

Advising Foreign Security Forces: Implications of Korea and Vietnam

**A Monograph
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Abstract

ADVISING FOREIGN SECURITY FORCES: IMPLICATIONS OF KOREA AND VIETNAM,
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The United States Army has a long history of advising foreign security forces with its general purpose force, despite a perception that its special force is the primary force with which it undertakes advisory efforts. Ad hoc selection and assignment and inadequate training of Army general purpose force advisors in Iraq and Afghanistan led to a rediscovery of lessons learned. Despite the Army's 110 years of advisory experience with its general purpose force, problems encountered in the Korea and Vietnam advisory efforts regarding advisor training, advisory group organization, and advisor assignments point to the Army's need to institutionalize advisory capability and capacity within its general purpose force. The relevance of general purpose force advising in Korea and Vietnam, however, place a specific light on contemporary advising efforts and demonstrate the Army's need to adapt the manner in which it prepares the general purpose force personnel to advise foreign security forces.

With the elevation of the concept of 'building partner capacity' to the level of national security doctrine in 2010, the Army finds itself behind its sister services with respect to institutionalizing advisory capacity and capability within its general purpose force. The resistance by Army senior leaders to divert what they perceive as limited resources within the conventional force conflicts with its anticipating future operations increasingly involving general purpose force personnel advising foreign security forces. This monograph recommends the Army expand its Foreign Area Officer program to include a secondary track to train and manage general purpose force advisors and establish a formal advisory command to create needed capacity and capability within the general purpose force.

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Introduction

The United States Army's history of advising of foreign security forces is written not by its special forces, but by its general purpose force as it advised and assisted the creation, reformation, or modernization of foreign security forces. In the Philippines after 1901, the Army created the Philippine Scouts and Constabulary to help U.S. Army units combat a growing insurgency.¹ During World War II, 500 Army advisors worked to train and retrain a quarter of a million French and Italian troops for combat in France following the North Africa landings, and 4,800 American advisors worked with Chaing Kai-shek's Nationalist Chinese forces to build a modern Chinese army as the Nationalist Chinese fought a ground war against Japan and Communist insurgents.² Following WWII, Army advisors worked to build the Korean Constabulary, later transforming it into the Korean army, advising Korean counterparts as they struggled against Communist insurgents and later fought a conventional ground war against North Korean and Chinese forces. Following the French defeat in Indochina in 1954, Army advisors from its general purpose force repeatedly trained, advised, and assisted Vietnamese military forces as they fought against the Communist North Vietnamese army and Viet Cong insurgents.

¹ See Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 1998); Carlos J. Herrera (Major, Philippine Army), "The Philippine Constabulary in the Battle of the Philippines," (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1947); Brian M. Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Richard L. Millet, *Searching for Stability: The U.S. Development of Constabulary Forces in Latin America and the Philippines* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 2010); Reynaldo P. San Gabriel, *The Constabulary Story*, (Quezon City, Philippines: Bustamante Press, Inc., 1978); and *Handbook, Philippines Constabulary* (Manila, Philippines: Bureau of Printing, 1901).

² See Michael Vigenas, *Rearming the French, United States Army in World War II, Special Studies* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1957); Mark D. Sherry, *China Defensive* (Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 2000); Marc Gallicchio, "Army Advisors and Liaison Officers and Lessons of America's Wartime Experience in China," in *The U.S. Army and World War II, Selected Papers from the Army's Commemorative Conferences*, ed. Judith L. Bellafaire (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1998); Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Time Runs out in CBI* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1959); and Joint Chiefs of Staff Historical Division, "Selected Aspects of U.S. Military Assistance," 13 December 1961 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff Historical Division), 54-65 (Hereafter cited as JCS Historical Division, "U.S. Military Assistance").

The Army's history of general purpose force advising aside, advisors and advising are associated with the Army's special forces, and generate a mental image of an advisor strikingly similar to Colonel Mike Kirby, an Army Special Forces combat advisor in Vietnam played by John Wayne, in the 1968 movie "The Green Berets." This is possibly attributable to the fact that Army special forces almost exclusively advised foreign security forces after Vietnam.³ Unfortunately, the image of men such as Colonel Kirby as the characteristic Army advisor could not be further from the truth. With the commencement of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq during the Global War on Terror, the advising pendulum swung firmly back into the domain of the Army general purpose force. After a very rocky start when the first attempts to build the Afghan National Army and rebuild the Iraqi Army were "farmed out to private contractors," and the second Bush Administration in 2004 and 2005 respectively directed the American military services to rebuild Iraqi and Afghan security forces.⁴ The Army, recognizing the mission exceeded the capacity of its special force, turned to its general purpose force and proceeded to write the next chapter in its general purpose force advising history.

In 2006, the Department of Defense recognized the concept of building partner nation capacity as a central tenet of American defense doctrine, with the concept's further recognition in 2010 as a core aspect of national security doctrine.⁵ The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review*

³ Scott G. Wuestner, "Building Partner Capacity/Security Force Assistance: A New Structural Paradigm" (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, February 2009), 4-6. See also Robert D. Ramsey, III, *Advising Indigenous Force: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam and El Salvador* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 2.

⁴ John A. Nagl, "A Battalion's Worth of Good Ideas," *New York Times* (April 2, 2008), <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/02/opinion/02nagl.html> (accessed January 28, 2010). See also Nina M. Serafino et. al., "The Department of Defense Role in Foreign Assistance: Background, Major Issues, and Options for Congress," Congressional Research Service Report RL 34639 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, August 25, 2008), 94-96; and Morgan Smiley, "The Need for Advisers: Joint MiTT Teams Could Restore Order, Stability to Iraq, Afghanistan," *Army Times* (February 4, 2008), http://www.armytimes.com/community/opinion/army_backtalk_mitt_080204/ (accessed February 26, 2010).

⁵ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, February 6, 2006), 11-17 (Hereafter cited as *QDR*, 2006); Department of Defense, *Irregular*

Report acknowledged American dominance in traditional forms of warfare and challenged the military services to adapt for future operations in which a one-size-fits-all military may not be optimal. Addressing Army and Marine Corps operational experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq to advise and build Iraqi and Afghan security force capacity, *Quadrennial Defense Review* emphasized the importance of an indirect approach to achieve common national objectives by improving and enabling partner nations’ “ability to perform... intended roles and missions... to police themselves and govern their populations more justly and effectively.”⁶ In October 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates put it even more succinctly in an address to the Association of the United States Army:

[A]rguably the most important military component in the War on Terror is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we enable and empower our partners to defend and govern their own countries. The standing up and mentoring of indigenous armies and police – once the province of Special Forces – is now a key mission for the military as a whole. How the Army should be organized and prepared for this advisory role remains an open question, and will require innovative and forward thinking.⁷

Despite four years’ passage since recognizing the development of foreign security forces as a key aspect to the building of partner nation capacity, and a re-emphasis in 2010 by the *National Security Strategy* and the *Quadrennial Defense Review*, the Army has yet to institutionalize an advisory capability within its general purpose force. To the Army’s credit, the task to institutionalize was not an explicit directive, but the Marine Corps and Air Force took it as such and institutionalized the capability within their services. The Marine Corps established a permanent Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group at Fort Story, Virginia – separate from the Marine Special Operations Advisor Group – with the explicit task to train and equip general

Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC) (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, September 11, 2007), 23-24 (Hereafter cited as *IW-JOC*); Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, February 2010), 26-30 (Hereafter cited as *QDR*, 2010); and Office of the President of the United States of America, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: Office of the President of the United States of America, May 2010), 14-27 (Hereafter cited as *NSS*, 2010).

⁶ *QDR*, 2006, 17.

⁷ Robert M. Gates, speech delivered to the Association of the United States Army, Washington, DC (October 10, 2007).

purpose force Marines assigned as advisors, and additionally standardize doctrine and force-generation procedures. Similarly, the Air Force established a permanent advisor structure within its 6th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Florida, to train selected pilots as combat aviation advisors.⁸ On the other hand, the Army continues to do as it has done for more than a century by pursuing “largely ad hoc ventures” in advising despite a history that highlights the implications of not institutionalizing a capacity and capability to advise.⁹ Although claiming an “enduring capability to prepare combat advisors to train and build capacity in foreign security forces,” the training remains inadequate, with the majority of training remaining focused on mandatory pre-deployment individual and small-unit combat skills rather than advising skills.¹⁰ The *ad hoc* selection and assignment and inadequate training of Army general purpose force advisors for Iraq and Afghanistan led to a painful rediscovery learned by general purpose force advisors during Korea and Vietnam.

Addressing the Senate Armed Services Committee in February 2007, then-Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker acknowledged that the Iraq and Afghan conflicts caught the Army

⁸ Andrew Feickert, *Does the Army Need a Full-Spectrum Force or Specialized Units? Background and Issues for Congress*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress RL34333 (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, January 18, 2009), 15; Thomas G. Mahnken, “The Role of Advisory Support in the Long War Against Terrorist Extremist Groups” (paper presented at the Combat Studies Institute Military History Symposium, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 08-10 August 2006), in *Security Assistance: U.S. and International Historical Perspectives, The Proceedings from the Combat Studies Institute 2006 Military History Symposium* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 2006), 509; and United States Marine Corps, *The Long War, Send in the Marines, A Marine Corps Operational Employment Concept to Meet an Uncertain Security Environment*, (Washington, D.C.: United States Marine Corps, January 2008), 16; John Nagl and Brian Drohan, “New Answers to Hard Questions,” *Armed Forces Journal* (April, 2008), <http://www.afji.com/2008/04/3392447/> (accessed January 28, 2010).

⁹ Theresa Baginski et. al., *A Comprehensive Approach to Improving U.S. Security Force Assistance Efforts* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, September 2009), 1-2.

¹⁰ John M. McHugh and George W. Casey, statement on the Army Posture made before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, DC (February 23, 2010), 17. See also 162nd Infantry Brigade, “Every Man a Tiger” (Fort Polk, LA, April 6, 2010); 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, “Transition Team Training” (Fort Riley, KS, October 24, 2008); and Department of Defense Inspector General, *Training Requirements for U.S. Ground Forces Deploying in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Washington, DC, April 9, 2009), 4 (Hereafter cited as DoD IG); Raymond M. Mattox, “Inventing the Vanguard: Developing and Sustaining a Professional Combat Advisor Corps” (2009), 4; and Shawn Brimley and Vikram Singh, “Averting the System Reboot,” *Armed Forces Journal* (December 2007), <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2007/12/2981245> (accessed June 9, 2010).

“flatfooted,” but also noted that it was making progress to fix what he called “holes in the force.”¹¹ While not addressed by the Army Chief of Staff at the time, the Army’s general purpose force advisory efforts were a stark example of the holes to which he referred. General Schoomaker’s successor, General George W. Casey, spoke of the Army’s efforts in adapting how it fights, trains, modernizes, and develops its leaders during his inaugural address to the Senate Armed Service Committee in November 2007, but made no mention of a need to adapt the Army general purpose force to create advisory capability based on anticipated future missions.¹² Coupled with the newly published *Army Operating Concept, 2016-2028*, which emphasizes Army special forces as the “forces of first resort” for building partner capacity due to their advisory skills and specialized training, this points to a resistance by Army senior leaders to institutionalize advising capacity and capability within its general purpose force.¹³ Resistance rests on an organizational culture that views “large-scale advisory duties as an aberration,” more a temporary problem that will go away after Iraq and Afghanistan, as it appeared to after Vietnam with the special force assuming primacy in the advisory role.¹⁴ While an inaccurate perception, it possibly explains Army senior leaders’ – past and present – view of general purpose force advising as “merely a sideshow effort” that does not warrant a permanent “diversion of resources from the conventional warfighting capability or [an] alternation of the career tracks of the best” personnel.¹⁵ With the recognition that Iraqi and Afghan advisory efforts exceeded the Army special force capacity, Army views on general purpose force advising appear to see it as more as a “stopgap measure” until the special force can resume the lead, rather than recognizing historical

¹¹ Peter J. Schoomaker, statement on the Army’s Preparedness for Current and Future Missions made before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, DC (February 15, 2007).

