 11 (MFP-11) funding only covers SOF specific requirements. For the Army that means that USASOC personnel are trained in the regular army first, they wear an Army uniform, attend Army schools for their career development, they are paid and promoted within an Army system competing against Army personnel, they serve on Army staffs, they depend on Army garrisons and training facilities, and more often than not, in the past 10 years most Army SOF have found themselves on the ground operating within the "battlespace" of GPF regular Army commanders. Though not a universal sentiment, many GPF

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<sup>35</sup>Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 3.05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), viii.

commanders have made no secret in their frustration that these SOF forces are Army and yet not under their command. The fact that SOF have a legal separation from their services (SOCOM, MFP-11, sub-unified SOCs) have further provided a cognitive separation of SOF from the Army. This is because SOF generally maintain constant activity and cooperation with their theater commands. For GPF, all of their guidance comes from the Army until deployment. SOF, on the other hand, receive their guidance directly from TSOCs and SOCOM and are routinely in and out of theater conducting other “engagement” activities that do not necessarily match the Army’s contemporary construct of regular deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup>

Joint Doctrine and common practice reinforce the cultural separation of SOF from the Army. When tasked to joint commands or when serving with a joint task force (JTF), SOF fall under their own component command (CFSOCC) much like a separate service.<sup>37</sup> USASOC provides forces to the theater special operations commands (TSOCs) of the various Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) throughout the world for various operational missions on a regular basis. These missions span the spectrum of conflict, from shaping and influence operations that advise or build capacity of partners, to major ongoing operations like Operation Enduring Freedom.

Within the Army, there are certainly more sub-organizations and subcultures than just the SOF vs. GPF relationship. In truth, the history of the Army is filled with policy debates and doctrinal changes that sought to more effectively integrate various subcultures that were part of the greater organization. The logistics branches, intelligence, cavalry, artillery, infantry etc. all could represent sub-organizations that have had distinctive elements of their own organizational

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<sup>36</sup>The term Engagement comes from the National Security Strategy of the United States.

<sup>37</sup>Department of Defense, Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007). SOF elements will form a Combined Forces Special Operations Command or CFSOCC just as Air Forces forms a CFACC etc. This construct integrates the overlapping capabilities of the services.

subculture. Many of these separate sub-elements viewed challenges and problems through the lenses of their organizational subcultures. Yet, commanders and their staffs had to integrate capabilities, ideas, and cultural perspectives into operations. Over the years, the Army has done this by starting with the cognitive tools of a common doctrine.

## **Doctrine, DOTMLPF, and Warfighting Functions**

Before delving into the points of view associated with the proposal, it is important to understand the context of the USASOC proposal and the relationship between SOF and GPF cultures. It is further necessary to explain three concepts and how they help to control the adverse influence of orthogonal and countercultures that exist in a fragmented organization. These concepts are DOTMLPF, doctrine, and the doctrinal concept of warfighting functions.

Perhaps the simplest definition of Army doctrine is; the fundamentals and principles that guide the employment of Army forces in coordinated and integrated action toward common objectives. Doctrine then is a guide to members of an organization that provides for a common way of conducting missions and thinking about problems.<sup>38</sup> As a service, the Army has its own doctrine. Joint forces have an integrating doctrine as well that supersedes Army doctrine but is generally in line with Army concepts. Special operations forces are mentioned in Army and joint doctrine, but have their own doctrinal manuals that guide their actions and are written by separate SOF organizations.

As mentioned earlier in this monograph, the Army and DoD use doctrine as a first step in thinking about and designing capabilities. As Robert Doughty says in explaining the importance and limitations of doctrine, “Doctrine...cannot perform the impossible. It can only provide

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<sup>38</sup>JP 1 and FM 3.0.

guidelines for action; it cannot provide final answers.”<sup>39</sup> Thus, doctrine is only the first domain in the JCIDS construct of DOTMLPF. After doctrine comes organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities. The point being, that a change in doctrine may, and often does, lead to changes in other domains in order to make that doctrinal change part of the Army’s organization and culture.

One of the most important concepts in current Army doctrine is the warfighting function. The army has six and they are mission command, intelligence, movement and maneuver, fires, sustainment, and protection. The warfighting functions are groups of tasks and systems (people, organizations, information, and processes) united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives.<sup>40</sup> These warfighting functions are linked to joint functions, which are essentially the same thing with slight variations in name. The six joint functions are Command and Control (C2), Intelligence, Fires, Movement and Maneuver, Protection, and Sustainment. Joint doctrine defines these as related capabilities and activities, grouped together to help Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) integrate, synchronize, and direct joint operations. Recognizing that these functions don’t entirely account for all tasks leveraged in the contemporary operating environment, joint doctrine also adds “other activities.”<sup>41</sup> These so called other activities are used to account for the inclusion of special operations capabilities as well as those activities of other government agencies that will be involved in any campaign or major operation.

The history of the warfighting function concept is not well understood, but is particularly relevant to this monograph because it fairly explains the purpose of the doctrinal construct with

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<sup>39</sup>Major Robert A. Doughty, “The Evolution of US Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946-76,” *Leavenworth Papers CSI*, March 2001.

<sup>40</sup>FM 3.0, C1 4-3.

<sup>41</sup>JP 3.0 (Change 1), *Joint Operations* (Feb 08) Chapter III.

respect to integrating the organizational cultures of various Army units that had differing but overlapping critical tasks. One of the earliest listings of groupings of tasks and systems was in the 1986 FM 100-5 where the Army coined the term “Major Functional Area” and listed 16 functional areas and included several sub-functions. SOF and civil affairs were included among these.<sup>42</sup> Documents coming out of the National Training Center and from the Infantry School at Fort Benning, GA began rearranging and listing these systems as tools to organize tasks and systems for staffs.<sup>43</sup> In a later version of the same manual in 1993, the Army reduced the number of functions to seven and changed the name to Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS) or combat functions. These included intelligence, maneuver, fire support, air defense, mobility and survivability, logistics, and battle command. Special operations, however, was not consolidated in these and was instead listed separately under “joint capabilities and missions.”<sup>44</sup> As this manual states, BOS help the commander and staff organize complex action:

To synchronize forces and effects on the battlefield, Army leaders examine large, complex operations in terms of functional operating systems that exist at each level of war. At the tactical level the battlefield operating systems (BOSs), for example, enable a comprehensive examination in a straightforward manner that facilitates the integration, coordination, preparation, and execution of successful combined-arms operations. The BOS has other applications at the operational and strategic levels.<sup>45</sup>

The BOS concept changed to the warfighting function construct only in recent years after Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom were well under way. The purpose of the name change was to better align Army and Marine Corps doctrine.<sup>46</sup> The most recent change though

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<sup>42</sup>Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 40 and Chapter 3.

<sup>43</sup>Ancker, interview.

<sup>44</sup>FM 100-5, 2-12. SOF is then listed separately under “Joint Capabilities and Missions,” 2-20 -2-21.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ancker, interview.

included the change of the Command and Control warfighting function to “Mission Command” which occurred in 2010.<sup>47</sup>

Where does special operations currently fit into these warfighting functions? The truth is that it is unclear and even those in the GPF community seem to agree. Some special operations tasks fit easily within the movement and maneuver warfighting function (Direct Action), some fit within fires or intelligence (special reconnaissance to include terminal guidance missions), but generally speaking the aspect of special operations that involves leveraging indigenous forces and influencing a population, what SOF would call their organizational essence, fails to fit neatly into any of the current warfighting functions.

Warfighting functions are quickly becoming more important in terms of how they affect the army and joint force headquarters. They have now become critical to guiding how staffs will fight and organize. A recent white paper on mission command demonstrates that operational staffs are no longer adhering strictly to the Napoleonic staff model of the numbered positions and are instead finding it more sensible to follow a model based upon warfighting functions organized into functional cells.<sup>48</sup> This construct is also part of FM 5.0 the Operations Process.

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<sup>47</sup>FM 3.0.

<sup>48</sup>Mission Command Battle Laboratory, “Mission Command Command Post,” (White Paper, Mission Command Battle Laboratory, Fort Leavenworth: Combined Arms Center, 2011).

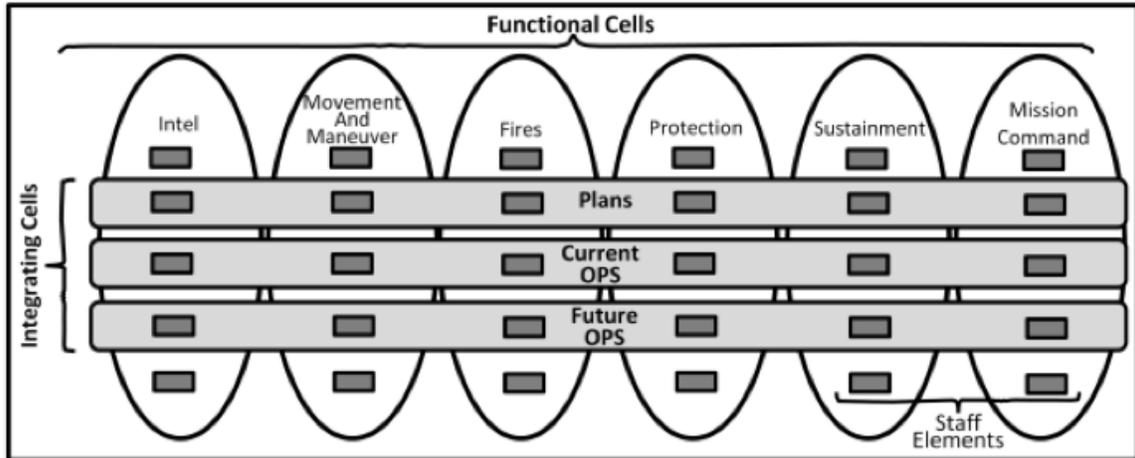


Figure 2. Model for the Organization of Command Posts for the Army.

Source: Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 5.0, *The Operations Process*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 2010), A-3.

It is important to understand that the proposal for special operations as a warfighting function was based upon the understanding that this model for staff organization at operational headquarters was becoming more and more relevant and important. Therefore, as staff and action officers at both ARSOCIC and ARCIC conceived the idea, they envisioned a doctrine that gave special operations a firm seat on future staff organizations of Army GPF headquarters.

