

Military Review

The Professional Journal of the United States Army

APRIL 1992

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CHAPTER IV **Operations Short of War**

IV.0
Operations
Short of War

IV.1
Peacetime
Engagement

IV.2
Hostilities
Short of War



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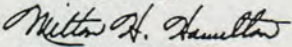
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Professional Bulletin 100-91, MILITARY REVIEW, appears monthly in English, bimonthly in Spanish and quarterly in Portuguese. Second-class postage paid at Leavenworth, KS 66048-9998, and additional entry offices. This publication presents professional information, but the views expressed herein are those of the authors, not the Department of Defense or its elements. The content does not necessarily reflect the official US Army position and does not change or supersede any information in other official US Army publications. MILITARY REVIEW reserves the right to edit material. Basis of official distribution is one per general officer and one per five field grade officers of the Active Army, and one per headquarters (battalion and higher) of the Army National Guard and the US Army Reserve. MILITARY REVIEW is available on microfilm from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, and is indexed by the PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service) Bulletin. Postmaster: Send change of address information to MILITARY REVIEW, USACGSC, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-6910. Telephone: (913) 684-5642 or AV 552-5642; FAX (913) 684-2448; Subscriptions (913) 684-5130.

MILITARY REVIEW (USPS 123-830)
US ISSN 0026-4148

Military Review

Headquarters, Department of the Army

Prepared by
US ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE
VOLUME LXXII - April 1992 - NO 4
Professional Bulletin 100-92-4

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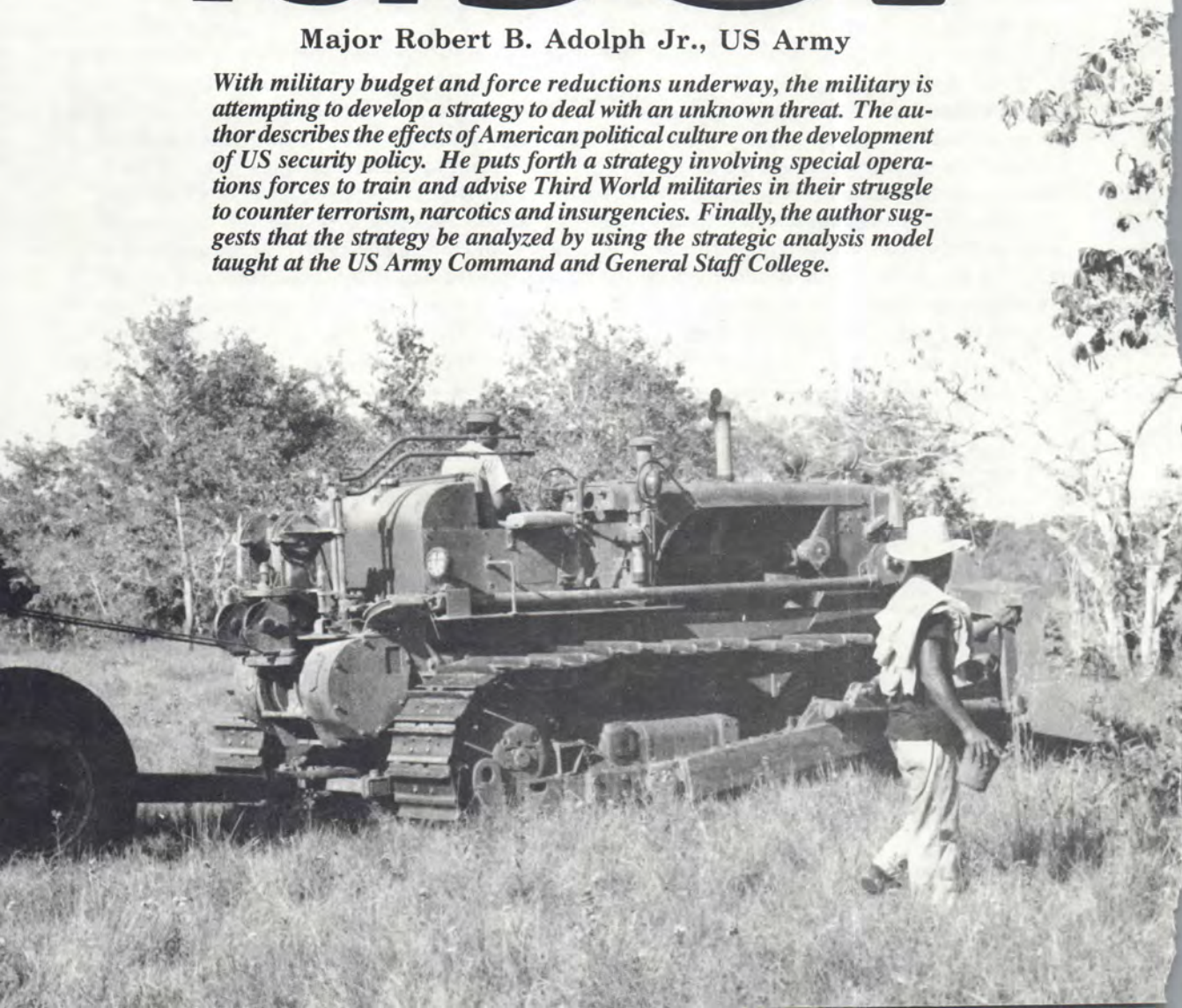
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Strategic Rationale for SOF