¹² George W. Casey, Jr., statement on the Army’s Strategic Imperatives made before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, DC (November 15, 2007).

¹³ Department of the Army, *The United States Army Operating Concept, 2016-2028* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, August 19, 2010), 25.

¹⁴ Baginski et. al., *Comprehensive Approach*, 8.

¹⁵ Mark Grdovic, “The Advisory Challenge,” *Special Warfare* (January-February 2008), 28.

implications and future need.¹⁶

While the Department of Defense does not disregard the Army's need to maintain conventional primacy, it maintains the Army's role in advising foreign security forces by general purpose force personnel as a prominent feature of the larger role of building partner nation capacity. Rather than institutionalizing advisory capability and capacity by creating a specialized structure to deal with the advisory contingency within its general purpose force, Army senior leaders believe the brigade combat team to be the optimal structure to undertake advising of foreign security forces if the scope exceeds the special force capacity in the future.¹⁷ The Army Vice Chief of Staff, General Peter Chiarelli, sees the Army returning the advisory mission to the special force with the completion of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan:

I don't believe it is in the military's best interest to establish a permanent "Training Corps" in the conventional military to develop other countries' indigenous security forces (ISF). The Special Forces do this mission well on the scale that is normally required for theater security cooperation and other routine foreign internal defense missions. Rather, we should ensure our conventional forces have the inherent flexibility to transition to ISF support when the mission becomes too large for the Special Forces. If requirements exceed Special Forces capabilities, then training and transition teams should be internally resourced from conventional U.S. or coalition units already operating in the battlespace.¹⁸

Not alone in his view, Chiarelli is joined by Army senior leaders such as Major General Anthony Cuculo, former Chief of Army Public Affairs and current commander of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, who also believe in special force primacy in advising and the ability of the brigade combat team to accomplish any advising task if needed.

In a possible move to reconcile this, the Army recently directed a gap analysis to identify solutions for "resolv[ing] issues that hinder the Army's ability to build partner capacity" with its

¹⁶ Nagl, "A Battalion's Worth of Good Ideas."

¹⁷ Michael D. Jason, "Integrating the Advisory Effort in the Army: A Full-Spectrum Solution," *Military Review* (September-October 2008), 27-28; Kenneth J. Burgess, "Transformation and the Irregular Gap," *Military Review* (November-December 2009), 25-30; Wuestner, "Building Partner Capacity," 21; Smiley, "The Need for Advisers."

¹⁸ Peter W. Chiarelli and Stephen M. Smith, "Learning from our Modern Wars: The Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future," *Military Review* (September-October 2007), 7-8. See also Wuestner, "Building Partner Capacity," 21.

general purpose force.¹⁹ The key to this, however, is the Army's ability to successfully "train and advise partner [nation] security forces" on a global scale through an institutional capability to organize, educate, train and equip advisors from the general purpose force.²⁰ The resistance by Army senior leaders to divert what they perceive as limited resources within the conventional force conflicts with its anticipation of future operations increasingly involving general purpose force personnel advising foreign security forces. Unfortunately, the Army's historical underestimation of advisor task complexity "contribute[s] to [a] long-standing bias that questions the value of advisory efforts," and condones *ad hoc* selection and inadequate training.²¹

While Department of Defense guidance did not specifically direct the services to institutionalize advising capacity or capability, the Army should follow the leads of its sister services and institutionalize advisory capability in its general purpose force to meet anticipated needs in an uncertain future.²² Faced with the same guidance from the *Quadrennial Defense Review* and *National Security Strategy*, and similar experiences in advising foreign security in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. Marine Corps and Air Force already institutionalized capability and capacity within themselves. Toward that end, this monograph presents three major parts. The first section presents the historical cases of Army general purpose force advising in Korea and Vietnam. These cases highlight contemporary implications in that they closely resemble advising efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and display the Army's *ad hoc* selection of advisors and inadequate training prior to assignment, despite demonstrating an evolution in general purpose force advising since Korea. The second section examines the implications of the historical cases in relation to the Army's resistance to institutionalizing advisory capability within its general

¹⁹ Department of the Army G-3/5-7, "SUBJ: ALARACT: Army Campaign Plan 8-6 (Adapting the Army for Building Partner Capacity) EXORD," ALARACT 179/2010 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, June 15, 2010).

²⁰ *IW-JOC*, 41.

²¹ Grdovic, "The Advisory Challenge," 23.

²² Baginski et. al., *Comprehensive Approach*, 8-9.

purpose force. The final section recommends the Army adopt a formal advisory command structure incorporating existing Army security assistance and general purpose force advisor training programs, and further recommends the Army expand its Foreign Area Officer program to include a secondary track to manage and provide focused training and education to general purpose force advisors.

Terms used throughout the monograph do not depart from doctrinal definitions or conventional understanding of advising. An advisor, according to Army *Field Manual 3-07.1, Security Force Assistance*, is an embedded individual or team that teaches, coaches and advises a counterpart or unit within a foreign security force, from the lowest tactical level to national ministerial levels. *Field Manual 3-07.1* further defines the role of the advisor as influencing, communicating, and interpreting for both the advised counterpart and American chain of command, roles accomplished through observation and evaluation of, and reporting about, the advised force.²³ *Field Manual 3-07.10, Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Advising Foreign Forces*, defines advising as “provid[ing] the advisor’s [sic] counterparts with expert opinions, advice, or counsel to assist them in making a decision based on applying knowledge and through a mutually developed bond of trust.”²⁴ In this regard, advising fits into the Army’s doctrine of full-spectrum operations as a basic tenet of foreign internal defense, where advisors work to improve or build foreign security capacity by “assist[ing] host-nation police and security elements” during offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations, or a simultaneous combination thereof.²⁵ Lastly, the definitions of advisor, advising, and foreign

²³ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07.1, Security Force Assistance* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, May 2009), 7-1; Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07.10, Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Advising Foreign Forces* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, September 2009), 7. (Hereafter cited as *FM 3-07.10*.)

²⁴ *FM 3-07.10*, 8.

²⁵ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, April 2010), 188; Department of

internal defense fit within the larger context of security force assistance, defined in *Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations*, as a “unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces... [by] thorough and continual assessment... includ[ing] the organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding, and advising of the forces involved.”²⁶ Finally, security force assistance nests within the national rubric of building partner capacity. The national intent for building partner capacity resides in enabling foreign partner nations to “govern and police themselves effectively.”²⁷ Specific to this monograph, building partner capacity focuses on development of foreign security capacity using American military advisors who increase foreign security force proficiency by training, advising, assisting, and equipping them from tactical to ministerial levels.²⁸

General Purpose Force Advising in Korea and Vietnam

The relevance of general purpose force advising in Korea and Vietnam, however, place a specific light on contemporary advising efforts and demonstrate the Army’s need to adapt the manner in which it prepares the general purpose force personnel to advise foreign security forces. Despite its history with general purpose force advising, the Army succumbed during current advising efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq to virtually the same problems experienced in Korea and Vietnam. At first glance, the Korean and Vietnamese cases appear similar, although closer examination shows an evolution in the way the Army approached advising with its general purpose force. It is the differences in the cases, however, that shed the most light on contemporary advising efforts. The cases are examined with respect to the historical context that

the Army, *Field Manual 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, February 2008), 3-1 – 3-13.

²⁶ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, October 2008), 6-14.

²⁷ *QDR*, 2006, 75.

²⁸ *QDR*, 2010, 26-27. See also *NSS*, 2010, 26-27.

led to American advisory efforts; the *ad hoc* selection of personnel assigned as advisors; the inadequate training received by personnel prior to assignment; and the role of the respective advisory groups (or commands). Implications of the Korea and Vietnam cases point to two central requirements with respect to the need for a centralized structure to organize and manage advisors and maintain unity of the advising effort, and the need for specialized selection and preparation of advisors with respect to advisory roles, skills, and language. These are the same experiences Army and advisors experienced with the advisory efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, experiences which revive the advisor debate in terms of the Army's need to institutionalize advisory capability and capacity within its general purpose force to avoid another reinvention of the wheel or "system reboot" during future foreign security force advising efforts.²⁹

Historical Background

Coinciding with the September 1945 Japanese surrender ending WWII, the US Army's XXIV Corps landed at Inchon and occupied the Korean capital Seoul, ending forty years of Japanese occupation. Beginning a process to provide security in the absence of Korean ability and to disarm and repatriate Japanese nationals who remained on the Korean peninsula, the American military government worked to "create stability through an indigenous national military organization."³⁰ By late-1945, the military government created the Korean Bureau of Armed Forces and Police, later placed under the Bureau of National Defense, and worked to build a

²⁹ Brimley and Singh, "Averting the System Reboot"; Grdovic, "The Advisory Challenge," 28; Baginski, *Comprehensive Approach*, 8.

³⁰ Bryan R. Gibby, "American Advisors to the Republic of Korea: America's First Commitment in the Cold War, 1946-1950," in *Military Advising and Assistance: From Mercenaries to Privatization, 1815-2007*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 81 (Hereafter cited as "Advisors to the ROK"); Robert K. Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, ed. Walter G. Hermes (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1962), 3-5; Mark J. Reardon, "Chasing a Chameleon: The U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Experience in Korea, 1945-1952," in *The U.S. Army and Irregular Warfare, 1775-2007: Selected Papers from the 2007 Conference of Army Historians*, ed. Richard G. Davis (Washington, DC: United States Army Center for Military History, 2008), 214-215.

Korean constabulary force where none existed previously.³¹ Originally envisioned as a 25,000-man force for border defense and internal security, the Constabulary was armed with light-infantry weapons and trained as infantrymen. Despite the Koreans' lack of "modern military experience" and a barrier posed by an alien Korean language, the American military government hastily organized advisors to train the Constabulary as a reserve security force for the Korean national police.³²

In late-1947, Far East Command commander, General Douglas MacArthur, approved the Constabulary's enlargement to 50,000 personnel, and it struggled to transform into a national army following Syngman Rhee's election as the Republic of Korea's first president on July 20, 1948. Following the election, American advisors reassigned to the Provisional Military Advisory Group and continued to train and build Korean security forces; those forces undertook counterinsurgency operations on Jeju Island in the fall of 1948 against communist guerillas seeking to destabilize the newly formed South Korean government, and operations to quell revolts by mutinous military personnel in Yosu-Sunchon.³³ The November 14, 1948, Republic of Korea Armed Forces Organization Act subsequently reorganized the Constabulary, renamed it the Republic of Korea Army, and increased it again to 100,000 personnel – roughly equivalent to eight infantry divisions. As Korean security forces increased, so did American advisor efforts as the Truman Administration formalized the provisional advisory group and subordinated it to the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. By 1950, the United States Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea – also known as the Korean Military Advisory Group, or KMAG for short – encompassed

³¹ Gibby, "Advisors to the ROK", 82.

³² Ibid., 81-83; Chang-II Ohn, "The South Korean Military and the Korean War," *International Journal of Korean Studies* (Spring-Summer 2001), 40; Reardon, "Chasing a Chameleon," 220-222.