Warfighting functions are not the only aspect of doctrine that affects this case study. Warfighting function addition seems to have been chosen because it was central to be both the way the Army thinks about operations and operational art and because it is becoming central to how the Army organizes. Yet, the Army also has other cognitive constructs in doctrine including the elements of operational art and core competencies.<sup>49</sup> Members of the SOF community who are involved in doctrine and were involved with the proposal were quick to criticize the way that

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<sup>49</sup>FM 3-0.

both of these constructs are explained in Army doctrine.<sup>50</sup> For example, the Army currently has two core competencies, which are essentially two broad description of the purpose of the entire organization. They are Combined Arms maneuver (CAM) and Wide Area Security (WAS). Neither of these, according to SOF personnel interviewed, reflects nor includes the organizational purpose (essence) of SOF.<sup>51</sup> The joint doctrinal construct on the other hand does. Joint Doctrine currently has four core competencies for all US military forces. They are Combat, Security, Engagement, and Relief and Reconstruction.<sup>52</sup> The fact that joint doctrine seems to give better description and credence to SOF's organizational essence is an additional artifact of the fragmentation of SOF's subculture from that of the Army.

## **The Proposal as Case Study**

As stated in the introduction to this monograph, the proposal officially began with the question posed by the Chief of Staff of the Army at the time, General George Casey. General Casey had raised the question after conversations with MG Bennett Sacolick, the Commander of the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS).<sup>53</sup> The impetus for the proposal came from MG Sacolick's personal experience in witnessing how dysfunctional the SOF/GPF relationship had been in Iraq and in previous conflicts. In interviewing and visiting with ODA commanders who were operating in the battle-space of conventional force commanders, there were frequent cases of poor to barely existent relationships

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<sup>50</sup>Sacolick, interview. Fitzpatrick, interview. LTC Glenn Thomas, interviewed by author (email), Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 3 May 2011.

<sup>51</sup>School of Advanced Military Studies, ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, Version 9.6.

<sup>52</sup>Department of Defense, The Joint Staff, Capstone Concept for Joint Operations, version 3.0, 15 January 2009, [http://www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/approved\\_ccjov3.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/approved_ccjov3.pdf) (4 September 2011).

<sup>53</sup>USAJFKSWCS is a subordinate command of USASOC and the superior command for ARSOCIC.

and no true systematic coordination or integration mechanisms<sup>54</sup> MG Sacolick came to the conclusion that doctrine was the only way to fix the problem because he believes it to be the foundation of everything that the Army teaches in schools and the way the Army organizes itself.<sup>55</sup> This understanding of doctrine's role is widely held and in line with the DOTMLPF construct of DOD.<sup>56</sup> The study group appointed to answer General Casey's question and consisting of both SOF and GPF representatives seemed to share MG Sacolick's vision. The study group convened on 10 September 2010 and published its findings in the form of a presentation and white paper on 11 November 2010.<sup>57</sup> The presentation and the white paper were both detailed in their description of the perceived problems and the way ahead for the proposal. The centerpiece of the detailed concept was the addition of special operations as the seventh Army warfighting function. Though there were challenges, ARSOCIC believed that they had thoroughly "socialized" the concept throughout the GPF community.<sup>58</sup> In addition to personal correspondence, phone calls, and video teleconferences (VTCs), ARSOCIC published an article in *Special Warfare Magazine* to provide USASOC's narrative of and support for the proposal.<sup>59</sup> ARSOCIC, as the proposals sponsor, reached out to every outstation that would take part in the General Officer Review Board (GORB) to be held on 23 March 2011 by VTC. LTG Robert Caslen, the Commander of the Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth, chaired the GORB instead of the Commander of Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), a four star

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<sup>54</sup>Sacolick, interview.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Flynn, interview

<sup>57</sup>ARSOCIC Presentation, "Final Report to CSA on Integration of GPF and ARSOF Study," (Washington, DC, 11 November 2011).

<sup>58</sup>James Yarborough, interviewed by author (email), Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May-June 2011.

<sup>59</sup>Glenn Thomas, "Special Operations as a Warfighting Function," *Special Warfare* (United States Army Special Warfare Center and School, January-February 2011), 8-11.

command. This was due to the fact that General Martin Dempsey, TRADOC CDR, had been recently nominated for Chief of Staff of the Army to replace General Casey, and was in transition. The CAC also happened to be the parent command of the Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCoE) and the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD), both located on Fort Leavenworth. The ARSOCIC position and the proposal were simply stated:

1) Current Doctrine (FM 3-0, 2008) and Concepts (Army Capstone Concept, 2009), and (Army Operating Concept, 2010) do not adequately address capabilities and limitations of ARSO (*Army Special Operations*).

2) Current Army education does not fully address ARSO contributions to Full Spectrum Operations.

3) ARSO independent operations conducted prior to the entry of a GPF are not understood and addressed in current doctrine.

4) ARSO persistent engagement with foreign populations and governments to Shape and Set Conditions as well as Prevent and Deter are overlooked in current doctrine.

5) GPF-ARSO integration at the tactical level takes place too late; integration must take place prior to operation.

6) Nine years of observations, insights and lessons and the distribution of those OILs to the Army through publications and other venues and media have done little to improve the level of Army conventional and special operations integration across the force.

7) The current level of Army conventional and special operations integration, largely based on relationships and personalities, is insufficient to meet the future needs of the Force, based on requirements and conditions highlighted in the Army Capstone Concept and the Army Operating Concept.

The current doctrinal construct provided in FM 3.0's use of the warfighting functions efficiently organizes the elements of combat power for the preponderance of the Army; however, it fails to capture unique capabilities of Special Operations Forces and the special operations they conduct. The FM's construct of the warfighting functions fails to assist planners in recognizing capabilities and effects that special operations contribute/or can contribute (before, during, after). In order to increase awareness and understanding of special operations and how they might best support combatant commanders, the Army

must work to educate and develop leaders at all levels and this requires conceptual and doctrinal updates.”<sup>60</sup>

The proposal envisioned future headquarters being similarly organized into functional and integrating cells with staff officers dedicated to key aspects of special operations. The figure below demonstrates the construct.

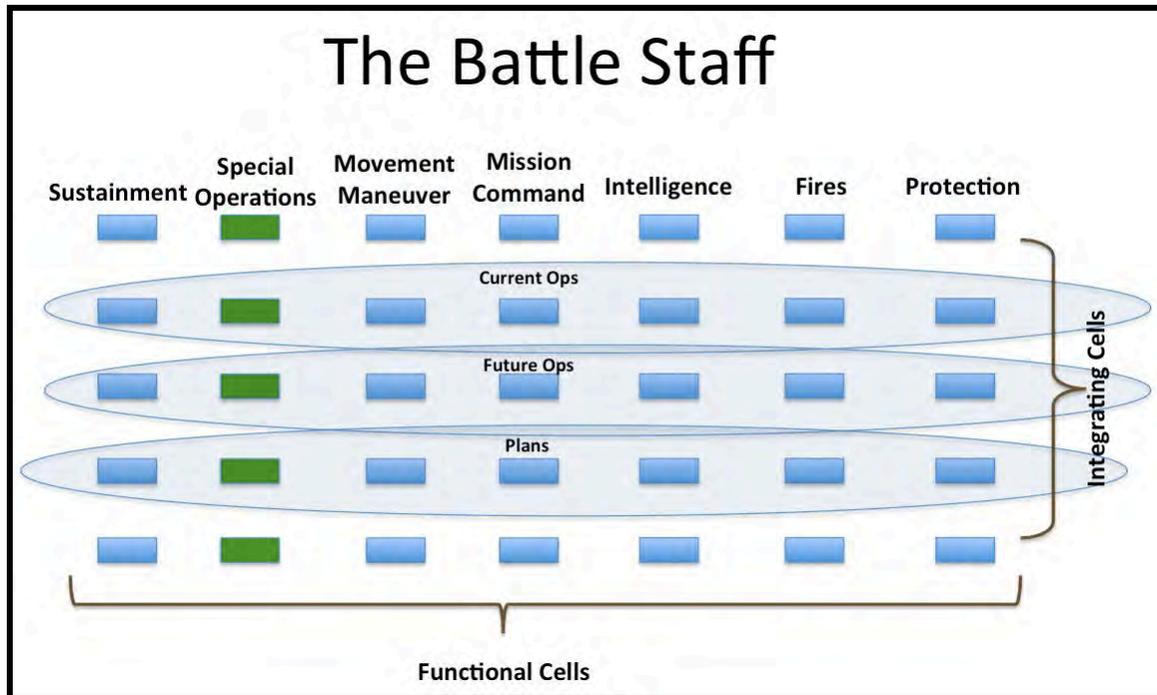


Figure 3. Future Command Post Model

Source: Author’s Design, based upon the proposal.

The special operation warfighting function would provide a doctrinal base for further organizational changes on Corps and Division level staffs as well as educational changes for Army professional schooling. These changes would further be supplemented by changes in personnel to fill the SO warfighting function gaps of various staffs. Because a warfighting

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<sup>60</sup>Yarbrough, interview.

function is a collection of tasks that logically go together, but might be accomplished by several different types of units, the SO warfighting function proposal listed the following tasks:

The special operations warfighting function is composed of a unique set of tasks and systems that enable lethal and nonlethal mission areas specifically designed to *influence* enemy, friendly, and neutral audience, and designed to *shape* foreign political and military environments by working with and through partner nation, indigenous populations and their institutions in order to *prevent* or *deter* conflict, prevail in war, or succeed in contingencies.

In addition to the primary tasks to support Army efforts to influence, shape, prevent, and deter conflict, the special operations warfighting function will be responsible for a full range of related sub-tasks. These tasks include: *Civil Affairs Operations, Counter-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Foreign Internal Defense, Information Operations, Military Information Support Operations, Security Force Assistance, Special Reconnaissance, and Unconventional Warfare.*<sup>61</sup> (Emphasis added)

ARSOCIC and USASOC representatives understood that the tasks and their definitions could still be refined and discussed. They fully understood that units and elements that were not SOF and did not fall under USASOC, SOCOM, or any MPF-11 funding, undertake many of the tasks as defined, especially the first four. To SOF, that was the very intent. Now a GPF Commander would have a staff functional cell that could coordinate the similar and complimentary activities that GPF and SOF elements were both trying to accomplish particularly with respect to indigenous forces, allies, partners, populations, governments, and other third parties not under the command of a US or CJTF commander. The GPF Commander would now have SOF personnel on their staff to do this. These SOF personnel, unlike their GPF counterparts, were trained and educated for this purpose.