Major Robert B. Adolph Jr., US Army

With military budget and force reductions underway, the military is attempting to develop a strategy to deal with an unknown threat. The author describes the effects of American political culture on the development of US security policy. He puts forth a strategy involving special operations forces to train and advise Third World militaries in their struggle to counter terrorism, narcotics and insurgencies. Finally, the author suggests that the strategy be analyzed by using the strategic analysis model taught at the US Army Command and General Staff College.



national stability, and thus reduce the duration of post-conflict activity.

The continuum of military operations model depicted in figure 1 illustrates four major points. The first is that a direct linkage must exist between national policy objectives and the use of the military. The Army must remain centrally focused on warfighting, yet has a viable and critical mission to perform in the environment of peace. The second, and closely related, point is that while the use of force (combat power) to defeat an enemy is still central to our Army, the engagement of forces (military capability) to build, protect, inform and otherwise assist other nations is both viable and effective. Third, a simultaneity of operations in both space and time characterizes the CINC's role across the continuum of military operations. Activities such as nation assistance, humanitarian support, disaster relief and combatting terrorism may not cease when higher levels of violence arise. They occur across the continuum.

Activities conducted during peacetime engagement directly focus on eliminating causes of instability, thus precluding conflict. They may well reduce the level of force required if influence fails and the requirement to deter, compel or coerce becomes necessary. Additionally, the effectiveness of activities conducted in peace, prior to the commencement of hostilities, may miti-

Turbulence associated with post-conflict activities can be reduced by using the least amount of force required to accomplish strategic aims in the theater. Also, the further the original theater campaign plan extends beyond the end of shooting and through the resolution of post-conflict activities, the more likely it is that the plan will result in smooth, efficient and effective post-conflict activities and an expeditious return to peacetime engagement.

gate the turbulence confronted in a subsequent post-conflict period.

The construct of the continuum of military operations is a powerful one. It is consistent with our nation's purpose, intent and direction in dealing with other nations. Further, it provides a viable model for the use of the nation's military. Our Army, as the predominant land power, is central to the successful implementation of these concepts. As a result, the focus of our doctrine, force structure, equipment, training and leadership must be examined and, if necessary, revised in a disciplined manner to accommodate these notions. This must occur if we are to best serve our nation's needs. **MR**

NOTES

1. *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington, DC: The White House, August 1991).

2. Frank Lieber and Abraham Lincoln, "Instructions for the Government of the Armies in the Field," Article 29, *General Order Number 100*, 24 April 1863.

3. The notion of a continuum of military operations is consistent in evolving doctrine, although refinement continues on precise terminology. One version, termed the "operational continuum," consists of three environments: peacetime, conflict and war. US Department of the Army Field Manual (FM) 100-1, *The*

Army, discusses the Army's contribution and is termed the "continuum of military operations" that also has three subcategories: peacetime engagement, hostilities short of war and war. This article attempts to clarify concepts generally consistent to both without encumbering the reader with the details of the evolution of terminology.