³³ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 35; Gibby, "Advisors to the ROK", 88, 95-97; JCS Historical Division, "U.S. Military Assistance," 19; Reardon, "Chasing a Chameleon," 220-221.

the Korean national police and air force, in addition to the army.³⁴

Catching the Korean army and its American advisors in the midst of their building program, the North Korean attack on June 25, 1950, propelled a “surprised, ill equipped, and inadequately trained” force into a conflict it was not prepared to meet.³⁵ American tactical advisors remained with and fought along-side their counterparts, and in many instances fell beside them in battle attempting to provide needed advice and liaise with nearby American combat units. When Eighth United States Army assumed command of Korean army units on July 13, 1950, it subsumed the advisor group and supervised the reconstitution of damaged Korean divisions into functional corps, assigning “advisors to assist the new [Korean army] corps commanders and their staffs in learning tactical and administrative skills the hard way, under combat conditions.”³⁶ Accompanying Korean units withdrawing to Daegu and Busan, American advisors

[d]uring the retreat toward Pusan... [were] forced on many occasions to drop their advisory roles and become operational. Faced with a desperate situation, they insisted that their suggestions be followed, and in the field they virtually commanded ROK Army formations. When it was necessary to act forcefully, they threatened and bullied the ROK officers into compliance. The methods were sometimes harsh but frequently the only means of slowing the rout and making the [Korean] forces take up defensive positions along the way south.³⁷

Throughout the Korean War, American advisors remained with their Korean units, advising during both training and combat operations, and liaising with American units. Korean army units were assigned increasingly difficult combat tasks as they gained proficiency and trust,

³⁴ Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 88; Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 41-45, 93; JCS Historical Division, “U.S. Military Assistance,” 15-16; Robert D. Ramsey, III, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 10.

³⁵ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 5.

³⁶ Ibid. See also Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 137-139; and Bryan R. Gibby, “Fighting in a Korean War: The American Advisory Missions from 1946-1953” (Ph.D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 2004), 232; JCS Historical Division, “U.S. Military Assistance,” 20-21.

³⁷ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 140.

and advisors continued to “stiffen the [Korean] capability and desire to resist.”³⁸ Throughout the period, Eighth Army emphasized the advisor’s responsibility for the “success or failure” of the unit they advised, despite the advisory group’s explanation to its advisors that advising meant the provision of advice and “benefits of [the advisor’s] military experience” to assist the counterpart to accomplish the combat mission.³⁹

Once the war became static along the 38th Parallel in 1951, advisors capitalized on available time to steadily improve Korean army capability and rebuild foundations destroyed during the withdrawal to Pusan. In spite of desperate times and setbacks posed by continual combat and intervention by Communist Chinese Forces, American advisors continued to stand by their counterparts as the Korean army successfully resisted Chinese efforts to seize terrain and inflict casualties throughout the remainder of the war.⁴⁰ By 1953 the Korean army comprised “two corps headquarters, twelve combat divisions, [and] forty artillery battalions,” with an “additional [two] divisions, two artillery battalions, and a tank company” undergoing formation and training.⁴¹ At the time of the armistice, the Korean army was 591,000 personnel and considered “one of the largest combat experienced armies in the world.”⁴²

Concurrent to the Korean War advisory effort, the United States established a four-man military assistance and advisory group in 1951 to advise French forces in Indochina conducting counterinsurgency against the Vietminh, a nationalist group seeking to gain independence from

³⁸ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 150.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 60, 152, 170-171; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 9; Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK,” 89; United States Military Advisor Group to the Republic of Korea, *Advisor’s Handbook* (Republic of Korea: United States Military Advisor Group to the Republic of Korea, March 1, 1951), 2. See also Reardon, “Chasing the Chameleon,” 223.

⁴⁰ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 186-188; Gibby, “Fighting in a Korean War,” 240.

⁴¹ Gibby, “Fighting in a Korean War,” 222.

⁴² Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 10.

France.⁴³ Following the French withdrawal after defeat at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954 and subsequent Geneva Conference agreements the following July, the United States enlarged the advisory and assistance mission and undertook what would become the largest, most complex military advisory and assistance effort in Army history.⁴⁴ Unlike in Korea example, where Korea faced an existential threat from without, the United States did not sufficiently appreciate the Vietminh insurgency, mistakenly believing the conflict between the French and Vietminh to be conventional rather than an insurgency. Rather than developing South Vietnamese forces to combat internal threats by “focusing... on local security efforts and police operations” designed to reinforce “political stability and security in the populated rural areas” as suggested by a British advisory team located in Saigon at the time, American advisors focused the South Vietnamese defensively on external security threats and sought to instill an offensive spirit to kill insurgents.⁴⁵

Between 1955 and 1960, the American advisory group worked to build South Vietnamese security forces, creating an army consisting of seven infantry divisions and smaller airborne and armored forces, as well as a fledgling marine corps, navy and air force, while American non-military agencies focused on creating, training and equipping a civil guard and self-defense corps. Vietnamese security forces, as created and trained, focused primarily on defending South Vietnam’s northern border from invasion by communist North Vietnam.⁴⁶ By 1963, the South Vietnamese army grew to four corps, nine divisions, multiple airborne and separate brigades and battalions, eighty-six ranger companies, and a special forces group.

⁴³ Andrew Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 18.

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Jeffrey J. Clarke, *The United States Army in Vietnam, Advice and Support: The Final Years, 1965-1973*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1988), 497; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 27. See also James L. Collins, Jr., *The Development and Training of the South Vietnamese Army, 1950-1972* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1975), 1-16.

⁴⁵ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 66-67.

⁴⁶ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 27. See also Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 19-21; and Collins, *Development and Training*, 20-46.

American advisor training efforts in 1965 were characterized as trying to Americanize the Vietnamese army with training “mirroring... instruction that American soldiers received in the United States.”⁴⁷ Training oriented on regimental- and division-sized organizations and maneuvers, rather than smaller-sized units that the Vietnamese believed were needed for counterinsurgency.

In 1962, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam – more commonly referred to as MACV – was formally established and absorbed the assistance and advisory group as a subordinate headquarters. By 1965, MACV eclipsed the advisory effort and focused its efforts as the operational headquarters for combating the North Vietnamese Army and large-scale Viet Cong units.⁴⁸ The operational headquarters’ expansion brought a concurrent increase to the advisory effort with the addition of the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program. The program, in addition to the tactical advisory effort, provided military general purpose force and civilian advisors for rural area pacification. By strengthening “critical elements of territorial security, economic development, [and] good governance programs,” and building regional and provincial paramilitary security forces who previously received only sporadic advising by non-military and Army special forces advisors, the program hoped to effectively combat insurgent guerillas with “counter-Viet Cong infrastructure operations,” and effective local political leaders, and accountable local improvement programs.⁴⁹ American combat operations continued to grow through 1968, but emphasis shifted away from advising and

⁴⁷ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 28; Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 23.

⁴⁸ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 145; Graham A. Cosmas, *The United States Army in Vietnam: MACV, The Joint Command in the Years of Withdrawal, 1968-1973* (Washington DC: United States Army Center for Military History, 2007), 108 (Hereafter cited as *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*); Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 29.

⁴⁹ Richard W. Stewart, “CORDS and the Vietnam Experience: An Interagency Organization for Counterinsurgency and Pacification,” in *Security Assistance: U.S. and International Historical Perspectives*, eds. Kendall D. Gott and Michael G. Brooks (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, August 2006), 256-57; Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 218; Clarke, *The Final Years*, 211-212; James L. Collins, Jr., *Development and Training* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1975), 39-41.

assisting South Vietnamese security forces to providing liaison with and combat support from American units. After the failed North Vietnamese Tet army offensive in 1968, the South Vietnamese army resumed national-level combat operations, and American advisors continued to liaise with American units and provide access to American fire support, attack and cargo helicopters, close air support and medical evacuation.⁵⁰

Following the Nixon Administration's decision in 1969 to withdraw American combat forces from Vietnam due to the growing unpopularity of the war, the advisory effort changed to reflect an official focus on providing combat support and materiel, rather than training and assistance. Attempting to "reduc[e] the number of tactical advisers to the absolute minimum," in 1971 MACV began a process of reassigning advisor teams from South Vietnamese units operating in areas considered stable to Vietnamese commands engaged in heavy combat.⁵¹ By continually assessing and reallocating advisors – at this point officially considered assistants rather than advisors – MACV reduced advisors simultaneously with American combat forces based on South Vietnamese security forces' assumption of "total responsibility for the war."⁵² By late-1971, the senior American commander assessed that South Vietnamese security forces no longer required operational advice, and directed MACV to deactivate its advisory and assistance administrative headquarters, along with all schools and training centers. He further directed all remaining tactical advisors to "urge their [South Vietnamese army] counterparts to conduct command post exercises and war games" focused on combined regimental operations at the corps level and combined battalion operations at the regimental level to "strengthen... reporting procedures... [and] increase the effectiveness of combined arms operations."⁵³

⁵⁰ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 322; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 54.

⁵¹ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 369; Cosmas, *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*, 273.

⁵² Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 32; Clarke, *The Final Years*, 449-450.

⁵³ Cosmas, *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*, 273; Collins, *Development and Training*, 109.

South Vietnamese security forces fought the North Vietnamese forces to a standstill and inflicted upwards of 100,000 casualties during the 1972 Easter offensive, but suffered heavy personnel and equipment losses as well, leaving a “rough battlefield equilibrium” in place with neither side having an ability to upset it.⁵⁴ Despite South Vietnamese security forces’ demonstrated need after the 1972 Easter offensive for continued American assistance, the American advisory and assistance effort continued to diminish, and officially terminated after implementation of the January 1973 cease-fire agreement. The deactivation of MACV and departure of remaining American troops followed in March 1973.⁵⁵

In spite of the cease-fire agreement, fighting resumed after the end of the 1973 summer rainy season with South Vietnamese security forces battling North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces for territory, despite South Vietnamese “administrative and military control of the bulk of South Vietnam’s population and resources.”⁵⁶ By the following summer in 1974, North Vietnamese forces and Viet Cong continued to attack South Vietnamese weak spots – remote airfields and storage facilities. After seizing in early 1974 territory lost to South Vietnam in the cease-fire agreement, the North Vietnamese launched a massive campaign in March 1975 focused on defeating South Vietnamese security forces and toppling its government. Despite stiff resistance by many South Vietnamese units, reductions in American military aid after President Nixon’s resignation in August 1974 and continued South Vietnamese governmental corruption in Saigon left the South Vietnamese command structure ill-prepared to respond effectively and led to the disintegration of many South Vietnamese units when attacked by North Vietnamese forces. By the end of April 1975, North Vietnamese forces successfully occupied Saigon and toppled the

⁵⁴ Cosmas, *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*, 379.

⁵⁵ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 495; Cosmas, *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*, 397-400.

⁵⁶ Cosmas, *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*, 402; Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1984), 660.

South Vietnamese regime.⁵⁷

Advisory Group Organization and Advisor Assignments

The Korea and Vietnam advisory efforts exemplify an *ad hoc* effort by the Army to create military advisors from its general purpose force in order to meet mission requirements. While both cases demonstrate the Army's struggle with providing personnel capable of effectively advising foreign security forces, the two cases are also distinct in that with the Vietnam case, the Army possessed a specialized organization – the Army special forces – whose assigned mission was the conduct of foreign internal defense and foreign security force advising. Army special forces did not exist during the Korean conflict and the Army relied exclusively on its general purpose force to advise the Korean security forces. Despite having a specialized organization during Vietnam, the Army relied overwhelmingly on its general purpose force to advise the South Vietnamese security forces due to the large scale of the advisory effort and small-size of Army special forces at the time.

Personnel availability problems plagued Korean advisory effort from its inception. Viewed as a “fringe organization” by the American military government, the provisional advisory group “compete[d] for personnel, equipment, and attention.”⁵⁸ Post-WWII readjustment policies further complicated the situation and highlighting the *ad hoc* nature of the advisory effort. At first, the provisional advisory group worked to build small teams of two American officers and four non-commissioned officers to recruit, organize and train Constabulary personnel in each province, but struggled to find enough personnel to fill 241 authorized advisor positions. Army reassignment and discharge criteria excluded capable officers and NCOs who accumulated required rotation points to redeploy to the United States. The first eighteen officers to perform as

⁵⁷ Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*, 660-670; Cosmas, *MACV, Years of Withdrawal*, 403-408.