The proposal came apart at the GORB. It was the very last item raised of 12 other proposed changes to doctrine and it came up only after two and a half hours of discussion. Prior to the start of the meeting the CADD supplied a brief issue paper explaining their non-concurrence with the proposal. The paper attacked the tasks and expressed a fear that SOF was

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<sup>61</sup>FM 3-0. Issue Paper SO as a Warfighting Function.

trying to “take-over” these tasks as if an Army warfighting function meant that USASOC would withhold the capabilities from GPF once the warfighting function was added. The circulation of the issue paper had the intended effect. The tasks as listed became the grand concern that doctrinally grouping those tasks under an Army warfighting function meant that GPF units, elements, and schools would no longer play a role. As one member of the staff from USAJFKSWCS recalled:

The arguments they were bringing I did not agree with. The argument they were bringing in was something like, “Yeah, we do that too,” the other centers for excellence were saying that. We weren't with MG Sacolick; we were in here listening and quiet. We were thinking, “No, you guys are missing the nuances of what we're trying to say. Whatever we're trying to say we're obviously not communicating it to the point where everyone else in the distant locations can figure it out.” Unfortunately in that huge format with all the GOs across the world, it was a bit of a challenge to present ideas that everybody else could listen to without chiming in and getting on their soap box a little bit. When LTG Caslen introduced it he said it was some kind of caveat and we all reacted in here -- because we weren't on the screen--we all reacted like, “Oh, man. That's not setting the stage the right way.” It seemed like it stalled versus getting the rest of the conversation about it...I think everything went well; it was well received at the high levels (*prior to VTC*). It seemed to come apart literally at the video teleconference (VTC). It all got boiled down to one PowerPoint slide, which we didn't prepare and it rapidly went off in a different direction than we would have carried it.<sup>62</sup>

## **Analysis of The Problems and The Proposal**

So this brings this study back to its secondary research questions: (1) What are the differences in the perception and understanding of problems between SOF and GPF communities. (2) How do organizational culture and structure affect the issue? (3) What can organization theory tell us about integrating SOF and GPF toward improving the practice of operational art?

The questions are as related as their answers. The disagreements between SOF and GPF over the proposal to make special operations a warfighting function fundamentally come down to differences in organizational subculture. This means that people who belong to either of these two camps (SOF and GPF) see the problem differently depending upon which camp they belong.

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<sup>62</sup>LTC Duane Lauchengco, interviewed by author, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 9 May 2011.

Individuals within each of these organizational subcultures have been conditioned throughout their careers to see the world differently, to see their purpose differently, and to understand their critical tasks and the relationship of those critical tasks to the greater missions differently. When they are brought together in operations and in planning, individuals from each camp will often view the problems and potential solutions to those campaigns differently. Each is convinced of the rightness of their point of view, their framework of understanding, and their specific style in the application of operational art. Organizational subculture gives us a frame of understanding and the foundations of SSM further explain how roles, norms, and values, which help define and link individuals of a subculture also generate these tendencies.<sup>63</sup> For example, while several individuals from both SOF and GPF identified a problem existing in the current operational environments concerning the integration or interoperability of SOF/GPF they could not (up to this point) agree on a potential solution, though some elements were similar. General-purpose forces (or individuals associated with that camp) generally believe that having more special operations personnel embedded in their staffs would make the difference. They seek a SO expert to have an assigned position on higher echelon staffs to work in the movement and maneuver warfighting function cell. They also seek more authority with respect to command and control relationships that would give the commander of GPF control and command authority over SOF that operate within the GPF commander's designated area of responsibility. Special operations forces on the other hand, do not view the problem or the solution in terms of just personnel. They identify the problem as one of their capabilities and missions not being considered as a part of the planning of campaigns and not being understood by GPF commanders. For SOF it is not just a matter of integrating their operations or command and control relationships, but rather it is a matter of seeing the possibilities of accomplishing certain missions, purposes, or end-states by the ways in

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<sup>63</sup> Checkland and Poulter.

which SOF operate. Particularly with the engagement with and the use of indigenous forces but also indigenous organizations such as local governments, tribes, and parties in a matter that they are enabled or influenced through MISO or Civil Affairs actions. Too often, according to SOF personnel, GPF view problems in terms of kinetic effects or trying to view the battlefield through kinetic actions. Special operations forces on the other hand, believe that they try to influence the human element of a local population. General purpose forces view problems with respect to terrain and enemy, while SOF generally understand and view problems with respect to populations and their willingness to take certain actions. This dichotomy has led to differences in understanding and an inability of these two communities to come together to solve a problem that they generally agree exists, but cannot agree upon the nature of the problem nor can they even begin to agree upon a solution. In order to understand this and the nuances generated by the separate subcultures, this study must explore the points of view and the arguments over the proposal in depth.

### **The SOF Point of View**

USASOC had a well laid out argument for their case. In addition to the reasons quoted above from the issue paper, USASOC explained how the current doctrine failed to express the value and capabilities of SOF.

Responsibility for special operations functions are currently divided between mission command and movement and maneuver warfighting functions. Kinetic or lethal tasks and systems were aligned with movement and maneuver, while non-kinetic or non-lethal tasks and systems were aligned with mission command (i.e. Military Information Support Operations and Civil Affairs). This limits the Army's ability to have unencumbered access to all Army CF and SOF capabilities. Moreover, the Army requires the ability to fully exploit the commonalities of conventional and special operations capabilities to influence enemy, neutral, and friendly populations and to shape political, economic, and military environments from the nonlethal end of the spectrum (often with interagency,

intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations) to the lethal end of the spectrum (often with joint and multinational partners).<sup>64</sup>

The oddity of this position is that SOF has what organizational theorists call, “precarious value.” Which comes from the structural and cultural distance it is allowed to maintain from GPF.

As Jessica Glicken points out:

The historic absence of legitimacy (of SOF) in the military community allowed for flexible organizational structures and operational behaviors that did not conform to standard military regimes. This framework engendered hostility toward SOF among the general-purpose military who resented the cadre of personnel self-styled and regarded by others as “elite warriors.” Addressing elements of the precarious nature of the special operations community has the potential to undermine the very qualities that distinguish it and give it value.<sup>65</sup>

The SOF community appears to be aware of this and, even though he is perhaps the highest-ranking advocate of the proposal, MG Sacolick believes that having the ability to act independently from GPF is key to SOF’s identity. MG Sacolick readily admits that he does not even like the term “SOF/GPF integration” to describe the problem surrounding the proposal because it implies a command relationship with GPF or putting SOF elements under the direct command of a GPF HQ. Though there are exceptions, SOF personnel are generally opposed to this.<sup>66</sup> The GPF community frequently uses the term “integration” to describe the kind of interaction they would like to achieve with SOF. As one member of the SOF community explained:

We've all heard the term SOF-GPF integration for all of our lives in the Army both from the SOF side and the conventional side but nobody really takes a look at, "What does that mean?" My proposal is this, SOF-GPF integration suggests the integration of forces which is not what you're doing. What you're doing is synchronizing and de-conflicting activities and operations. I think we should get away from that and I know MG Sacolick

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<sup>64</sup>FM 3.0. Issue paper SO as a warfighting function.

<sup>65</sup>Turnley, 28.

<sup>66</sup>Sacolick, interview.

doesn't like the term 'integration' -- but that whole SOF-GPF integration... Its implying C2 mechanism if you use the term SOF-GPF integration.”<sup>67</sup>

Thus, SOF’s organizational culture is averse to too much integration with GPF, yet the proposal was an attempt to provide a doctrinal mechanism to do just that. But certainly it was not intended to do only that. Generally speaking SOF as a community want their major capabilities and the tasks associated with their organizational essence to be part of how the Army does business. To SOF, this proposal was more about helping the Army leverage SOF to do what the Army is not doing well, at least as observed by members of the SOF community through the lens of SOF’s organizational sub-culture.

As defined by joint doctrine, special operations have a clear, if somewhat unspecific definition:

Special operations: operations conducted in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to achieve military, diplomatic, informational, and/or economic objectives employing military capabilities for which there is no broad conventional force requirement. These operations often require covert, clandestine, or low-visibility capabilities. SO are applicable across the range of military operations. They can be conducted independently or in conjunction with operations of conventional forces or other government agencies and may include operations by, with, or through indigenous or surrogate forces. SO differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets.<sup>68</sup>

For much of SOF, especially the Special Forces elements within SOF, the very thing that makes SOF special, the distinctive element of their organizational essence, is that they are the only force in the Army designed specifically to work with indigenous forces at the tactical and operational level. This explanation of organizational essence means Special Forces, but also MISO and CA elements.<sup>69</sup> Yet, for members of the SOF community, it is not just about what they do, but when

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<sup>67</sup>Thomas M. McKinley, interviewed by author, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 9 May 2011.

<sup>68</sup>JP 3.05, I-1.

<sup>69</sup>Sacolick, interview.

they do it. SOF's activities with foreign indigenous forces are not limited to major theaters of war like Iraq and Afghanistan. Special operations forces conduct these activities on a regular basis with partners around the world. This occurs as part of theater cooperation plans of the combatant commanders and at the request of United States ambassadors as part of interagency country plans. When the joint definition says "may include," the SOF community would likely rephrase to say, "frequently includes." The SOF community sees itself playing a key role in the design process for Joint Task Force (JTF) commanders and ambassadors because SOF has trained people who understand a country, its culture, and indigenous population.<sup>70</sup> It is this aspect of SOF that the SOF community, starting with MG Sacolick, wants the Army to leverage. SOF personnel feel that the Army simply forgets about their capabilities and their pre-conflict activities. As some SOF personnel explain:

The purpose of trying to establish SO as a distinct war fighting function is to ensure that we are brought into that initial campaign planning; that SO are part of the planning process. For example, if you look at the old battlefield operating system (BOS), you had your matrix of the BOS that you're supposed to use as a platoon leader. For example, if you're a Bradley platoon leader and you have an Air Defense Artillery (ADA) section attached to you (*Protection warfighting function*), if they're not on your planning matrix you forget about them. That's kind of what we're looking at; ARSOF is not part of that normal JTF level sync matrix so they're forgotten about. I will tell you that from a human behavioral perspective, we look at that and say, "What is wrong with you people? How can you always forget us?" Which they always do. Even in some of these TRADOC things we sometimes get last-minuted and they're like, "Oh, yeah. The SOF guys." I've spent enough time up there that I know that is not their world. We're not on anybody's sync matrix. It's not even a matter of faulting; you get stuck in your normal way of doing things. Part of the logic here is to make this muscle memory. Make SO part of the sync matrix and make that the normal way of doing things.<sup>71</sup>

All SOF personnel interviewed shared this sentiment with respect to both operational planning and to activities of the force generating side of the greater Army organization.