4. President George Bush, "Remarks by the President at the Address to the Aspen Institute Symposium," (Aspen, CO: The White House, 2 August 1990).

5. Although the precise definition continues to evolve, this is accurate as of the writing of this article.

Lieutenant Colonel Edward E. Thurman is a doctrine writer with the School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College (USACGSC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He received a B.A. from the University of Washington, an M.S. from the Naval Postgraduate School, and an M.M.A.S. from the USACGSC. He is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff Officer Course and the School of Advanced Military Studies, USACGSC. He has served in a variety of command and staff assignments in the Continental United States and Korea, including command of the 3d Battalion, 47th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division.

THE United States has been unable to develop an integrated and coherent long-term strategy for dealing with the threat posed by low-intensity conflict (LIC). According to Steven Metz, "Because of the multidimensional nature of low-intensity conflict, it requires a "grand," or "total," strategy integrating military political, psychological, ideological and economic responses."¹

This fact is recognized by everyone who has studied the problem in depth for over a decade. Unfortunately, the American people, and thus Congress, do not perceive the danger as sufficiently clear and present to support the kind of grand strategy required to reach the stated US goals of fostering democracy, stability and expanding free markets throughout the Third World. But a national security strategy in support of US objectives in the Third World and based on the employment of a triad of US Army Special Forces (SF), Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP), supported by other service special operations forces (SOF), may provide a potential answer to this dilemma. In other words, SOFs, because of their unique capabilities and characteristics, can be a viable surrogate for a coherent national strategy aimed at the potential threats found in LIC.

President George Bush describes the post-Cold War period in terms of a "new world order." The dissolution of the Soviet Union, no doubt, bodes well for humanity. It appears that we will not have to face the possibility of global thermonuclear destruction. While Congress was planning the reduction of US Armed Forces, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, and the single largest movement of US troops since World War II began. Had Hussein waited a few years, America might not have had the capability to come to Kuwait's aid. Even before Hussein's aggression, Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney characterized the last 10 years of the 20th century as "the decade of uncertainty."² But it is also true that:

"... world events in the coming decade will likely be dominated by the quest for freedom and democracy. Not only have men and women the world over demonstrated the pow-

For decades, officers of the American military have bemoaned the inability of the US political system to develop long-range and coherent national security strategies concerning threats beyond the Soviet Union. . . . The American political process is too pluralistic to produce the kinds of strategies that the military desires.

er of ideas, even after decades of oppression, but they have also shown a willingness to lay down their lives for liberty."³

The opportunities and challenges that America now faces are without parallel in history. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, James R. Locher III, stated that, "Though peace and freedom are our goal, it is not always shared by others. As a result, the United States requires a flexible military force that is manned and equipped to handle a wide range of security challenges."⁴

Now that US troops have returned from the Persian Gulf War, Congress will again pull out its budgetary pruning shears. The Armed Forces will become much smaller in an era where America does not know what or where the next threat will be. This situation demands that we take a hard look at every one of the arrows in our national security quiver and decide how to best use all the elements of national power at our disposal.

For decades, officers of the American military have bemoaned the inability of the US political system to develop long-range and coherent national security strategies concerning threats beyond the Soviet Union. Astute observers of American political culture recognize the problem and know that there is no immediate solution. The American political process is too pluralistic to produce the kinds of strategies that the military desires. According to two specialists:

"Authority in the American political system is diffused and, at times fragmented. The division of powers in the Constitution institutionalizes

Americans generally believe that democracy, despite its obvious problems, is still the best form of government in comparison with all others. This idealism is reflected in American outrage over Iraqi human rights abuses and the rape of Kuwait by the tyrant Hussein.

some diffusion of power, but its actual extent varies according to popular attitudes and moods.”⁵

Given this understanding, America seemingly has a disease with no ready cure. But there is an explanation.

There are two generally well-recognized characteristics of American political culture that affect the development of US security policy. The first of these is pragmatic self-interest. The interests of the United States usually predominate. Our security structure is designed to ensure that vital strategic interests are protected. The US deployment in support of Kuwait was, at least in part, because of oil. This self-interest is also reflected in business, where unimpeded access to raw materials and manufactured goods is considered essential and proper.