⁵⁸ Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK,” 88.

advisors – all lieutenants – arrived at Bureau of National Defense from the US 40th Infantry Division when it deactivated in late-January 1946.⁵⁹ Exacerbating the personnel replacement situation in 1948 was the Army’s focus on “rapid demobilization” of forces and “cutbacks in [post-WWII] military expenditures,” with personnel suitable for advisor assignments rotating back to the United States for stateside reassignment or discharge.⁶⁰

In early-1949, the Truman Administration formalized KMAG and subordinated it to the US Embassy in Seoul, facilitating the further withdrawal of American forces while maintaining a perceptible commitment to the Koreans with as few personnel as possible.⁶¹ This decision was at odds with the Korean Constabulary’s transformation to the Korean army on July 1, 1949, and led to a steady increase in advisor requirements as the American military commitment to Korea diminished. KMAG’s growth to 500 personnel in 1949 – growing to almost 3,000 by 1953 – did not alleviate the advisor shortage problem and resulted in the convening of a personnel board to screen Army units still in Korea for suitable personnel.⁶² Enlisted personnel freely volunteered, but officers were not as forthcoming and “[e]xcept for a few volunteers, had to be levied for duty as advisors.”⁶³ Officers at the time did not consider advisor assignments as either desirable or important, and the board struggled to fill open advisor billets:

The board at first considered only officers in the grade of captain or higher who still had a year to serve overseas. When [departing American units] failed to turn up enough officers thus qualified, the board relaxed its requirements to permit the selection of first lieutenants while lowering the service requirement on overseas tours to six months. When the board still was unable to meet its quota, it took a few officers who had less than six months to serve overseas. Even so, before the advisory group obtained sufficient advisors... fifteen officers had to be requisitioned from the Far East Command [in Japan].⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Reardon, “Chasing a Chameleon,” 216; Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 13-15.

⁶⁰ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 28-30.

⁶¹ JCS Historical Division, “U.S. Military Assistance,” 13; Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 30.

⁶² Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 43-44; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 10.

⁶³ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 43.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 43-44. See also Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 11.

Willing and eager officers who volunteered were very young and professionally inexperienced, and “lacked formal training in how military missions should function.”⁶⁵ This problem was particularly endemic in the provisional advisory group, where at one point sixty-three of 106 advisors were lieutenants. Junior rank affected advisors’ credibility in the eyes of their Korean counterparts, especially for those assigned to advise Korean regimental or battalion commanders.⁶⁶

While the advisory group planned to assign advisors to every Korean army commander at division, regiment, and battalion-level, personnel shortages throughout the war resulted in most Korean infantry battalions rarely having an American advisor. Advisor shortages were more acute in the Korean national police – for the first half of 1950, only four advisors covered the eight provinces in which the Korean national police were active – and advisors were similarly short in the Korean air force. Whereas in normal units personnel, administrative, financial, and logistics functions were accomplished by a dedicated staff, advisor shortages at the team level forced advisors to take care of these issues themselves in addition to their primary advisor duties, with the advisor being simultaneously a one-person commander and staff. Many advisor teams were temporarily augmented with marginally effective personnel from Eighth Army units considered “cast-offs,” and in many cases this added to the advisors’ burdens rather than alleviated them.⁶⁷

One incident in particular highlights the advisors’ plight in Korea, and the negative perceptions and reactions by general purpose force personnel to advisor assignments in Korea. In April, 1951, when the Korean army 6th Division collapsed and threatened the Korean III Corps and United Nations line, twenty-four American advisors were killed or captured as they fought

⁶⁵ Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 89.

⁶⁶ Headquarters, United States Forces in Korea (USFIK), Special Orders no. 176, 17 August 1948, Korean War Collection (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University), cited in Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 89.

⁶⁷ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 54-55; Gibby, “Fighting in a Korean War,” 14-15; JCS Historical Division, “U.S. Military Assistance,” 17; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 10-12.

along-side counterparts to keep the 6th Division operational. This and similar incidents during the first year of the war led to many advisors to refer to the advisory group's informal name – Korean Military Advisory Group, or KMAG – as meaning ‘Kiss My Ass Goodbye’, and speaks to the level at which many advisors saw themselves and perceived how they were viewed by others.⁶⁸ In terms of U.S. Army combat unit counterparts, commanders expected advisors to deliver “effective combat performance” from Korean army units and told them directly that they – the advisors – were “responsible for [the advised] unit” whether they commanded that unit or not.⁶⁹ This dilemma posed a critical problem where honest reports to American units carried a potential to damage counterpart relationships and affect the “future effectiveness of their counterpart”, while holding a relationship above honest reports risked advisors’ careers – when Korean army “units collapsed, no one was safe, personally or professionally.”⁷⁰ These facts and perceptions kept many suitable officers from volunteering for advisory duty during the war, preferring instead to remain with American tactical units where personal safety was not continually in question and promotion opportunities were greater. While the situation gradually improved over the next two years, it is characteristic of the American military advisory effort in Korea. Problems and perceptions resulting from *ad hoc* organization and advisor selection were not alleviated and continued to the war’s end.

During its early stages, selection and assignment of general purpose force advisors in Vietnam did not differ significantly from that of advisors in Korea a decade earlier. As the South Vietnamese security forces expanded throughout the mid-1950s and early-1960s, the number of advisors needed to cover those units also increased. Providing advisors for duty in Vietnam was not a high Army priority before 1960 and the selection criteria at best focused on rank, branch, or

⁶⁸ Gibby, “Fighting in a Korean War,” 11.

⁶⁹ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 18.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

whether the individual was at risk for an overseas tour. By 1962, the Army selected personnel to fill open advisor billets from low-priority assignments, or from those on their last duty assignment prior to retirement. Personnel were selected to advise

not on the basis of any particular familiarity with counterinsurgency, but on the principle that generalists rather than specialists were best suited for the role. According to this criterion, practically any officer was qualified to serve as an adviser, and just about every kind did.⁷¹

Despite advisor shortages, officers and non-commissioned officers seeking combat experience did volunteer for advisory duty in Vietnam, but not to the extent that shortages were easily filled:

Prior to 1965, candidates were normally volunteers anxious to serve in one of the few assignments that offered operational experience in a combat environment. In Vietnam, MACV [Military Assistance Command, Vietnam] tried to assign newly arrived officers to units appropriate to their U.S. military backgrounds—combat arms officers to combat units, engineer officers to engineer units, and so forth. But by 1964, with the flood of junior officers and noncommissioned officers needed to fill battalion and district advisory teams, the importance of military experience in advisory posting at the lower levels had become irrelevant.⁷²

While the Army employed its special forces in Vietnam, it relied heavily on its general purpose force to provide advisors for the South Vietnamese military services. Special forces remained employed as advisors in the minority, and advised only civilian irregular defense corps and South Vietnamese army special forces and ranger companies throughout the war.⁷³

By mid-1959, advisors were assigned to regimental-level infantry units and armor and artillery battalions. As South Vietnamese counterinsurgency operations increased through 1961, advisors began accompanying their counterparts into battle to observe and provide advice, and by late-1961, advisors were assigned to each operational South Vietnamese battalion and province.⁷⁴ As the Vietnamese army continued to grow as it conducted combat and counterinsurgency operations, “the role of American tactical advisers expanded... beyond that of military advice to

⁷¹ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 48, 80. See also Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 37.

⁷² Clarke, *The Final Years*, 61.

⁷³ Collins, *Development and Training*, 38-41, and 53-55; Clarke, *The Final Years*, 69-74; Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 58.

⁷⁴ Collins, *Development and Training*, 26; Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 28.

their counterparts... [and by] early... 1962 began coordinating and directing American fixed- and rotary-wing support in the field,” a situation that provided advisors with greater influence in counterparts’ plans and operations.⁷⁵

In 1966, the senior American commander in Vietnam acknowledged the “difficult and often frustrating” work of advisors and announced that only “the finest officers and NCOs are made available for assignment to [Vietnam] as advisors.”⁷⁶ Contrary to this, Army personnel assignment policies mirrored that of Korea with the influx of American combat units in 1966, and shift in emphasis away from advisory efforts. The Army’s priority became filling empty U.S. unit command billets, rather than providing the best quality advisors, at times reassigning advisors to fill combat unit shortages. Despite emphasis from MACV regarding the Army’s need to assign its best officers for advisory duties in Vietnam, combat units frequently “picked off” best people as they entered the theater with no action taken by MACV to stop this practice.⁷⁷ As operational and advisory requirements increased between 1961 and 1968, advisor shortages regularly led to lieutenants leading infantry battalion advisor teams, instead of captains. Throughout the advisory effort, some teams remained up to fifty percent undermanned. Before 1961, advisor teams were assigned to South Vietnamese army corps, division, and regiments; battalion teams were added in late-1961 with Secretary of Defense approval; and eventually counterpart relationships were established with the Vietnamese Joint General Staff by advisors drawn from the advisory group administrative headquarters in order to monitor national level activities. Throughout, the field advisor in Vietnam played the central role by providing advice and combat support to South Vietnamese security forces, and throughout the 1960s the advisory command was driven by shortages to assign, reassign, reallocate, and alter advisor team composition to ensure appropriate

⁷⁵ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 59.

⁷⁶ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 38; Clarke, *The Final Years*, 187.

⁷⁷ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 237; Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 208.

coverage.⁷⁸

After the arrival of large-scale American combat units in 1966, the advisory effort diverged from its similarity to the Korean case. Unlike in Korea where Korean army units and the advisory group were subordinate to the Eighth U.S. Army commander, South Vietnamese security forces were never subordinated to the American command. In Vietnam prior to 1966, as in Korea, senior advisors assigned to South Vietnamese army corps were directly responsible to the senior American commander and supervised the divisional, regimental, and battalion advisor teams assigned to the corps' subordinate units. As American tactical units assumed the lead in combat operations in 1966, this counterpart relationship changed when the MACV commander placed U.S. corps commanders as senior advisor to South Vietnamese corps commanders, and subordinated corps senior advisors to U.S. corps commanders. This decision placed American advisors directly in U.S. corps' chains of command, relegated the actual corps senior advisor – a colonel – to deputy advisor, and severed the “direct operational link” between advisor teams and the MACV commander.⁷⁹

American tactical commanders expected advisors to “improve the combat effectiveness of [South Vietnamese] units,” but provided no teeth with which to do this. Advisors in Vietnam neither gave, nor took, orders from their Vietnamese counterpart; rather they had a “much less positive role – that of giving advice, providing guidance and exerting influence.”⁸⁰ In Vietnam the primary expectation of advisors was to provide advice, coordinate combat support, supervise

⁷⁸ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 32-33; Clarke, *The Final Years*, 54-57. See also Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1983), 291; David E. Ott, *Field Artillery, 1954-1973* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1975), 24; and Gerald C. Hickey and W.P. Davidson, *The American Advisory and his Foreign Counterpart: The Case of Vietnam* (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, March 1965), 57-59.

⁷⁹ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 56-57.

⁸⁰ Spector, *The Early Years*, 346. See also Headquarters, Military Assistance Advisory Command, “Lessons Learned Number 28 – Guidelines for Advisors,” 18 April 1963 (Vietnam: Military Assistance Command, Vietnam), 2.

subordinate advisor teams, and communicate between American tactical units and between American and South Vietnamese units.⁸¹ Whereas Eighth Army in Korea “commanded and demanded,” and advisors were expected to assume command of Korean units if necessary, advisors in Vietnam only “coordinated and suggested.”⁸² In the absence of a combined U.S. – South Vietnamese command, advisors found themselves valued by counterparts for their ability to coordinate combat support from nearby American units, rather than for their advice.