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<sup>70</sup>U.S. Army Special Operations Command, "ARSOF Capstone Concept," (Fort Bragg, NC: USASOC, 2010).

<sup>71</sup>McKinley, interview.

It has been revised; I don't recall if it's been published yet or if it's making its final wickets. In there it talks about redesigning the doctrine hierarchy and originally it had our capstone document, FM 3-05, and had dropped it as a FM. That's where we kind of threw up the red star clusters and said, "Hey, we're not getting included even in this Army hierarchy of FMs. We need to fight that battle as well alongside the war fighting functions." By bringing up the war fighting function in those white papers -- and that was done between us, ARSOCIC, MCD, and the rest of the school house -- we were addressing that fact of, "Hey, we need to get SO on board as far as being looked at as a warfighting function." Also, within (TRADOC Pam) 25-36, kind of concurrently, we said, "Hey, we shouldn't be dropped off as one of the other FMs that's getting dropped off. Let's pull that back up as one of the key manuals for the Army." That has actually now happened. In the latest FM 3-0, the one they put a hold on, it was again listed as a key stone manual and in 25-36 it's there along with all the other war fighting functions. While it would appear we didn't win that fight as far as being recognized by everybody else as a warfighting function, we are recognized by all of the other doctrine writers as being a keystone manual. That is almost an equivalent step, I would say, because the only other manuals that are keystones are warfighting functions.<sup>72</sup>

The SOF community readily believes that their regional expertise and ability to deliver to combatant commanders key skills in working with foreign forces is better than anything that GPF can or will ever produce. MG Sacolick says that GPF will never be as good at working with foreign forces as SOF and that he wants to help GPF be better at it. As he stated, "I don't need the Army's help to be good at this. This kind of persistent engagement is important to us but it also must be important to them."<sup>73</sup> The USASOC Capstone concept further reflects this sentiment of the SOF community:

ARSOF organizations have depended on understanding the environment and relations with indigenous people, and therefore are well suited to provide information to and collaborate with country teams and military commanders. Ultimately, ARSOF elements are able to assist in providing situational awareness and understanding to support the development of campaign plans of the GCCs and JTF commanders and mission strategic plans of the Ambassadors. Through the employment of proven techniques such as Area Studies and Area Assessments, Target Audience Analysis, and Civil Information

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<sup>72</sup>Lauchencgo, interview.

<sup>73</sup>Sacolick, interview.

Management, ARSOF can serve as a bridging force to support planning by Ambassador and GCC staffs.<sup>74</sup>

Persistent Engagement and Strategic Bridging are two key phrases in the SOF community's narrative that explains ARSOF's organizational essence through the capstone document. Bottom line is that ARSOF sees itself as a strategic bridging force that will help the US government, and the Army, achieve the kinds of whole of government solutions that the National Security Strategy calls for.<sup>75</sup> In this sense, SOF leaders believe that they need to help their GPF brothers understand the strategic context. There is a clear sense among the SOF leadership and SOF personnel that they are increasingly relevant, while GPF is increasingly less relevant unless they can better embrace engagement concepts and whole of government approaches where they (GPF) are not necessarily the lead actor as they have been in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last 10 years. GPF personnel, on the other hand, often seem mystified by the assertions of the SOF community especially as so many GPF officers and NCOs have returned from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan with significant experience in partnering with indigenous forces often for full year tours. Though they have rarely been specifically trained for working with indigenous forces, GPF have shouldered the burden and feel that they have developed significant competencies as individuals and as organizations.

Unlike the GPF parts of the Army, SOF has invested in people with regional expertise for the purpose of working with and through others largely as part of pre-conflict shaping efforts (as opposed to shaping operations that support the man effort in an operation or campaign). The SOF community seems to take pride in that regional expertise. In 2009, for example, ARSOF conducted more than 100 partner nation capacity-building training and program events in more

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<sup>74</sup>ARSOF Capstone Concept, 4-5.

<sup>75</sup>National Security Strategy.

than 50 countries. This was in addition to the tremendous requirements of OIF and OEF.<sup>76</sup> SOF has also further institutionalized its best regional expertise in the form of regional support detachments that enhance SOF's ability to prepare the environment and coordinate with host nations and other agencies of the United States government prior to the large scale operations that the Army is mostly interested in. These detachments include native speakers and individuals who have spent significant portions of their professional lives in designated regions.<sup>77</sup> From an organizational culture standpoint, SOF considers GPF to be amateurs and neophytes in this increasingly important element of national security policy. The tone is sometimes patronizing.

In MG Sacolick's opinion, the warfighting function proposal failed because some civilian advisors to the general officer representatives at the centers of excellence were entrenched in their organizational interests.<sup>78</sup> There is some indication that his assessment has merit, but one must examine that from the GPF point of view as well. MG Sacolick further believes that the Army has absolutely no appreciation for what SO brings to the table with respect to "Strategic Bridging."

"No, absolutely not. The Army has no appreciation for what we do. They have no idea. They may say that they want a SOF company or unit in their AO but they have no appreciation for how to employ that element." He further explains:

This is not about SOF relevancy. We don't need the Army and that is what is so pure about these initiatives. I am absolutely convinced that post Iraq and Afghanistan we can put SOF guys in 150 countries around the world and continue to do the kind of work we are doing for the Combatant Commanders...we turned down over 90 JCETs this year alone...so it has nothing to do with our relevancy it has everything to do with the contribution that we can make collectively to the Army and support to the theaters<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>ARSOF Capstone Concept, 9.

<sup>77</sup>FM 3.05, 8-4.

<sup>78</sup>Sacolick, interview.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

## The GPF Point of View

The GPF community does not share the vision of SOF as somehow the savior of purpose and direction for the Army. Instead they view the problems and issues on a simpler scale. When it comes to the issue of SOF and GPF and their interactions, the GPF community views this as purely a function of integration and information sharing. Unlike MG Sacolick, and other members of the SOF community, members of the GPF community will frequently use the word integration. For those in the GPF community that have paid attention to these integration issues, the history of the problem goes back several years and the narrative is one of suspicion, frustration, and lack of cooperation that manifests the diverse fragmented subculture of SOF.

In describing the background to the problem, Mr. Clint Ancker, the director of the Combined Arms Doctrine directorate (CADD) at the Combined Arms Center (CAC) explains that after OIF 1 (2003) there were a number of points of friction between SOF and GPF. He claims to have put together integration talks in 2003 in conjunction with the Special Operations Command from Joint Forces Command (SOCJFCOM). The talks and their outputs were wholly disappointing because they failed to address what the GPF community understood to be the central issues.

When we were done with the meeting, I had jotted down about 6 to 10 points from the briefings that I thought were worthy of discussion. In terms of how we could further integration. So I asked what was the way ahead and you know to be brutally honest with you the folks at USASOC were not even interested in talking about it. I mean they literally wouldn't even talk about it. So it pretty much died at that point. Now shortly after that, SOCOM decided to write a paper of SOF and conventional force integration. They sent it up to me, because I still had some contacts down there, and my concern was that it was almost entirely about what conventional forces needed to do to support SOF. There was very little the other way in fact nothing going the other way and it still maintained that SOF would only work for a JSOTF and would not be OPCON to conventional forces.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Ancker, interview.

Mr. Ancker further explained some personal history with attempts at SO integration. He stated that when he was on the working group in 2003 for designing the Army Force Generation Concept (ARFORGEN) and modularity, he personally called LTG Kennsinger (Former USASOC CDR) and asked if he could get at least one CMF 18 (Special Forces) Officer on each of the three Army Corps staffs. He, like MG Sacolick today, believed that it was important for Corps level planning staffs to be considering SO capabilities early in the planning process. Mr. Ancker laments that LTG Kennsinger stated that he simply could not spare any and advised him that the Corps staffs should go to a TSOC if they need SO expertise. The problem, in Mr. Ancker's estimation, was that a Corps headquarters does not know when it needs SOF input unless it has trained SOF guys.<sup>81</sup> If Mr. Ancker is right, and MG Sacolick and members of the SOF community seem to agree, then the disconnect and lack of understanding of SOF runs deep and is further evidence of the fragmented nature of the two organizational cultures. But just as importantly, it demonstrates that the GPF community, and specifically those people and organizations involved with the warfighting function proposal, had made serious attempts in the past to address the problem as they saw it. They saw the problem as an integration problem, not a vision problem or a failure to leverage engagement as operational art. As the CADD Director stated, "I have been frustrated for the better part of a decade in trying to solve what I think is a lack of integration."<sup>82</sup>

Turf issues, specifically over doctrine, further hindered the quest for SOF and GPF integration. Mr. Ancker recalls prior incidents where USASOC forwarded draft copies of its own doctrine to the CADD. The directorate disagreed with elements of the proposed SO doctrine because USASOC had misused or attempted to redefine existing definitions. When USASOC

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

went ahead and published the draft anyway, this further emboldened the sense of separation and cultural fragmentation that both MG Sacolick and Mr. Ancker seemed to acknowledge.<sup>83</sup> As Ancker said, “They just decided that they were not going to play by our rules.”<sup>84</sup>

When it came to the decision point over the warfighting function proposal, the GPF community leveled three interrelated arguments or concerns against it, while recommending other conceptual solutions to the integration problem. The SOF view of the problem as a more holistic problem with the way the Army practiced operational art was wholly ignored. The first was the proponency concern, second is the concern over definitions of tasks, and third is the “we do that too” argument. The first argument is a sad statement on the fragmentation of organizational subculture and an expression of Wilson and Halperin’s notions of “turf.” The second argument is accurate in that the warfighting function proposal recommended some terms that are either already defined or have different meanings in the Joint vs. Army communities. The third argument is false and, on its own, runs counter to the very concept and purpose behind a warfighting function.