The other characteristic of American political culture is idealism. Sam Sarkesian describes it as a “messianic spirit”:

“... the American people and political system are ‘ordained’ to undertake the mission of being ‘the light’ for other nations—lending added moral weight to their notion of democratic faith.”⁶ This attitude is reflected in the many presidential pronouncements made in the post-World War II period that have demonstrated concern for human rights and called for fostering democracy around the globe. This kind of idealism may be unique to the United States. Americans generally believe that democracy, despite its obvious problems, is still the best form of government in comparison with all others. This idealism is reflected in American outrage over Iraqi human rights abuses and the rape of Kuwait by the tyrant Hussein.

It is not unusual for these two characteristics

to be seemingly at odds with one another. America does not immediately come to the aid of every country that is invaded or suffers from an insurgent movement. But where our self-interest and idealism clearly converge, American action at many levels can be expected—including armed intervention. This is not a moral statement, but simply a recognition that because of a pluralistic government, US foreign policy and resultant security strategy seem to accurately reflect American popular opinion. The American style of democracy does not promise the best government for all, but the best government for the most people. Where the two characteristics do not clearly converge, long-range and coherent security strategy development is often not possible.

For over 40 years, the former Soviet Union provided such a sufficiently clear threat to US security that America was able to design a long-range strategy (containment). It worked! Hussein also presented a clear threat—sufficient to deploy over 500,000 troops to bring him to heel. Unfortunately, not all potential threats will be so clear. This lack of clarity is the predominant characteristic of LIC, making long-range and coherent strategy all but impossible for the United States. Yet, obviously, America must address the problem. According to Cheney:

“Low-intensity conflict continues to be the most likely form of violence involving US interests. . . . We must prepare an active and timely defense against such violence, one that presents a credible deterrent and remains capable of using power when necessary. The Department of Defense (DOD) must also address the underlying causes of instability by assisting in the nation-building process.”⁷

The immediate question is how can this be accomplished, given our political system, when clarity is required in order to develop strategy? Aaron Friedberg, in an article for the *Washington Quarterly*, suggested that the United States consider “second best strategies.”⁸ Since American popular opinion is generally against the employment of conventional combat forces to deal with anything other than obvious threats, Friedberg’s recommendation appears to make sense. What

A Missouri National Guardsman fuels a UH-1 at Oso Grande during Operation General Terencio Sierra 86, a Honduran-US road-building exercise.



In LIC, as in other conflict environments, political objectives must remain preeminent. Although organizations such as the US Information Agency and US Agency for International Development play important roles in the Third World, the Department of State has the lead in the attempt to address Third World problems by political, diplomatic, informational, economic and military means. The US military is the element of national power best prepared to assist in developing a stable security environment.

type of forces would support a second best military strategy?

First, it is imperative to note that "... the Department of State must lead in setting policies."⁹ In LIC, as in other conflict environments, political objectives must remain preeminent. Although organizations such as the US Information Agency and US Agency for International Development play important roles in the Third World, the Department of State has the lead in the attempt to address Third World problems by political, diplomatic, informational, economic and military means. The US military is the element of national power best prepared to assist in developing a stable security environment toward the accomplishment of our nation's foreign policy goals.

US Army Special Operations Forces (AR-SOF), which for the purposes of this article includes CA and PSYOP, supported by other serv-

ice SOFs, lend themselves to a "second best military strategy" for addressing LIC because of their organic characteristics and capabilities. According to a report written for the Commission on Integrated Long-term Strategy, "US force structure, equipment, and doctrine, designed for accustomed combatant missions, are not well-suited to pursuing non-combat roles in assisting any Third World nation."¹⁰

General purpose forces' capabilities in combat are not in question, but combat is not necessarily the objective. Army divisions, even light divisions, are ill-suited to the preponderance of roles demanded in LIC. "Military roles in low-intensity conflict are best performed by specially trained individuals or detachments."¹¹

SOF possesses both the requisite characteristics and capabilities to operate successfully in this environment. And, because SOFs are recognized as specially trained volunteers who

According to FM 100-5, "The low end of the conflict spectrum requires special force composition and task organization, rapid deployment, and restraint in the execution of military operation." SOF possess all the characteristics mentioned. The 12-man SF operational detachment, for example, is a very flexible instrument. Even if the detachment is task organized to include CA or PSYOP personnel, because of its small size, rapid deployment is seldom a problem.

regularly perform inherently hazardous missions, American popular support for a strategy using SOFs does not present the problem that the commitment of US ground combat troops does. But what are the characteristics and capabilities?