Prior to subordinating advisor teams to U.S. tactical units, teams submitted reports directly to the advisory group, just as in Korea. After subordination, however, advisor reports were sent through corps, division, regimental and battalion commands before they were forwarded to the MACV or the advisory group:

[S]ubjective assessments... [preceded] a more comprehensive system. Not surprisingly, “the dogged ‘Can Do’ attitude of most officers and noncommissioned officers [assigned to American combat units] tended to see all faults in the [South Vietnamese] army as correctable, all failures as temporary,” and the expectation of results contributed to inaccurate and overly optimistic reporting. MACV ensured that field advisors soon became too frustrated with the performance of their counterparts, or those whose reports were too critical,” were “quietly but promptly relieved and transferred.”⁸³

Advisor recommendations for relief of ineffective or corrupt South Vietnamese counterparts frequently were ignored, whereas under the combined command structure in Korea, Korean military or political leaders heeded advisor recommendations for replacement or relief of counterparts. In Vietnam, harmony between the American and South Vietnamese commands was the order of the day, and commanders sometimes deliberately overlooked advisors’ negative reports.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Collins, *Development and Training*, 36. See also Bryce F. Denno, “Advisor and Counterpart,” *Army* (July 1965), 25-26.

⁸² Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 48-51.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 52. See also Spector, *The Early Years*, 379; and Clarke, *The Final Years*, 69.

⁸⁴ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 57-58, 187-193; Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 80-84. See also JCS Historical Division, “U.S. Military Assistance,” 18.

The last way in which the Vietnam case differs from the Korean case is how MACV and the Army attempted to attract general purpose force personnel to advisor assignments. After two years of American build-up in Vietnam, the assistance command turned to the Army Chief of Staff to develop incentives to overcome problems with advisor quality and shortages by attracting quality officers and non-commissioned officers to advisor assignments. Concerns voiced to the Army Chief of Staff by the MACV deputy commander stimulated the Army's consideration of incentives. Addressing provincial-level advisor positions – normally occupied by senior majors or lieutenant colonels – the Army increased rank requirements to lieutenant colonel and colonel and offered battalion and brigade command credit, as well as language and advanced schooling, special pay, leave privileges, and preference on their next assignment. In doing so, the Army failed to address its more pressing need to attract experienced senior company grade and junior field grade officers needed for regimental and battalion advisor billets.⁸⁵ Overall, the Army's incentive plan failed to achieve expectations:

Although MACV and the Army Staff supported measures to make advisory duty more attractive, the men in the field refused to believe that service outside main-force units (battalions, brigades, and so on) could enhance their career. For example, a strong majority of officers felt that promotion and senior service school boards gave advisory work less weight than command time. ... [forty-seven] percent felt that combat experience as an adviser did not help their career as much as combat service with a U.S. unit and [sixty-three] percent agreed that command time as an adviser helped them less than command of a U.S. unit. ... [A]fter the Army incentive program had been initiated, only [twenty-four] percent of those serving as advisers had requested the assignment.⁸⁶

Still unable to attract officers to fill empty advisor positions, the assistance command forcibly transferred staff and combat unit personnel into the advisor program to fill shortages.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 208; Clarke, Clarke, *The Final Years*, 238.

⁸⁶ Warren R. Graham and William King, *Military Advising in Vietnam, 1969-1970* (Alexandria, VA: Human Resources Research Organization, 1973), 79. See also Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 207-210

⁸⁷ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 238.

Advisor Training

The issue of advisor qualifications compounded the problem in Korea already posed by personnel availability. Throughout the mission from 1946 to 1953, the U.S. Army made no formal attempt to educate or qualify those assigned as advisors as to the method or manner by which to provide appropriate advice to a foreign counterpart.⁸⁸ Further frustrating this was the fact that most officers assigned as advisors were far junior in grade than their counterparts or lacked credible combat experience. The personnel selected to fill advisor shortages, whether volunteers junior in rank or involuntary reassignments, demonstrated a need for some sort of advisor training in order to maximize the advisory effort. The institutional Army developed no such capacity given the Truman Administration's policy by 1949 to minimize Korean military commitments. Personnel reporting to Korea for advisor assignments were expected to execute their duties to the best of their abilities regardless of motivation.

The first chief of KMAG, Brigadier General William L. Roberts, directed in 1949 the advisory group staffs to overcome the lack of advisor training by instituting a reception and in-briefing program for newly received advisors. Shortly afterward, newly assigned advisors were briefed by Roberts within a few days of reporting for duty on the advisory group's mission and staff procedures, as well as on problems experienced and those likely to be faced. New advisors were additionally required to attend the next weekly KMAG staff meeting before reporting to their assigned advisory team in order to gather a big-picture understanding of problems and further develop expectations. By 1949, KMAG published and distributed the *Advisor's Handbook*. The handbook, a short compendium of procedures and advice to advisors to be read later, on their own time, presented advisors with Robert's "standards for leadership, expectations... and procedural techniques to assist the field advisors in all his endeavors as

⁸⁸ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 11.

partners in command with his counterpart,” and emphasized advisors’ need to render accurate and timely reports for purposes of intelligence.⁸⁹

Far from being any sort of formal education on advisory duties or skills, the handbook represented Robert’s communication of expectations, and empowered many junior and inexperienced advisors, rather than leaving them to learn by discovery – which they still did. Insofar as presentation or familiarization with the “professional skills needed to advise a Korean army commander one to three levels above his rank or experience,” the *Advisor Handbook* and its 1953 successor, the *Advisor’s Procedure Guide*, did little to clarify situational understanding or Army expectations.⁹⁰ Outside of Robert’s communication of personal expectations, however, most advisors were reduced to trial and error in attempting to overcome obstacles posed by Korean culture and language as they sought to accomplish their mission in part due to the lack of advisory training or understanding of professional skills needed to advise.⁹¹

The Korean language posed further problems, and of the original eighteen advisors in January 1946, none spoke any Korean whatsoever. Instead, they were paired with an American non-commissioned officer fluent in Japanese as they set about their Constabulary advisor duties. While Japanese is a very advanced and technical language, Korean language at the time contained no clear or understandable technical military terms, and only those Koreans who served in the Imperial Japanese Army or its surrogate, the Manchukuo Army, were able to converse – some

⁸⁹ Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 90; Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 57; Robert D. Ramsey, III, “Some Observations on Americans Advising Indigenous Forces,” in *The U.S. Army and Irregular Warfare, 1775-2007: Selected Papers from the 2007 Conference of Army Historians*, ed. Richard G. Davis (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2008), 244 (Hereafter cited as “Observations on Advising.”).

⁹⁰ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 14.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

only barely – in Japanese.⁹² Rather than training advisors to learn Korean, the advisory group identified Korean Constabulary candidates for English school:

From the beginning, KMAG had no Americans who knew or understood the Korean language. By 1953, only one KMAG advisor could speak, read, and write Korean with any degree of fluency and only one other was fluent in Japanese. Prewar attempts to get KMAG advisors to learn Korean failed from lack of interest. An early [advisory group] chief actually considered making English the common language of the [Republic of Korea] security forces, even though most Korean soldiers were illiterate. Somehow, thousands of illiterate Koreans could learn English better and faster than educated Americans could learn Korean.⁹³

Pairing English school graduates with advisor team mildly alleviated the communication problem, and teams ventured forth to recruit and train local Constabulary regiments. Those advisor teams without an English school graduate relied on interpreters hired locally or drawn from the ranks of the advised unit.⁹⁴ Throughout this, no effort was made by the Army to educate its officers in Korean.

Advisor's inability to comprehend Korean culture also affected mission success, posed a much more difficult problem with potential for grave effects of advisor personal security and safety. Many advisors faced situations in which the American method was an unsuitable method for their counterpart's unit. Realizing this, some advisors saw the benefit and superiority of Korean army tactical or technical methods.⁹⁵ Korean cultural sensitivities emphasizing prestige and infallibility of the superior confounded many advisors, who soon learned:

[S]enior [Korean army] officers disdained in many instances to consult with their staffs, since they were inferior in grade or in years, and were hesitant in changing or canceling orders lest this indicate that they might have been wrong in their original diagnosis of the situation or problem. For the same reason, subordinate commanders and staff officers were reluctant to present unfavorable news to their superiors or to the KMAG advisors. The unwillingness to admit mistakes or errors in judgment led to a lack of accurate information or even to supplying misinformation to preserve face. How to deal with this question subtly and with tact posed a major challenge to each advisor. The most

⁹² Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 16; Gibby "Advisors to the ROK", 83.

⁹³ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 15.

⁹⁴ Gibby, "Advisors to the ROK", 85.

⁹⁵ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 18.

efficacious course of action required a great deal of patience and understanding and the development of mutual trust and respect between an advisor and his counterpart.⁹⁶

Whereas candid and direct communication, initiative, and flexibility are hallmark characteristics of the U.S. Army, they are “Western military values without direct equivalents in Korean culture.”⁹⁷ Additionally, advisory-counterpart rank disparities led in some cases to the counterpart’s refusal to cooperate with advisors simply out of rank disparity, despite professional and wartime qualifications. Advisors that failed to understand these cultural nuances risked alienation and outright ostracism when pushing valid advice, if the counterpart perceived the advice as undermining their authority or prestige.⁹⁸

Advisors who embarrassed their counterparts by “contradicting or correcting him” in public soon discovered this was a “surefire way to discover the erection of an impenetrable wall,” and that maintaining counterpart prestige was critical to both advisors’ and Korean units’ operational success.⁹⁹ In attempting to reconcile this with the straightforward nature of American military commanders, advisors found themselves stuck between two vastly different militaries and two vastly different cultures. Deft navigation between the advisor’s military and culture and that of his counterpart was required for success, and in some cases, if the advisor wanted to remain alive. Those advisors that remained in position and developed enduring relationships with their counterparts learned these lessons the hard way – by discovery – but new advisors remained at risk.

Just as in Korea, the Vietnam advisory effort was plagued with advisor training and language problems that lasted to the end of the mission in 1973. Early on, the Army responded to

⁹⁶ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 65-66. This is more commonly known as the concept of ‘face’, which touches on the individual’s “pride, self-respect, and vanity” as well as other’s beliefs regarding the individual’s “social status... and perception of power....” Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 98.

⁹⁷ Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 98.

⁹⁸ Sawyer, *KMAG in Peace and War*, 65.

⁹⁹ Gibby, “Advisors to the ROK”, 99. See also Ramsey, “Observations on Advising,” 244-245.

advisor requirements by addressing officers' qualifications with respect to professional experience and schooling: but did little to train those selected for advisory assignments:

The selection, training, and placement of the advisers themselves received relatively little attention. Prerequisites for advisory duty were generally identical to those demanded for advancement in regular military service: attendance at key military schools, and successful command tours with U.S. tactical units. Colonels (corps senior advisers) were to be graduates of senior service schools, such as the U.S. Army War College, and lieutenant colonels (division senior advisers) and majors (regimental and province senior advisers) graduates of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, with neither having been passed over for advancement to the next higher rank."¹⁰⁰

The Army, however, did little to improve advisor training despite establishing a four-week training program at Fort Bragg's Special Warfare Course in early-1962, to "provide officers and NCOs going to Vietnam with a working knowledge of what they could expect to encounter in their roles as advisors."¹⁰¹

The Military Assistance Training and Advisory course provided Vietnam-bound advisors instruction on Vietnamese history, counterinsurgency tactics, small-arms proficiency, psychological and civic operations, and twenty-five to thirty hours of Vietnamese language. The course expanded to six weeks by mid-1962, with nearly half of the instruction covering Vietnamese language, and the course's overall focus shifting to "familiarization with... culture... and a general knowledge of advisory duties, responsibilities, and techniques."¹⁰² Due to increasing advisor requirements and personnel shortages, the Army waived requirements for many advisors and deployed them to Vietnam with no training whatsoever. By the end of 1963, only 3,000 of 16,000 advisors attended training, and between 1969 and 1970, an estimated one-third of advisors attended, underscoring advisors' minimal preparation for duty.¹⁰³ Once arrived

¹⁰⁰ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 61-2. See also Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 80.

¹⁰¹ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 48.

¹⁰² Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 40-41; Clarke, *The Final Years*, 61-63.