Proponency: Both the CADD Director and the Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCoE) Director expressed concern about the proponency issue. Although doctrinally a warfighting function is designed to cognitively group tasks and systems so that the commander can organize the efforts of his staff and operations, they also serve as a way for the Army’s bureaucracy of TRADOC to organize and assign proponency for groups of tasks. These are known as centers of excellence and each warfighting function has a center of excellence that is dominated by specific groups of specialties.<sup>85</sup> The Maneuver CoE at Fort Benning, GA is

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, TRADOC Regulation 25-36, *The TRADOC Doctrinal Literature Program (DLP)*, (Fort Monroe, VA: Government Printing Office, 2004).

dominated by Infantry and Armor personnel, the Fires CoE is dominated by Artillery personnel, etc. All of these centers fall under TRADOC, but special operations do not fall under TRADOC, they fall under USASOC. A Special Operations warfighting function would have to create its own center of excellence and the only logical choice for that would be USAJFKSWCS at Fort Bragg. Both the CADD Director and the MCoE Director, COL (P) Charles Flynn, expressed great concern about such a center not being under the direct control of TRADOC, “Due to the role and responsibilities that TRADOC plays in integrating DOTMLPF across all warfighting functions for the Army. If left outside of TRADOC, the coordination of these DOTMLPF solutions would be challenging - if not significant.”<sup>86</sup> While there may be genuine motivations about what effects might occur if a center of excellence was outside the direct authority of the TRADOC CDR, one can easily attribute some of this to a bureaucratic turf battle.

The argument goes deeper especially when one relates the proponency concern to the second concern over the defined tasks. Fundamentally the proposal raised concern over the future of the Information Operations (IO) specialty. The tasks assigned under the proposed special operations warfighting function included “Influence, prevent, deter, shape” among others. With the word influence listed under the new special operations warfighting function, there was potential for large changes to Mission Command proponency. Therefore, as the MCCoE considered the doctrinal change, they had to recognize the possibility that the Information Operations (IO) specialty might logically belong in the special operations warfighting function since MISO is a significant part of IO. IO as a cognitive construct is defined as:

The integrated employment of the core capabilities of Electronic Warfare (EW), Computer Network Operations (CNO), Psychological Operations (PSYOP), Military Deception (MILDEC), and Operations Security (OPSEC), in concert with specified

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<sup>86</sup>Flynn, interview. BG Flynn later added clarification to previous comments in an email to the author dated 19 September 2011.

supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision-making while protecting our own.<sup>87</sup>

The Army's Information Proponency Office, which falls under the MCCoE, trains IO officers to be able to coordinate these capabilities.<sup>88</sup> The real differences between MISO and IO goes beyond the inclusion of electronic warfare (EW), computer network operations (CNO), and operations security (OPSEC) in the IO specialty. The Army and Joint community view IO as a whole separate domain of warfare and element of national power. The purpose of IO is described as follows:

Information Operations seek to influence the behavior of target audiences by changing their ability to make decisions, while simultaneously defending the friendly capability to make proper decisions. This is no different from the exercise of the other forms of national power. In this instance the means is information, but the resulting outcome is the same.<sup>89</sup>

Yet recently the Army moved CNO proponency outside of TRADOC, because, "TRADOC lacks the expertise that ARCYBER possesses in this field."<sup>90</sup> Additionally, EW is now a separate career field.<sup>91</sup> That alone may indicate that it logically belongs in the fires warfighting function because it attacks systems. Given these developments, the SOF community sees the IO specialty as increasingly doing the work of MISO officers toward enemy, indigenous, and neutral audiences. OPSEC could easily remain a function of mission command without the IO framework. The MCCoE director opposed this idea because he firmly believes that IO belongs as part of the mission command warfighting function as a part of the inform and influence

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<sup>87</sup>Department of Defense, Joint Pub (JP) 3-13, *Information Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 13 February 2006), ix.

<sup>88</sup>MCCoE Website, <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/MCCOE/organizations.asp>, accessed on 23 August 2011.

<sup>89</sup>Department of Military Strategy, *Planning, and Operations & Center for Strategic Leadership, Information Operations Primer*, (US Army War College, Carlisle PA: November 2010), 1.

<sup>90</sup>Flynn, interview. BG Charles Flynn later added this clarification in an email.

<sup>91</sup>MCCoE Website, <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cew/> accessed on 23 August 2011.

activities. This is in line with current doctrine as written in FM 3-0, change 1. Additionally, the MCCOE director emphasized that the IO proponent office, which is part of MC COE, runs the integrating course for all of the IO leaders in the army.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless, the CNO proponenty existing outside of TRADOC has become a test case for the ability to integrate DOTMLPF with proponenty outside the direct control of TRADOC.

Special Operations Force officers, on the other hand, maintain that most of the elements of SOF train very specifically for influencing populations. It is the very organizational essence of MISO and vital to the essence of Civil Affairs and Special Forces. Civil Affairs influence civil governance institutions and people and Special Forces influence indigenous security organizations.<sup>93</sup> As one CA Officer explained:

At the Army corps, division, BCT you've got a cell that used to be called the division CA (G9) cell where you have CA guidance. They're now putting the CA guy, and the MISO guy together and calling it the Inform and Influence Cell under Mission Command. Let's throw a SF guy in there and make it the Special Operations or the Engagement Cell warfighting function cell. Then you have all three of those together and they're all synchronized.<sup>94</sup>

Defining Terms: The CADD Director and McCoE Director expressed serious concern over definitions of terms and tasks as defined in the proposal. Specifically they cited, "Influence, prevent, deter, and shape." MG Sacolick and other SOF staff personnel who worked on the proposal had understood that the definitions of the tasks were not final as listed in the proposal and that some refinement would be necessary.<sup>95</sup> The representatives from the other communities did not see it that way. Specifically, Mr. Anker denounced the notion of "shape" saying, "I cannot see a Division or Corps commander assigning shaping operations to a SO warfighting function

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<sup>92</sup>Flynn, interview.

<sup>93</sup>COL Fitz Fitzpatrick, interviewed by author, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 9 May 2011.

<sup>94</sup>Fitzpatrick, interview.

<sup>95</sup>Thomas, interview.

cell when shaping operations are everything that contributes to setting the conditions for the decisive operations.”<sup>96</sup> In this sense, CADD’s rejection of the proposal had a great deal to do with previous frustrations with SOF’s misuse and imprecise use of doctrinal terms in previous doctrine submissions. Yet, CADD’s understanding of the proposal did not line up with the proposal as articulated by the working group that recommended it. The actual proposal defined “shape” quite differently from the idea of “shaping operations” that existed in the current doctrine. The definition of shape and the use of “shaping operations” in the proposal leaned heavily on the SOF construct of persistent engagement as defined in the ARSOF Capstone Concept. The terms “prevent and deter” also came from this document.

Shape: Persistent engagement with host nation and indigenous assets provide methods and opportunities to directly or indirectly create or preserve conditions advantageous to US policy. Shaping operations are frequently conducted in partnership with interagency, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental partners, as well as with joint and multinational forces. Shaping often employs indigenous forces in conjunction with conventional forces. Over time, these operations shape the operating environment to facilitate pre-combat operations, combat operations, and post-combat operations. While specific effects can be achieved from short duration operations, efforts to prevent and deter conflict will often be conducted as part of a Geographic Combatant Command's long-term engagement strategy. As part of persistent engagement, shaping efforts provide increased regional knowledge of transportation and distribution networks, as well as linkage to host and partner nation law enforcement, public safety, and emergency and health services. This knowledge and linkage will facilitate the movement and maneuver, sustainment, and protection functions in the event of escalation to open conflict.<sup>97</sup>

The opponents of the idea used the doctrinal definition of shaping operations to tear down the proposal because of the word “shape” and then carried it further with “influence, deter, and

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<sup>96</sup>Ancker, interview. Mr. Ancker later clarified his concern on this issue in an email to the author dated 19 September 2011. “The frustration was not so much with their misuse of the term, but that if assigned this task, shape, they would be responsible for things that were well outside their area of expertise. They had interpreted shape as phase 0 and phase 1 operations to shape the security environment prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Shape in army doctrine is everything that is done during operations to support the decisive operation. The issue is one of precision in language. It is not the misuses itself that is at issue, but rather the consequences of that misuse if carried over into actual operations.”

<sup>97</sup>FM 3-0 Issue Paper. SO as a Warfighting function.

prevent.” The fact that these terms were already well established in Army doctrine seemed of little concern to some members of the SOF community involved with the proposal.

I remember in that list of tasks they put on that slide -- and we didn't put together that slide. I know our guys didn't and I know Clint Ancker and his folks didn't put that slide together. That was put together over there and we were sitting over here thinking, "What the f--- is that doing on there? That doesn't make any sense." Those are the things, if I remember correctly, that LTG Caslen had kind of served up on and everybody kind of honed in on those as opposed to saying, "Hey, that's really not what we're going for here. You guys are getting distracted by some shiny things as opposed to reading the paper. Read the paper. That's what you should have done." It would have made a lot more sense and it would have been whittled down to a one-page PowerPoint slide.”<sup>98</sup>

Keeping in mind the characteristics of organizational subculture as defined by Hatch, Checkland and Poulter, one cannot help but see how different norms and values of individuals from GPF and SOF cultures affect their understanding of key concepts in how each describes what the greater organization must do. In this sense they also play a significant role in how each organizational subculture understands the very concept of operational art.

The third argument that opponents raised was closely linked with the second. This is the notion that somehow a special operations warfighting function must only be comprised of those tasks that are peculiar to SOF. This argument rejects the very idea of warfighting function as a cognitive, conceptual, task and system integrating method. To see the fallacy in the argument one must only ask if the intelligence warfighting function tasks are only accomplished by intelligence personnel or intelligence units. The answer is of course not. Infantry and armor units conduct reconnaissance and surveillance (tasks in the intelligence warfighting function) and all soldiers play intelligence roles just like all soldiers and units will have an influence role. Warfighting functions allow commanders to organize their staffs to manage actions and activities that are related and then process that information. They are an important organizing tool in operational art because many different kinds of units do many different things and classifying tactical actions

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<sup>98</sup>Lauchengco, interview.

into warfighting functions should help the commander arrange them in time, space, and purpose to achieve strategic objectives; ie practice operational art. Limiting a proposed special operations warfighting function to just tasks done by SOF units exclusively is like saying that fires cannot be a warfighting function because infantry maneuver units have mortars and conduct their own fires activities.