¹⁰³ United States Continental Army Command, "CONARC [Continental Army Command] Contributions to U.S. Army Operations in Vietnam, July-December, 1963" (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History), cited in Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 49; Graham and King, *Advising in Vietnam*, 44. While Graham and King's research only covers 1969-1970, it is indicative of the overall

in Vietnam, only advisors assigned to district-level assignments received additional instruction before reporting to their assignments; all others were provided with the *MACV Advisor's Handbook* – if available – and reported immediately to their assignment without additional training after in-processing.

The Vietnamese language proved just as problematic for advisors as Korean was for their predecessors almost two decades earlier. For those advisors attending the training course at Fort Bragg, basic language consisted of “a single instructor’s reciting phrases in front of an auditorium filled with students, who would then try to repeat them.”¹⁰⁴ Selected advisors were sent to the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, for an additional eight to twelve weeks of intensive language training following training at Fort Bragg. Monterey’s limited capacity and “the length of time needed to acquire a working knowledge of the complex Vietnamese tonal language, greatly restricted advanced linguistic training,” however, and very few advisors attended the additional language training.¹⁰⁵

The Army continued to refine training through 1972. In January 1969, the original assistance training and advisory course split into two courses for officers and senior non-commissioned officers, and a third course for advisors assigned to the CORDS program. In 1968, U.S. Army Vietnam established a 125-hour in-country course for military assistance teams assigned to the CORDS program, and in 1972, the Army established a specialized twelve-week course for military intelligence officers assigned to district and provincial operations centers. Despite creation of a handful of other smaller training courses throughout the period, very few advisors attended them.¹⁰⁶ In an effort to alleviate the advisor training issue, several field manuals

training effort for advisors drawn from the Army’s general purpose force. See also Clarke, *The Final Years*, 61.

¹⁰⁴ Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, 48.

¹⁰⁵ Clarke, *The Final Years*, 62.

¹⁰⁶ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 42-43.

and handbooks were published similar to the *KMAG Advisor Handbook*.¹⁰⁷ While many of the courses and publications proved effective at getting small populations of advisors ready for their duties, the lack of a comprehensive and standardized training program hindered advisors and hindered the advisory effort.

Contemporary Implications of Korea and Vietnam

In viewing the Korea and Vietnam advisory efforts, the implications of the Army's *ad hoc* establishment of advisory groups and advisor selection, and inadequate training are apparent. What is less apparent is the attribution for overall success in the Korean case and failure in the Vietnam case. If one were to lay the cases side-by-side and compare advisory group organization, advisor selection, and advisor training, two differences between the cases jump to the forefront. Whereas in both cases the foreign security forces were advised outside of American command channels early on, only in Korea were those security forces subordinated to the American command – specifically Eighth U.S. Army – once hostilities commenced in mid-1950. In Vietnam, at no point were the South Vietnamese security forces subordinated to the American assistance command, whereas in both cases the advisory groups were subsumed by the larger ground force command. With respect to advisor training, advisors bound for Korea received none whatsoever, while some advisors – close to one-third, if statistics through 1963 and between 1969 and 1970 are inferred across the duration of the Vietnam advisory effort – received a modicum of language, culture, and counterinsurgency training. From this, a logical conclusion could be drawn that failure in Vietnam is attributable to the lack of a combined U.S. – South Vietnamese

¹⁰⁷ See Department of the Army, *Field Manual 31-73, Advisor Handbook for Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, April 1965); United States Army Special Warfare School, *Special Text 31-179, MATA Handbook for Vietnam* (Fort Bragg, NC: United States Army Special Warfare Center, January 1966); Department of the Army, *Field Manual 31-73, Advisor Handbook for Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, October 1967); Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, *RF-PF Handbook for Advisors*, (Vietnam: Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, November 1969); and Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support Rural Development Division, *The Vietnamese Village, 1970* (Vietnam: Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support).

command system, and some advisors receiving training prior to employment. However, this is only partially correct.

The largest implication of advising in Korea and Vietnam is from the Army's generalist nature in selecting advisors from its general purpose force. In both cases, the Army assigned advisors with little regard to individual suitability beyond branch qualification, and in many cases, based on the individual's risk for overseas assignment, rather than screening and selecting the best possible personnel with which to advise foreign security forces. A generalist view prevails today just as it did in Vietnam with respect to advisor selection. As noted earlier, then-Lieutenant General Peter W. Chiarelli commented in 2007 on the Army's need to build needed nation-building capacity to meet future challenges and, rather than creating a specialized capacity or capability to do so, instead recommended that forces be pulled from tactical units already deployed due to the Army's lack of resources. Contrary to this, Army Special Forces Colonel David Maxwell, while noting Army special forces' unique ability to advise within the context of foreign internal defense, points out the institutional Army's larger role in foreign internal defense and its requirement must be maintained at all levels of the Army's full-spectrum force. Former Army Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl similarly points out:

Special Forces adviser skills focus on tactics. Special Forces detachments were not intended to develop security forces at the institutional level and cannot provide the division- and corps-level planners, personnel and finance specialists, and expert logisticians needed to develop security institutions.¹⁰⁸

Acknowledging special forces' unique training and limited capabilities, Maxwell counters that Army operational mission requirements in large-scale nation building and foreign internal defense sometimes obviates the use of special forces and necessitate the use of general purpose

¹⁰⁸ John Nagl and Brian Drohan, "New Answers to Hard Questions," *Armed Forces Journal* (April 2008), <http://www.afji.com/2008/04/3392447/> (accessed January 28, 2010). See also David Maxwell, "Considerations for Organizing and Preparing for Security Force Assistance," in Center for Army Lessons Learned, *Foreign Internal Defense and Security Force Assistance: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures*, no. 10-28 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, February 2008), 25; and Ramsey, "Observations on Advising," 242-243.

force personnel to advise foreign security forces.

The implications of Korea and Vietnam shed a harsh light on the Army's contemporary efforts to prepare general purpose force personnel to advise foreign security forces. In Korea, advisors received no training whatsoever, and only a portion of those in Vietnam received some form of formal training. However, a consensus exists among many Vietnam advisors that training received was inadequate, and lacked sufficient depth in advisory roles and techniques, and language.¹⁰⁹ Advisor training for Iraq and Afghanistan evolved from a hasty program conducted at Fort Hood, Texas, to a standardized program at Fort Riley, KS, in 2006 under the 1st Infantry Division, and finally to Fort Polk, Louisiana, in 2009 under the 162nd Infantry Brigade. Whereas advisors received no training in Korea, and one-third of advisors received some training in Vietnam, the Army ensured that general purpose force advisors headed to Iraq and Afghanistan went through a formal training program prior to deployment. Unfortunately, despite standardization, training conducted today achieves less than one-quarter of training conducted during Vietnam and focuses primarily on individual and small-unit combat skills rather than advising skills and roles, a fact reflected by an advisor team chief who underwent training at Fort Riley in 2008 prior to deployment to Iraq:

[C]ombat advising is no different than the Special Operations Forces core task of foreign internal defense. But for all its similarities, no attention is paid to the concepts and methods utilized by the SOF communities in order to create the most effective advisor possible from the selected Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen. Beyond the charges made in the December 2007 issue of *Special Warfare Magazine* that advising is a special job for special people, Fort Riley and 1st Infantry Division strive to produce the best combat advisors possible, but are only marginally achieving the desired end. The training can and should be improved with a greater emphasis placed on the actual concepts and methods of advising, vice remaining solely focused on the mandated [Forces Command] deployment training requirements.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Ramsey, "Observations on Advising," 242.

¹¹⁰ Beaver L. Huh, "Combat Advisor Course Class 54, After Action Review" 25 October 2008 (Fort Riley, KS), 1-2. Army Lieutenant Colonel Huh commanded the 10th Iraqi Army Division Military Transition Team, attached to 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division; later 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, from November 2008 to October 2009. See also Christopher Bluestein, "Combat Advising: Three Challenges We Must Overcome to Succeed in Afghanistan," *Small Wars Journal*

While the Army's existing advisor training program is standardized, it is far from optimal and continues to rely on individual skills and capabilities that are not trained in branch or service schools, and demonstrates Army leaders' confidence general purpose force capabilities. In opposition to this, Maxwell asserts the Army's responsibility to train and educate officers and non-commissioned officers from the general purpose force and "provide... [them] with sufficient understanding of the foreign internal defense mission and the requirements for successful foreign internal defense operations."¹¹¹ Today, as in Korea and Vietnam, other than the Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg or the 162nd Infantry Brigade at Fort Polk which general purpose force personnel do not attend unless assigned as advisors, these capabilities do not exist at the institutional level for a full-spectrum general purpose force. Further, this likely explains the Army senior leaders' view of Army special forces as the force of first resort for future operations involving foreign internal defense and foreign security force advising and within larger picture of building partner capacity.

In early-2008, Army Special Forces Lieutenant Colonel John Mulberry argued that the Army's generalist mentality leads it to perceive foreign internal defense as deceptively simple, and mistakenly conclude that its general purpose force is robust enough to execute any advisory effort with little preparation. Similar to Maxwell, Mulberry makes a case for the appropriateness of general purpose forces to conduct foreign internal defense only when the scale is so large as to preclude special forces, or when the training of foreign security forces, conduct of humanitarian assistance, or partnership exercises takes place in an environment that negates fear in navigating sensitive political or diplomatic waters.¹¹² While Mulberry argues that foreign internal defense

(April 2009), <http://www.smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/234-bluesteen.pdf> (accessed March 29, 2010); and Greg Jaffe, "Problems Afflict U.S. Army Program to Advise Iraqis," *Wall Street Journal* (October 18, 2006), 1.

¹¹¹ Maxwell, "Organizing and Preparing for SFA," 25.

¹¹² Mulberry, "ARSOF, GPF, and FID," 30-31.

and advising is a special job for specially trained people, he fails to point out is that special forces personnel start out in the general purpose force and are qualified to conduct foreign internal defense and advising only after selection and specialized training. Not everyone makes it into special forces, and the same considerations apply to the selection and training of general purpose force personnel to conduct foreign internal defense and advising foreign security forces: not everyone in the general purpose force is uniquely suited to do so and specialized training is required to get them to that point.

During his debriefing in January 1972 after a twenty-two month advisory tour, Major General John H. Cushman reflected advisory requirements relative to advisor suitability, and in relation to tactical commanders and their units. Beyond advisor individual requirements, Cushman commented on advisors' need to balance their natural decisiveness while convincing foreign counterparts to accept advice that might be contrary to the counterpart's established way of thinking and asserted that good, general purpose force tactical commanders may not make suitable advisors, and vice versa.¹¹³ While Cushman demonstrated very unmilitary thinking in 1972, despite an inevitable decline in advisory operations in Vietnam he saw a need for stringent selection and training of those general purpose personnel assigned as advisors as a critical requirement for the future. Dr. Thomas Mahnken commented similarly in 2006 of the Army's need to rectify the *ad hoc* manner in which general purpose force advisors are identified and trained, citing advising as "peripheral to the identity of general purpose units."¹¹⁴ Mahnken echoes Cushman's argument that what makes American soldiers so well respected – aggressiveness, initiative, decisiveness, and drive to accomplish any mission in the face of adversity – and contrasts them with the "qualities of a good advisor":

¹¹³ Headquarters, Delta Regional Assistance Command, Vietnam, "Senior Officer Debriefing Report of Major General John H. Cushman, RCS CSFOR-74" (14 January 1972), 1-3. See also Grdovic, "The Advisory Challenge," 23; and Ramsey, "Observations on Advising," 245.

¹¹⁴ Mahnken, "Role of Advisory Support," 511.

[A] good advisor should be culturally sensitive, competent in his or her Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), open minded, patient, humble, disciplined, self confident, capable of dealing with moral dilemmas, and tolerant of uncertainty. Not always personality traits that the military as a whole screens for. In some cases, not even personality traits that the military values above others.¹¹⁵

In mid-2007, the Army's Stability Operations Division commented on the Army's "sub-optimal" sourcing, training and employment of advisors drawn from the conventional force. Citing it as a major cause of advisory ineffectiveness, the division noted the Army's need to "adapt... to cater for training," need to address advisor instructor manning inexperience and shortages, and recommended the Army create an "advisor academy" and "incentives for [advisor] assignments."¹¹⁶ Army Chief of Staff, General George W. Casey, asserted to the Senate Armed Services Committee in February 2010 that 162nd Infantry Brigade "provid[es] a dedicated and enduring capability to prepare [general purpose force] combat advisors to train and build capacity in foreign security forces."¹¹⁷ The transition from Fort Riley to Fort Polk did not come with an improvement in overall advisor training. The sixty-day training programs at Fort Riley and Fort Polk are identical and "comparatively little time is spent instructing [advisors] in the complex advisory tasks they are required to perform."¹¹⁸ Of sixty days allocated for advisory training, only ten were allocated for language or advisory-related skills; the remainder of training focused on mandatory U.S. Army Forces Command theater pre-deployment individual and small-unit combat skill training.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Mahnken, "Role of Advisory Support," 511.

¹¹⁶ HQDA G35, "Way Ahead for Advise, Train, and Assist". See also Headquarters, Department of the Army G-3/5/7, "Transition Team (TT) and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Enduring Training Capabilities," (July 10, 2007).

¹¹⁷ McHugh and Casey, "Army Posture Statement," 17.

¹¹⁸ Mattox, *Inventing the Vanguard*, 4.

¹¹⁹ 162nd Infantry Brigade, "Every Man a Tiger"; 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, "Transition Team Training"; DoD IG, *Training Requirements*, 4; Department of the Army, "ALARACT 055/2008, SUBJECT: HQDA EXORD For FSF TT Training Mission Move from Fort Riley to Fort Polk" (2008); Dennis Steele, "Advisor Training Shifts to Fort Polk: Army Establishes Enduring Mission," *Army* (September 2009), 49-50.

With the 2009 move in advisory training location, the army also transitioned its overall advisory training strategy. Teams trained at Fort Hood and Fort Riley were deployed into theater and attached to nearby U.S. brigade combat teams or other nearby American units for administrative and logistical support. Concurrent to the move in advisor training to Fort Polk, the Army began to assign individual advisors directly to Army brigade combat teams prior to the brigade's deployment, and gave discretion the brigade's commander of whether to send assigned advisors to the Fort Polk advisor training program prior to deploying. This marked a backward step in the training of advisors, and placed responsibility for advisor training on the brigade, rather than sending all the advisors to Fort Polk for centralized and standardized training.

In September 2009, commanders and advisors with the 1st Armored Division's 4th Brigade combat team in Iraq recognized shortfalls in advisor training and recommended that future brigades conducting an advising or assistance mission pay special attention to the advisor training prior to the brigade's deployment.¹²⁰ In January 2010, the Army rescinded this decision and directed all advisor teams, regardless of attachment or assignment, undergo thirteen days of centralized training at Fort Polk prior to deployment. The thirteen-day program is equivalent to the original ten days contained in the sixty-day program, with an additional three-day seminar covering culture, counterinsurgency, rapport-building and influence, and amounts to nothing more than a shuffling of the advisor training cards by the Army.¹²¹ A 2008 Congressional Research Service report suggests that four to six months is the minimum time needed to train and develop effective advisors, a view shared by some Army Special Forces officers.¹²² While Army

¹²⁰ Jay Gallivan, William Walski, Jason Bender, Paul Gunnison, and Bart Ransone, "Training Considerations for an Advise and Assist Brigade Combat Team" (Iraq: 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, September 6, 2009).

¹²¹ Headquarters, Forces Command, "Specified Training Requirements for Advisory Teams and ILO Elements" (January 6, 2010).

¹²² Feickert, "Full-Spectrum Force or Specialized Units," 9; Grdovic, "The Advisory Challenge," 28; Maxwell, "Organizing and Preparing for SFA," 24.

leadership may balk at taking four to six months to train general purpose force advisors, this represents only one-half of the time invested in the special forces, a large improvement over the existing thirteen days, and a step in the right direction toward creating a truly enduring advisory capacity in the Army's general purpose force.

Finally, the centralized nature of the advisory group in Korea contributed to success, whereas the decentralized advisory group in Vietnam allowed the effort to shift focus numerous times. In the Korea case, advisors remained accountable to the advisory group chief, with open and honest communications. In Vietnam, corps senior advisors reported directly to the MACV commander until 1966 when U.S. corps commanders assumed senior advisory duties to South Vietnamese corps commanders and the former corps senior advisor stepped into the deputy's role, decentralizing the advisory effort and subordinating it to the tactical mission. The centralized advisory group, as well as its relationship with the combined American and Korean command, allowed advisors to wield far more influence than did their contemporaries in Vietnam. Korean military and political leaders heeded advisors' advice, but South Vietnamese leaders only valued advisors' access to American combat support, heeding advisors' recommendations as long as American military support continued. While advisors in Vietnam should have had "some sort of long-term impact on Vietnamese military leadership," American commanders never went beyond thinking that they would.¹²³ The importance of the centralized advisory group is, therefore, a contributing factor to the success of the Korean case, just as was the combined command structure.

Similar to advisor teams in Vietnam, the Army subordinated advisor teams in Iraq to tactical combat units in December 2007 to alleviate administrative and logistical requirements complicating teams' sustainability during distributed operations. In 2009, the Army eliminated

¹²³ Clark, *The Final Years*, 509. See also Gibby, "Fighting in a Korean War," 10; and Reardon, "Chasing a Chameleon," 223.

the attachment altogether and assigned teams directly to brigades, and Multi-National Corps-Iraq concurrently eliminated the Iraq Assistance Group, the advisory group headquarters, and assumed all security assistance and advisory responsibilities. Whereas Iraq Assistance Group maintained centralized oversight of advisory efforts down to battalion-level, provided key input to the Multi-National Security and Transition Command, its elimination led to American division and brigade combat team commanders pursuing advisory and assistance efforts within the context of their tactical operations, just as in Vietnam. *Ad hoc* security force coordinators at divisions and brigades, often with no experience or understanding of advising, further exacerbated synchronization of advisory efforts.¹²⁴

The implications of Korea and Vietnam are loud and clear. The strength of the centralized advisory group is its ability to focus on the advisor effort as a key aspect of the strategic or operational mission, rather than as an adjunct of the tactical mission as it was in Vietnam, and is in Iraq. Assigning general purpose force personnel selected and trained for advisory operations increases the likelihood of an advisory effort's coherence and synchronization, and compliments the overall tactical effort, rather than leaving it decentralized and managed by *ad hoc* security force coordinators assigned from within the tactical units. Finally, in-depth training on advisory specific skills, roles, and languages not only provides the best possible advisor for future advisory efforts, it creates within the Army's general purpose force *writ large* a capability that improves the Army's ability to advise foreign security forces in the future at all levels.

¹²⁴ Benjamin R. Kibbey, "BCTs Change to AABs to Meet New Role" (Babil, Iraq: Army News Service, August 5, 2010), <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2010/08/mil-100805-arnews06.htm> (access August 15, 2010); Steele, "Advisor Training Shifts to Fort Polk," 50; 10th Iraqi Army Division Military Transition Team, "SUBJECT: 10th Iraqi Army Division MiTT After Action Report," 14 September 2009 (Tallil, Iraq), 1-4.

Institutionalizing General Purpose Force Advising Capacity and Capability

Institutionalizing general purpose force advisory capability and capacity within the Army requires first, a formal training and education program and, second, a formal force structure. Expanding the Army's existing Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program with the addition of a secondary track based on the defunct Military Assistance Officer Program focused on operational and tactical foreign security force advising, the Army will create an enduring capability within its general purpose that benefits not only future operations, but also the general purpose force as a whole. Similarly, by establishing a formal physical structure that oversees Army security force assistance, foreign internal defense, and advisor operations, the Army creates a necessary capability to address uncertain future conditions.

Creating a 'FAO-Lite'

In May 1965, the Secretary of the Army convened the Haines Board to review officer training and education. The board received specific guidance to examine potential "special career programs that filled vital needs not normally addressed by branch-material assignments."¹²⁵ The board concluded in 1966 that, based on the on-going general purpose force advisory effort in Vietnam, the Army needed to "embrace training in language, regions, psychological operations, civil affairs, and related subjects" similar to those covered in the existing Foreign Area Specialist Program.¹²⁶ The Army did not adopt the recommendation, however, and in 1967 the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel revisited it at the direction of the Army Chief of Staff. The re-examination, informally called DCSPER-40 – the original recommendation was the Haines Board's fortieth recommendation – led to the Army Chief of Staff redesignating the Foreign Area

¹²⁵ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 62.

¹²⁶ Ibid. See also Edwin E. Erickson and Herbert H. Vreeland, *Operational and Training Requirements of the Military Assistance Officer* (McLean, VA: Human Sciences Research, Inc., May 1971), 10-11.

Specialist Program as the Military Assistance Officer Program, and designated the publication of a specific regulation to govern officers working within the program.¹²⁷

The Military Assistance Officer Program provided the Army with officers who possessed skills and education needed to serve as commanders or advisors attuned to “social, economic, political, and psychological” considerations, with special attention paid to developing foreign security forces.¹²⁸ The program, governed by *Army Regulation 613-134, Military Assistance Officer Program*, gave special attention to officers’ rank and selection, and mandated specific requirements for military and civil schooling, and language proficiency, and stipulated that the best qualified military assistance officers were needed not only as advisors, but in the general purpose force. In order for officers to bring their knowledge and expertise to the general purpose force, they would “alternate between branch material and MAOP assignments.”¹²⁹ In this way, officers in the program remained current in their branch, and brought to their branch specialized education and experienced gained during tours in the program. Envisioning that the program would fill shortages in advisor personnel in Vietnam, the Army sent early participants to the Military Assistance Training and Advisory course at Fort Bragg, the same course that many general purpose force personnel attended prior to deploying to advisor assignments in Vietnam.¹³⁰ Expectations were that the program would expand to 6,000 personnel; unfortunately, the program had slightly more than 1,000 participants when it was terminated in 1972, near the end of the Army’s general purpose force advisory effort in Vietnam.¹³¹ Despite the program’s elimination, it led to the Army’s future Foreign Area Officer program.

¹²⁷ Erickson and Vreeland, *Operational and Training Requirements*, 11-15. See also Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 614-134, Military Assistance Officer Program* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, June 30, 1971). (Hereafter cited as *AR 614-134*)

¹²⁸ *AR 614-134*, 1-1.

¹²⁹ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 63; *AR 614-134*, 1-2 – 1-4

¹³⁰ Erickson and Vreeland, *Operational and Training Requirements*, 47.

¹³¹ Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 64.

Acknowledging the “[u]nique knowledge and skills” required of Foreign Area Officers, *Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*, emphasizes the need for Foreign Area Officers to have proficiency and expertise in regional languages, and in-depth knowledge of regional military force structures, and political-military, economic, and social issues that affect their regional concentration. The Army’s current program deliberately assesses general purpose force officers for aptitude and provides training to focus strategic and regional expertise, language proficiency, and professional skills. Once trained, officers are provided relevant experience before assignment to positions that require them to “advise senior military and civilian strategic decision-makers,” or to train “foreign military leaders, personnel and government officials to help build partnership capacity and facilitate foreign military training and exercises.”¹³² These are the same expectations the Army maintains for its general purpose force advisors, and the Foreign Area Officer program presents potential for expansion to encompass a larger Army capacity through the training and education of selected general purpose force personnel to advise foreign security forces.

The existing program remains small due to extensive training timelines, with officers undergoing between two-and-one-half to four-and-one-half years of training and education before assignment to specific positions at combatant and Army service component commands, security assistance or embassy positions, or higher echelon staffs in Washington, DC. Unfortunately, the Army assigns none of the officers to division-and-below tactical assignments where their language and cultural skills may be of far more benefit, either as advisors or as staff officers in tactical units.¹³³ Viewed from this perspective, an expansion of the Army’s Foreign Area Officer

¹³² Department of the Army, *Department of the Pamphlet (DA Pam) 600-3, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, February 2010), 256-257.