An email exchange between senior officers from SOF and GPF communities about the proposal reveals just how wide the cultural gap in understanding actually is. In this particular email exchange, a senior officer from the GPF community states the verbatim definition of a warfighting function and explains that special operations simply does not fit the criteria of being a group of tasks and systems untied by common purpose. The SOF senior officer simply cannot understand how the GPF officer can say that and launches into the rhetorical arguments about how the Congress of the USA thought it separate enough that it passed legislation to provide separate headquarters, funding, and the assessment and selection of personnel. The SOF senior officer continued to state that the obstinacy of the GPF officers was reminiscent of the controversy that occurred in WWII when leaders insisted that armor did not need to evolve beyond the capabilities of the 76mm gun and the Sherman tank because armor existed purely to support infantry maneuver.<sup>99</sup>

So why raise such a spurious argument and why is there such a difference in understanding? The fragmentation of SOF culture from GPF and the Army provides a very real explanation for this breach of logic and the failure to achieve a shared understanding. Members of the GPF community see SOF as separate and different. The difference culturally between a Special Forces officer for example and any other Army officer is far more than the difference

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<sup>99</sup>Emails provided by ARSOCIC officials under conditions of non-attribution of names of senders and recipients.

between an Artillery officer and an Infantry officer. The culture of the other branches is diverse-integrated. The sub-culture of SOF is diverse-fragmented.<sup>100</sup> Such a merger in doctrine would mean possibly trusting the management, coordination, and planning of such activities to actual SOF personnel who are not “one of us.” In this sense, by simply calling the new warfighting function “Special Operations” the fragmentation rears its head in the form of arguments that reject the very definition of the warfighting function concept and defy logic. This brings new and profound meaning to the old Shakespearean question, “What’s in a name?” Strangely enough, the very decision to name the warfighting function “Special Operations” may have led to its downfall and soon after the proposal’s demise, SOF began calling for a change to proposal to read, “Engagement as a seventh warfighting function.”

The arguments against the proposal did not end there. The GPF community had to also address the idea of “Engagement,” because USASOC had made clear that this initiative went beyond SOF/GPF integration and sought to address the real problem as perceived by USASOC. The CADD director further rejected the idea that a special operations warfighting function would be responsible for those engagement and shaping activities of the Army with respect to Theater Security Cooperation. He cited the new army initiative to stand-up theater security cooperation elements to integrate army efforts for the theater commander. These are now known as Theater Military Advisory and Assistance Groups (TMAAGs).<sup>101</sup> The CADD Director and the MCCoE Director do not believe that to be a SO function even though that is largely what SOF (an SO) has done for the last 50 years. It is what SOF personnel are trained and educated to do and it is exactly what USASOC elements have been trained manned and equipped to do for decades. Yet,

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<sup>100</sup>See literature review section for definitions of these terms.

<sup>101</sup>Thomas M. Jordan Brigadier General (USA Ret.), “Theater Military Advisory and Assistance Group (TMAAG)” Small Wars Journal Blog Post, March 20, 2008, <http://www.smallwars.org/blog/theater-military-advisory-and-assistance-group-tmaag> ( 18 September 2011).

the GPF community believes that a brand new element comprised of GPF personnel and a future concept of potentially regionally aligning brigades within the ARFORGEN cycle is somehow a better way to help manage and implement shaping efforts of combatant commanders.<sup>102</sup> From the outside looking in, it would seem odd that the Army as an organization would seek to create and employ a capability from scratch that already exists. It is in the very organizational essence of Army SOF. SOF are already conducting the bulk of Army security cooperation around the world, yet the Army has done little to leverage their capability other than borrowing the idea of regional orientation from SOF. Again the oddity of that situation points to the diverse-fragmented nature of SOF's organizational subculture. The comments of some in the GPF community seem indicate that they do not consider USASOC elements and SOF personnel to actually be part of the Army effort. Their comments are indicative of an inclination to view SOF as almost a separate service or at least outside of the Army community. Yet, SOF personnel demonstrated something quite similar in their apprehension over the use of the term integration and their concern that GPF commanders desired command authority over SOF. Hence, the diverse-fragmented nature of SOF as an organizational subculture in the Army. The criticism of such a concept in the mind of members of the SOF community is telling. Generally speaking, SOF personnel express praise for their small foot-print, regional expertise, and their ability to work with and be approved by ambassadors and other agencies. They express almost righteous indignation over the idea that large GPF units such as BCT or Divisions would ever be accepted into realistic engagement plans.

At the theater Army level they're talking about the Theater Engagement Group (TEG),<sup>103</sup> which is going to have to have some competencies developed in it. The latest version I

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<sup>102</sup>Ancker, interview.

<sup>103</sup> Interviewee seems to be referring to the TMAAG construct, yet substituting "Military Advisory Assistance" with "Engagement".

saw was a laundry list of, “You're going to have so many officers of this rank and this military occupational specialty (MOS) but there hasn't been any thought given to how we were going to train these guys.” Are we going to send them all to master's programs? That's great; they'll have a book education. How are we going to develop their competency outside the classroom? How are we going to develop their experience level? At what point do we talk about regional expertise? I think Engagement war fighting function has got to be tied to regional expertise. It's not like going back to NTC every year. If I send a BCT to Afghanistan then I better have Afghan engagement guys or Central Asian engagement guys. If I send that same BCT to Iraq I've got to have Iraqi engagement guys. If I send them to North Africa I have to have North African engagement guys. The engagement cell has to bring in that regional expertise. The Artillery guys and Aviation guys are worried about air pressure and altitude and so forth but what we're doing is deeper than that.<sup>104</sup>

There's that but most of the ambassadors like SOF because they're a small unit with a small footprint and relatively cheap. This is the problem the Army is encountering with the BCT approach to Security Force Assistance (SFA) and Battle Projection Center (BPC)--not a whole lot of ambassadors are going to let a whole brigade in their country. It's just too big of a footprint and too big of a presence. The Army is trying to struggle with resolving that. That being said, it's recognized that the force as a whole needs to be involved in shaping and influencing to prevent--the whole point of it is to prevent. If you have to go to deter you're in phase one and that means you have to be threatening somehow and an ODA is non-threatening to a large-scale threat.<sup>105</sup>

I spent the better part of three years going down to South American in the 1990s conducting FID missions, [inaudible 26:34], and that was what I grew up on. I've been in embassies; I've been temporary duty (TDY) attached and working for an embassy in a Milgroup so I'm kind of more familiar with the process than perhaps somebody who has never been an [inaudible 26:52]. The detachment commander, the assistant detachment commander are probably more cognizant of the fact, ...As a general rule the SOF probably are.<sup>106</sup>

The Army right now is not viewing it through the lens of Phase Zero. They're viewing it through the lens of--when you're talking SFA and BPC--they're viewing it through the lens of Iraq and Afghanistan; areas already in conflict. They're viewing it through the lens of the joint force owns Afghanistan because it's a combat zone. The Army can go wherever it wants and do whatever it wants in the country because the Army is in charge of that. In Ecuador the Army is not in charge of anything, the ambassador is, from the US perspective. That's kind of what I've been seeing. This is how I was brought up; I was brought up doing FID missions, Phase Zero in South America so I've been to Ecuador. Now I've become familiar with BPC and SFA in context of Iraq and Afghanistan but again, you can move a brigade and have a big, huge presence and you kind of need it

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<sup>104</sup>Fitzpatrick, interview.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

there because that's the only way to fight a counterinsurgency (COIN)--to have more guys than the other guy. A FID mission to Ecuador you don't want that much presence. You don't know what you don't know; the ceiling of your experience is the ceiling of your experience. It's just a matter of explaining to folks and pushing their ceiling of experience. I had this same conversation discussing building partner capacity.<sup>107</sup>

## **GPF Alternatives**

The GPF community and the opponents of the SO warfighting function proposal had their own ideas about how to solve the problem as they perceived it. Keeping in mind that to the representatives of the GPF community the problem was about SOF/GPF integration, leveraging SOF capabilities on the ground, and getting SOF under control in their battlespace. To solve this problem, the GPF community sought SOF expertise inside their headquarters to operate within the various functional cells. There was precedent for such action and existing doctrine provided for the poorly understood constructs of Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE) and the Special Operations Forces Liaison Element (SOFLE). These two entities described in joint and army doctrine should provide the answer to the integration issue.

4-46. The SOCCE assists the JSOTF commander in fulfilling his supporting commander's responsibilities in several ways. It provides a positive means for the JSOTF commander to ascertain the supported commander's needs. The SOCCE may provide a responsive reporting capability in those situations where the JSOTF commander has been requested to provide information requirements of the supported commander (for example, SR reporting). The SOCCE can exercise C2 of designated ARSOF units when the JSOTF commander determines the need for such a command relationship to facilitate his supporting commander's responsibilities. The SOCCE can also provide a monitoring capability if the JSOTF commander decides to transfer ARSOF under a command relationship of the supported commander—for example, the attachment of SF detachments under the control (OPCON or tactical control) of the Army forces to improve the Army forces commander's ability to employ subordinate multinational forces. The JSOTF commander could transfer these forces and pass control to the Army forces with appropriate mission restrictions IAW his determination on the employment of those forces, such as "no reorganization of forces authorized" or "for use only in an advisory assistance role with the designated multinational force."<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

<sup>108</sup>JP 3-05, 4-46.

Unfortunately SOCCEs and SOFLEs have been the doctrinal construct that existed while the episodic friction and dysfunction that both SOF and GPF interviewees agreed had characterized SOF / GPF integration over the last ten years. Additionally, the SOCCE and SOFLE constructs are not permanent parts of a GPF headquarters staff and therefore to do not address the sub-problem of getting SOF capabilities and concepts involved in planning of campaigns from the very beginning. Thus, the directors of CADD and MCCoE believe permanent SOF personnel on GPF staff headquarters is the better conceptual answer and that changing doctrine to create a warfighting function is either unnecessary or something that could be considered in the future.

Unfortunately, MG Sacolick and USASOC will not support putting additional SOF personnel, especially CMF 18 (Special Forces) officers, on Division and Corps staffs until doctrine is written to support their role within a framework that addresses the broader problem as SOF sees it.<sup>109</sup> The Director of CADD rejects the notion that doctrine always needs to come first. He believes that SOF should provide the people first and then fix doctrine later.<sup>110</sup> This seems an odd thing considering that DOD's DOTMLPF construct deliberately puts doctrine first because it sets the framework for all of the other domains.<sup>111</sup> But his point is clear. He believes that putting SOF personnel on conventional staffs is the single most important thing you can do to improve the integration and interoperability of SOF and GPF and we could write the specifics of duties and roles for those positions into existing doctrine.<sup>112</sup>

The director of the MCCoE agrees with this point and discussed the demise of the Special Operations Coordinator (SOCORD) position, a position that used to be a SO cell at the Corps

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<sup>109</sup>Sacolick, interview.

<sup>110</sup>Ancker, interview.

<sup>111</sup>Sacolick, interview and Flynn, interview.

<sup>112</sup>Ancker, interview.

level staff that was based in doctrine until late 90s. This cell served as the Commander's direct staff representative on all things special operations<sup>113</sup> He believed that the concept of putting SOF officers on GPF staffs might be an interim solution without a warfighting function doctrinal change until the Army can decide if a new "special operations warfighting function" is required.<sup>114</sup> MG Sacolick and other SOF representatives, however, emphasized that there is absolutely no way they would agree to putting additional SOF personnel on GPF staffs without the organization and purpose of such personnel being firmly codified in doctrine. MG Sacolick asserted that that is why the SOCORD concept of SOF officers on Corps staff prior to 2001 was a failure. His perception was that the role of the SOCORD was not understood and not well codified in doctrine and education. On this point, however, the SOF position is clear. They will not give up one officer or NCO to GPF staffs unless there is doctrine that supports what they do and why they do it.<sup>115</sup>

In addition to his point about the SOCORD, the MCCoE Director wants GPF and SOF to "get back" to training at homestation and training areas together, particularly for SOF and GPF that are deploying to the same area of responsibility (AOR). He emphasized that this would help the integration problems between the forces. He further highlighted the ARFORGEN cycle and believes that SOF and GPF must work together so that units can be better aligned prior to deploying, because this move alone could improve habitual integration challenges.<sup>116</sup> Other members of the GPF community support this assertion. MG Sacolick and the SOF personnel, on

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<sup>113</sup>Ancker, interview and Flynn, interview.

<sup>114</sup>Flynn, interview. BG Flynn stated that he still believed that the doctrinal change proposal might be viable in the future once TRADOC and OSASOC had made some incremental steps toward integration and mitigated risks and concerns about a warfighting function center of excellence existing outside of the authority of TRADOC.

<sup>115</sup>Sacolick, interview.

<sup>116</sup>Flynn, interview. BG Flynn clarified his comments in an email dated 19 September 2011.

the other hand, stated that was never going to happen because SOF is too busy doing the kinds of engagement, shaping, capacity building operations with which the Army is struggling to get involved. In other words, while Army BCTs and Division staffs are preparing for their deployments, the very same SOF units scheduled to join them in Iraq or Afghanistan are actually deployed around the world on short duration, but persistent missions to engage with, build the capacity of, and work with other nations. They are doing the fundamental engagement work of the combatant commanders as directed in the national security strategy of the United States<sup>117</sup> Viewed through the lens of organization theory, SOF is busy completing tasks that help define its organizational essence and are in line with the norms and values of the SOF subculture. The fact that the GPF community does not recognize this even after 10 years of war contributes to the diverse-fragmented nature of SOF subculture and its relationship to the dominant organizational culture of GPF in the Army. It is also indicative of SOF having orthogonal or counterculture tendencies.

Why not then just change doctrine to make the SOCCE construct permanent on Division, Corps, and Army staffs? That is really what GPF representatives interviewed seemed to want.<sup>118</sup> MG Sacolick and others on the SOF side made clear that that was what they intended with only a slight doctrinal difference. The warfighting function construct has become so central to the way that the Army teaches, organizes, and operates that USASOC personnel and leadership believe a special operations warfighting function would accomplish what SOCORD construct never could.<sup>119</sup> As staffs formed operations planning teams (OPTs) there would be no way to avoid SO capabilities or forget to account for SOFs pre-campaign engagement and capacity building

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<sup>117</sup>Sacolick, interview.

<sup>118</sup>Flynn, interview and Ancker, interview.

<sup>119</sup>Sacolick, interview.

efforts. In schools, Army officers would practice working with a special operations functional cell and it would become part of normal procedures and thought patterns. The special operations functional cell would provide enough people to fill the integrating cells as a separate warfighting function.<sup>120</sup> The disagreement and conflict of organizational culture arises again over the question as to just where the people to fill such slots would come from. In other words, while there may have been some level of commonality on the prospect of actually getting SOF officers and NCOs into the integrating structure of GPF staffs, the “P” in DOTMLPF became the issue. MG Sacolick made very clear that while he believed that there should be permanent SOF personnel on a special operations warfighting function cell within GPF headquarters staffs up to division level, he was unwilling to pull those individuals from other duty positions within the SOF community. He believed that the Army as a whole (GPF) should be the bill payer with respect to actual MTOE positions recoded from end-strength so that he could grow the SOF force in terms of raw numbers. While emphasizing that ARSOF has enough colonels and lieutenant colonels from Special Forces to provide leadership to a special operations warfighting function cell, additional members of such a cell would have to come from CA, MISO etc. Yet personnel manning and the manning of billets in a headquarters by MTOE is often a zero sum game. Such billets or slots on the staffs would have to come from somewhere and it is here that SOF’s plan threatens the organizational interests of the GPF community. Specifically, MG Sacolick and COL Fitzpatrick cited Information Operations again. This is the very piece of bureaucratic turf mentioned by CADD and MCCoE. They ask, why not just pass those personnel slots (and existing personnel) over to the special operations warfighting functional cell on Division, Corps, and theater Army staffs? The basis of their argument is the same as the proponenty argument, i.e. there is unnecessary overlap between the specialties of IO and MISO. This argument immediately

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<sup>120</sup>USAJFKSWCS, ARSOF Study. Sacolick, interview. Fitzpatrick, interview.

stirs up the observations of both Wilson and Halperin with respect to turf and organizational essence and their strong link to organizational subculture. It also justifies the fear of the CADD and MCCoE about losing this responsibility and authority that goes along with proponency. But that argument only holds true for the proponency issues which fundamentally are about bureaucratic turf and not about operational art. Whether the tactical actions associated with IO are cognitively resident in mission command or in a seventh warfighting function should not affect the commander's ability to employ and coordinate their efforts any more than any other task resident in a warfighting function other than Mission Command.

IO is the commander's responsibility. Well, that's great. Maneuver is the commander's responsibility and fires are his responsibility. You don't have the BCT commander planning all the fire missions. He has a fires cell that does that for him; they present it to him and he signs off on them. The IO would be in the Engagement (*Special operations*) cell but the commander would still be responsible for it in the same way he is for the other functions.<sup>121</sup>

### **Post Mortem / Rebirth – Proposals Change, Subcultures Persist**

MG Sacolick now admits that the Special Operations warfighting function proposal was flawed mainly because of its name. Calling it “Special Operations” confused the communities at large. He now believes that he should have called it “Engagement,” which is a better fit for what he was trying to do in the first place.<sup>122</sup> Put in terms of organization theory, MG Sacolick was trying to take what he and others considered the very organizational essence of SOF and place that squarely into the doctrinal integrating mechanism of an Army that by its own admission needed to be better at adapting. Though perhaps not the words he would use, he firmly believed that all the elements of his organizational subculture could be better integrated and less fragmented through the inculcation of this doctrinal construct and thereby give the Army a way to

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<sup>121</sup>Fitzpatrick, interview.

<sup>122</sup>Sacolick, interview.

leverage its own diversity (SOF) and better adapt to the contemporary operating environment. His thought process was right, but the same cultural frictions that kept SOF as a fragmented counterculture derailed the very proposal that sought to integrate it. After the proposal to make special operations a warfighting function was officially “tabled” at the GORB in March of 2011, the SOF community began rethinking how they could still address the problem and save the nature of their proposal. One way in which the proposal has morphed or changed is that SWC through ARSOCIC, has now begun calling the warfighting function “engagement” rather than “special operations.” Engagement tasks would involve the influence and use of indigenous forces whether they be host nation forces, local security forces or irregular forces as well as the influence over local populations and enemy forces (MISO and IO) and also how local governments are influenced in such a way that their actions can be nested through tactical actions with operations and campaigns. All of these actions would fall under one warfighting function called Engagement. The benefit of renaming the warfighting function from Special Operations to Engagement is that it no longer carries the emotional baggage of organizational cultures. Engagement is something that is mostly done by special operations, but certainly not exclusively. This is much the same way Fires is mostly done by artillery in the Army. However, rather than just sticking to a couple of branches engagement involves SOF, particularly SF, CA, and MISO, but also would involve elements of GPF that must engage with indigenous forces, local governments, security forces and populations. This concept of engagement takes away the idea and spurious argument that a special operations warfighting function would just concern SOF. It gives the concept a common name that defines a true integrating function within a warfighting function construct. In much the same way that fires as a warfighting function enables the coordination and synchronization of fires and effects whether they come from airpower, artillery, rockets, or mortars up and down the echelons of military operations, engagement could be integrated the same way. Engagement activities involving the organization of indigenous forces

would be coordinated and understood in terms of task and purpose all the way up the chain of command to the Joint Task Force. Engagement activities such as Key Leader Engagement (KLE) would also be coordinated and synchronized through the functional cells at echelons of staff, just like Fires, in order to ensure that the assets dedicated work toward the same overall effect at the right time, place and purpose. Such a conceptual structure would likely aid in preventing incidents of KLE fratricide that occurred between SOF and GPF in Iraq and Afghanistan. Using the concept of Engagement nests it with the other warfighting functions. Intelligence as a warfighting function enables staffs at various echelons to coordinate and synchronize intelligence activities such as reconnaissance and surveillance and specific NAIs can actually be numbered, listed and tasked through various assets up and down the chain of command. Engaging a local leader, raising an indigenous force, influencing a distant tribe can all be coordinated at the right echelon. Not having Engagement as a warfighting function leaves a gaping hole in the Army's doctrinal explanation for how it will coordinate the use of indigenous forces, populations, leaders and organizations.