¹³³ Eric D. Homan, “Expanding U.S. Army Language and Cultural Proficiency” (monograph, United States Army War College, 2010), 8-10.

program, similar to when the Foreign Area Specialist Program enlarged to include the Military Assistance Officer Program in 1968, is a viable solution to the institutional education and training requirement for Army general purpose force advisors.

Earlier this year, Colonel Eric Homan recommended enlarging the Foreign Area Officer program to include a secondary track that includes essential characteristics of regional language and cultural proficiency training and education. Whereas officers in the program must fulfill extensive in-country training and graduate schooling requirements, Homan recommends eschewing those requirements for the secondary track to alleviate a critical shortage of tactical-level officers with specialized proficiency in language and culture in Iraq and Afghanistan. A 'FAO-lite', as Homan refers to products of the secondary track, provides the Army with a trained and educated pool of personnel – an institutionalized capacity – which can be tapped during future operations in which foreign security forces are advised, as advisors, tactical unit advisor coordinators, and advisory group staff personnel.¹³⁴ The Army's 162nd Infantry Brigade is suited to assume the training role for the secondary track, and is capable of providing the tactical and operational focus needed by general purpose force advisors, if the Army deliberately assigns former advisors to all command, staff and instructor positions, rather than branch generalists as is currently the case.

Security Advisory Assistance Command

Colonel Scott Wuestner, head of the Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute's Operational Integration section, commented in February 2009 on the Army leaderships' generalist mentality, arguing that the Army's desire to focus brigade combat teams regionally will further challenge its 'full-spectrum' argument. Arguing that a regional focus precludes brigades from having personnel from which trained, culturally understanding, and

¹³⁴ Homan, "Language and Cultural Proficiency," 14-18.

language proficient personnel might be drawn as advisors, Wuestner asserts that a regional focus will reinforce *ad hoc* advisory and foreign internal defense efforts by overloading the jack-of-all-trades conventional force with missions requiring specialized or region specific training. In order to overcome this obstacle, Wuestner suggests that:

there must be a significant mind shift among senior governmental and military leaders in regard to force structure for [military advisory and assistance groups].... It is not an argument of getting away from the Army's core competency or fighting and winning our nation's wars, but of having a minimal effective capability within our Army. By having a small core of Army, Police, and Ministry Trainers, the United States will have a professional, trained, and focused capability that is not ad hoc or temporary in nature and can compliment [major combat operations].¹³⁵

Wuestner's recommendation centers on the creation of a small core of trainers and advisors – the institutional capability – and draws on two previous recommendations: former-Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl's 2007 recommendation for a 20,000-person Army advisor corps, and the Army Combined Arms Center's 2007 Theater Military Advisory Assistance Group – Forward (TMAAG-F) white paper that presented a standardized organization capable of advising foreign security forces at brigade-and-below levels.¹³⁶

A permanent security advisory and assistance command (SAAC), Wuestner contends, provides not only a standing Army organization to oversee advisor administration and control in terms of training, service proponency, and operational employment, but also provides the Army an institutional capability to advise foreign security forces with little or no notice, rather than resorting to hasty advisor training programs and *ad hoc* command structures and relationships. Commanded by a major general, the SAAC contains a military advisory and assistance command (MAAC), a deployable headquarters and training group commanded by a brigadier general with responsibilities for coordination of multiple theater-level military advisory and assistance groups

¹³⁵ Wuestner, "Building Partner Capacity," 36-37.

¹³⁶ See John A. Nagl, "Institutionalizing Adaptation," *Military Review* (September-October 2008), 21-26; and Training and Doctrine Command Combined Arms Center, *Future Theater Military Advisory and Assistance Group*, White Paper Draft (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, December 2007).

(TMAAG) assigned or attached to Army service component commands as originally recommended by the Army's Combined Arms Center. Recognizing the need for advising above the brigade level, Wuestner suggests aligning TMAAGs regionally with Army service component commands to suit them to division- and corps-level advisory missions. Small enough to be placed under tactical or operational control of an Army brigade if needed, the TMAAG, commanded by a colonel, is capable of advising up to three brigade-level advisory teams commanded by centrally selected lieutenant colonels, each with up to six battalion-level military or police advisory teams commanded by majors who receive key-and-developmental credit.¹³⁷

Besides unity of advisory effort, Wuestner's SAAC stands out in its thoroughness. The concept capitalizes on already existing Army structures and proximity. Subordinating the SAAC to the Army's Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, provides an opportunity for it to assume proponentcy for Army general purpose force security force assistance, a responsibility currently handled by the Combined Arms Center as an adjunct of stability operations. SAAC proponentcy of security force assistance allows for unity of security assistance effort throughout the spectrum of operations, as well as close proximity to the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance, also located Fort Leavenworth. As proponent for Army security force assistance, the SAAC coordinates with the Army's Security Assistance Command, Training and Doctrine Command's Security Assistance Training Directorate, and the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance for all Army security force assistance issues. To rectify historical problems with general purpose force advisor training, the SAAC subsumes the 162nd Infantry Brigade as a subordinate unit under the MAAC, and transforms it into a 900-person training organization responsible for advisor screening, assessment, selection, and training at all levels, including regional, national, and ministerial advisors. Additionally, the SAAC maintains a

¹³⁷ Wuestner, "Building Partner Capacity," 40-52. While Wuestner does not specify central selection for the TMAAG commander – a colonel – but this is a logical conclusion based on his recommendation for the central selection of lieutenant colonels.

relatively small size – less than 5,000 personnel – as compared to the Nagl’s 20,000-man advisor corps. Whereas Nagl’s proposed advisor corps contains as many personnel as four Army brigade combat teams, a reason that possibly explains Army leaderships’ resistance to the concept, Wuestner’s recommendation incorporates already existing structures and encompasses the same number of personnel utilized annually in the conduct of general purpose force advisory operations, approximately 4,000 to 5,000.¹³⁸

Finally, there is a historical aspect to Wuestner’s recommendation: its similarity to previous military advisory and assistance groups in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In Korea and Vietnam, the military advisory group was commanded by a brigadier general, an historical fact that coincides with Wuestner’s theater-level advisory command, the MAAC. While Wuestner asserts that the MAAC is similar to Multi-National Security and Transition Command – Iraq, it is more analogous to the Iraqi Assistance Group, and to a lesser extent, the Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan. The historical precedence of assigning a regionally focused advisory group is well accepted, in that it manages the assessment and training of advisors, assists with advisor deployment and operational employment issues, and advises the joint task force commander or U.S. country team military group on the employment and capabilities of advisors.¹³⁹ Given the SAAC concept’s small footprint, incorporation of security force assistance training and proponent structures, and the historical precedent of previous military advisory groups (i.e., Korea and Vietnam), it is well suited to be the Army’s vehicle to institutionalize general purpose force advisory capability.

¹³⁸ Wuestner, “Building Partner Capacity,” 40-44. See also HQDA G-35, “Way Ahead for Train, Advise and Assist,” 7; Andrew Krepinevich, “Send in the Advisers,” *New York Times* (July 11, 2006) http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/PubLibrary/O.20060711.Send_In_The_Advisers/O.20060711.Send_In_The_Advisers.pdf (accessed May 15, 2010); and Ann S. Tyson, “Military Training Units Seen as Career Detours,” *Washington Post* (October 25, 2007) <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/10/24/AR2007102402549.html> (accessed February 19, 2010). HQDA G-3/5/7 cites the exact number of advisors at the end of December 2007 as 4,981.

¹³⁹ Wuestner, “Building Partner Capacity,” 41-42.

Combined, the SAAC and 'FAO-lite' concepts create conditions for Army general purpose force officers and selected non-commissioned officers can undergo in-depth and rigorous language and cultural education, and training for advisor-specific skills, team building and theater deployment requirements. Further, to capitalize on experiences and training, advisors who complete the 'FAO-lite' program and demonstrate above-average aptitude as advisors, are available for subsequent assignment in the SAAC, MAAC, or training brigade. Selected others might be transferred to the Army's Foreign Area Officer Program based on demonstrated aptitude or performance. In either case, the Army benefits from the officer's experiences. Whether the officer remains in the SAAC, transfers to the Foreign Area Officer program, or goes back to the general purpose force for a branch assignment, the Army writ large reaps the benefits of an institutionalized advisor capability and reduces future requirements to pull personnel from the general purpose force at the last minute and assign them involuntarily as advisors.¹⁴⁰

Conclusion

Despite the Army's 110 years of advisory experience with its general purpose force, problems encountered in the Korea and Vietnam advisory efforts regarding advisor selection and training, advisory group organization, and advisor assignments, as well as poor advisor performance in Iraq and Afghanistan stemming from *ad hoc* implementation and a specific contingency approach, point to the Army's need to institutionalize advisory capability and capacity in its general purpose force.¹⁴¹ While this monograph does not argue the Army ignored those lessons – rather, it argues the Army's resistance in adapting to them – it is far harder to dispute whether the Army gave adequate thought to those lessons as it once again advises foreign security forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. As happened Korea and Vietnam, the Army hastened to identify, train and deploy general purpose force advisors and assign them to *ad hoc* organizations

¹⁴⁰ Smiley, "The Need for Advisers."

¹⁴¹ Baginski et. al., *Comprehensive Approach*, 2-3.

to execute a mission not fully understood by the officers and non-commissioned officers sent to execute it. Honesty requires acknowledging the Army's need to start the mission quickly, and history pointed to a lengthy train-up period in order to produce proficient advisors. One cannot fault the Army for doing what it could with what it had, rather than waiting for the optimal solution. However, this speaks directly to the Army's need to adapt by institutionalizing an advisory capacity within its general purpose force, and a structural capability within the larger organizational force to face future challenges, rather than race to catch up with them. Six years have passed since the beginning of the Iraqi general purpose force advisory effort. In that time the Army has not developed or institutionalized an enduring general purpose force advisory capacity or capability, while its sister services have.

The U.S. Marine Corps and Air Force adapted to the future challenge by incorporating general purpose force advisory capability and capacity within their ranks, and the Army must follow their example. If the Army establishes the security assistance and advisory command as its formal structural capability for general purpose force advising, it institutionalizes a command structure, a training structure, and proponentcy for doctrinal and operational aspects of the advisory effort, with only a modest personnel cost. In comparison to Nagl's 20,000-man advisory corps, Wuestner's 5,000-person SAAC is a bargain. Institutionalizing capacity in the general purpose force requires an expansion in the Army's Foreign Area Officer program with the addition of a secondary track focused on operational- and tactical-level advising. As the secondary track creates advisors at the individual level, it also creates within the larger general purpose force a better understanding of advising as advisors go back and forth between branch specific and advisor assignments, as well as maintaining a pool of trained and capable advisors, relevant in their branch, within the Army.

The 2010 *National Security Strategy* elevated building partner nation capacity to doctrine and the 2006 and 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review Reports* and 2007 *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept* assert the need for military capability and capacity to undertake the mission.

The Army anticipates it will advise foreign security forces in the future as part of its contribution to building partner capacity. It must overcome a generalist mentality of a one-size-fits-all general purpose force and acknowledge the difficult and specialized nature of advising with respect to advisor selection, training, assignment and management, and institutionalize advisory capability and capacity in its general purpose force.¹⁴² Good advisors do not necessarily make good commanders, and great commanders do not necessarily make great advisors. With appropriate training and experience, however, the right individual can successfully be both. Similarly, advising foreign security forces is not a special job for special people, but it requires special attention to preparation and training, and it is not a mission amenable to *ad hoc* approaches.

¹⁴² Ramsey, "Observations on Advising," 247.

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