As one CA officer explained:

Engagement may be a good name for it because you don't have the FA war fighting function and you don't have the ADA fires war fighting function. These are things that we're doing that the Army needs to think about. Oh, by the way, a lot of these things are done by SOF just as a lot of fires are done by FA but we don't call it the FA war fighting function. We have Protection as opposed to the Military Police (MP) war fighting function or the Engineer war fighting function.<sup>123</sup>

Sacolick further believes that Engagement may be better off as a core competency rather than a warfighting function. Though beyond the scope of this monograph, a core competency is a broad explanation of the critical tasks of the Army as an organization. (Wilson's critical task in lit review) According to current doctrine, the Army has only two core competencies, Combined

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<sup>123</sup>Fitzpatrick, interview.

Arms Maneuver (CAM) and Wide Area Security (WAS). In terms of organizational subculture, these two doctrinal constructs exacerbate the problem of SOF as a fragmented subculture in the Army because a good deal of SOF's core tasks (or critical tasks) simply do not fit into either one. As MG Sacolick says, 'You can't take everything that our country expects this great Army to do and fit it into two categories.'<sup>124</sup>

He further points out that Joint Doctrine is way ahead of Army doctrine on this concept and he believes that Engagement is likely to be the dominant type of activity for both SOF and the military in the next ten years.<sup>125</sup> If that is the case, then the Army does not even have within its own doctrine a core competency for what it will most likely be asked to do in the near future. It also leaves the Army doctrinally unaligned with Joint Doctrine and the National Security Strategy, which consider engagement central to the "ways" of US strategy. Again, in terms of organizational culture, this is forcing SOF to lean away from the Army's dominant GPF culture and try to be closer to the Joint and interagency community. MG Sacolick expressed this in terms of SOFs fight for resources and facilities within the Army system. He further emphasized that when the Army makes their projections on force sizes and organizations to the Secretary of Defense and congress in terms of what they need to be able to do what is asked of the Army, there is no inclusion of SOF in those numbers or projections.<sup>126</sup> "It is almost like we are another service. We are not integrated into Army culture." Said MG Sacolick<sup>127</sup> If the greater Army cannot find a way to integrate the currently fragmented SOF subculture, this may be a better place for Army SOF to lean.

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<sup>124</sup>Sacolick, interview.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

While GPF personnel interviewed acknowledged that Sacolick is the first in a long string of SOF commanders to address the issue of SOF and GPF relationship in a meaningful way, the future of the SOF/GPF relationship is unlikely to change overnight.<sup>128</sup> As USASOC pushes the question of an Engagement warfighting function, the Army is now leaning toward making Building Partner Capacity (BPC) either a warfighting function or a core competency.<sup>129</sup> While this is a step in the right direction in terms of operational art and addresses some of the deficiencies that MG Sacolick identified with respect to the Army understanding the value of what SOF has been doing, it is unclear how this will affect the problem of SOF/GPF integration. BPC is only one small part of engagement as defined by SOF. Engagement is more about leveraging the potential of partners, organizations, and populations than it is about just building their capacity.

TRADOC and the USASOC are also taking incremental steps toward further coordination, integration, and understanding. TRADOC is adding spaces for USASOC officers and personnel to work in doctrine and concepts integration and continue to improve and study further ways to address some of the original concerns of the study that launched the proposal.

## **CONCLUSION**

Examining this case study in depth leads one to conclude that SOF does demonstrate characteristics of an organizational subculture within the greater Army organizational culture that is dominated by GPF. SOF within the Army represents a subculture that shows clear artifacts of fragmentation from the Army's organizational culture. Its norms and values are sometimes orthogonal and even counter to the dominant culture. This fragmentation prevented, and may

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<sup>128</sup>Ancker, interview.

<sup>129</sup>This came from statements made by senior army officials in non-attribution forums. Also see Walker Monograph.

continue to prevent, doctrinal and structural changes that could make SOF a key part of the integrated subcultures that make-up the Army's organizational culture. SOF is in a position to help the Army in its transition period because it possesses the very skills desired and routinely conducts the tactical actions that translate into the strategic ways dictated in national strategy.

As this study reflects upon the three secondary research questions, it becomes clear that organizational culture is pervasive not just in the post-mortem of this singular proposal, but in the interaction of SOF and GPF.

(1) What are the differences in the perception and understanding of problems between the Army SOF community and GPF community? While SOF viewed the problem on a grand scale and understood that the SOF community has the capabilities and experience that the Army will need in the future, GPF community saw the problem on a much smaller scale. The comments and written products from the GPF community indicate that they were concerned simply with getting SOF under control of GPF commanders or at least within systemic coordinating structures.

(2) How do organizational culture and structures affect the issues? Simply put, one can see that the differences in norms and values between SOF and GPF have more than just the effects of friction, SOF and GPF have intuitive differences in the very practice of operational art. While SOF views the engagement with partners, indigenous forces and populations as vital and central in terms of tactical actions and their relationship to strategic objectives, GPF view this activity as ancillary, sometimes enhancing, sometimes counterproductive. GPF understand the value of building partner capacity but have trouble sharing the vision of SOF that Engagement is much broader than just building capacity.

(3) What can organization theory tell us about integrating SOF and GPF toward improving the practice of operational art? The case study demonstrates that a subculture that is orthogonal or counter, once fragmented is difficult to integrate. Structural integration mechanisms are vital but require the emphasis of leadership. Doctrine is one of Army leadership's greatest

tools and doctrinal change will be necessary, but there is something to be said for incrementalism in bringing about institutional change. A warfighting function more appropriately named that incorporates SOF personnel on key staffs could be part of the answer. Unfortunately, because the cultural divide runs so deep into the very understanding of operational art, the Army may need to consider bringing the core competencies in line with the joint world and the national security strategy. MG Sacolick is probably right about the need to add “Engagement” as both core competency and warfighting function for the Army. Building partner capacity or security force assistance are too shallow and do not reflect the broad and diverse tactical actions that make up the strategic “way” of Engagement. Or perhaps engagement is better used to define a core competency, as aligned with joint concepts, and simply capacity building becomes the warfighting function with a definition that includes the act of influencing third parties to apply tactical actions toward our strategic goals.<sup>130</sup>

This study tells us that organizational subcultures and the friction of a diverse and fragmented subculture of SOF, which has been reinforced by structural barriers, is preventing the Army as a greater organization from making the necessary institutional adaptation to embrace the concept of engagement as something fundamental to what the Army must do in the coming years. The inability of both SOF and GPF players in the proposal to come to grips with these fragmented aspect of their organizational cultures led to the presentation and construction of ideas in the proposal that offended the norms and values of each side in the proposal. GPF elements could not conceive of a “Special Operations” warfighting function somehow including GPF forces. While SOF wants to help the Army take advantage of its capabilities and the important work it does to set conditions prior to conflict, SOF as an organizational subculture naturally

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<sup>130</sup>Eric L. Walker, “Achieving Operational Adaptability: Capacity Building Needs to Become a Warfighting Function” (SAMS Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 2010).

resists the loss of control of its own personnel and assets. Regardless of where it is placed or articulated in doctrine, whether as a warfighting function, a core competency, or an element of operational art, or ability to leverage power that is not bound to us by command will be (and has often been) an essential part of victory. Whether it is influencing a population, leveraging indigenous forces, strengthening allies, or enabling civil governance we must take it more seriously and be prepared to integrate our efforts. Continuing to perpetuate cognitive distance from the people and sub organizations that possess the lion's share of the skills required to effectively complete those tactical actions (SOF) merely because of subcultural barriers is a shame. Only leaders who are above the organizational sub-cultures due to their position and the structure of the organization can take those steps. They must begin with doctrinal change and if they have to rearrange a few rice bowls, then so be it.

As the Army faces this transitional challenge of its own identity and purpose, one has to ask if the Army as an organization will be able to overcome sub-organizational interests in order to change and meet the challenges of its evolving tasks and purposes? The National Security Strategy makes engagement a central idea and clarifies its definition based upon elements of national power.<sup>131</sup> The operational artist now must use allies, partners, indigenous forces, and populations to undertake tactical actions where the United States cannot.<sup>132</sup> The Army as an organization needs to come to understand, what SOF's organizational culture intuitively understands, that this is a new policy tradition that will have profound impacts on operational

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<sup>131</sup>National Security Staff, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America, May 2010* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2010), 1. This is not the tactical term engagement from FM 1-02 which refers 1. In air defense, an attack with guns or air-to-air missiles by an interceptor aircraft, or the launch of an air defense missile by air defense artillery and the missile's subsequent travel to intercept. 2. A tactical conflict, usually between opposing lower echelon maneuver forces.

<sup>132</sup>Tactical actions here are defined as in Unified Operations pre-decisional draft.

art.<sup>133</sup> This is true, not just because it is now dictated “way” in the current national strategy, but because the strategic context demands it. With the national debt as the single biggest threat to national security and the shrinking relative power of the United States,<sup>134</sup> leveraging others will be ever more important. Combine these two observations with an understanding that prosperity is increasingly reliant on a global interconnectedness and that non-state actors and the use of irregular warfare are growing.<sup>135</sup> Thus, we must engage because the socio-cultural, economic, political, and technological elements of our strategic context have necessitated this shift in grand policy.<sup>136</sup>

Recognizing this situation and stepping above the awkward tendencies of our organizational subcultures will allow the Army and SOF leaders to develop doctrinal, structural, and educational ways to make SOF an integrated and enhancing subculture in the greater Army organization. It will further allow the Army to improve overall operational adaptability and the ability of the Army to conduct operational art as part of a joint or combined force.

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<sup>133</sup>Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State, The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997). Based upon Walter McDougall’s framework of US Foreign Policy Traditions.

<sup>134</sup>Cardin, accessed 16 June 2011.

<sup>135</sup>Gray, 261.

<sup>136</sup>*Ibid.*, 10-11. This further necessitates shifts in policy and strategy.

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