Characteristics

According to US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*, "... the low end of the conflict spectrum requires special force composition and task organization, rapid deployment, and restraint in the execution of military operation."¹² SOF possess all the characteristics mentioned. The 12-man SF operational detachment, for example, is a very flexible instrument. Even if the detachment is task organized to include CA or PSYOP personnel, because of its small size, rapid deployment is seldom a problem. The same is true for the employment of US Navy SEALs (sea-air-land teams). In addition, these forces are, in the words of the report to the commission, "unobtrusive." This is of great importance because:

"Usually, the presence of any foreign military stirs nationalist abhorrence in a Third World nation, and in some places (e.g., Central America), US military forces operate encumbered by historical burdens, so that their mere presence creates political problems for a host nation."¹³

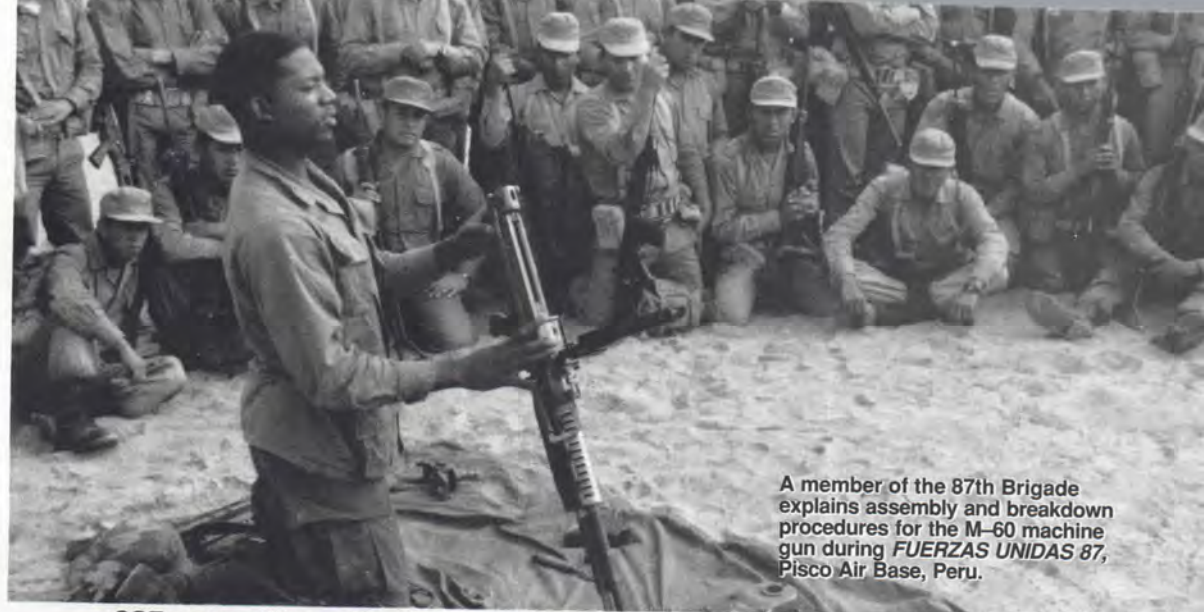
SOFs are well practiced at operating in ways that are low in visibility. It is not at all unusual

for SOFs to enter a country, perform their mission in support of a host nation, and then leave without their presence ever being reported in that country's media. According to Locher, "These soldiers, sailors and aircrew members have been actively, effectively, and quietly engaged around the world for decades."¹⁴

Fiscal concerns are often a significant consideration when developing national security strategies. A strategy using SOFs, by comparison with other kinds of forces, is cheap. Support to Third World militaries is commonly a low-technology affair. More often, such support is human resource intensive for missions like those conducted by SOF mobile training teams. According to the Security Assistance Training Management Office at the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the greatest cost incurred in accomplishing these missions is often for transportation. SOFs regularly operate in spartan environments where costs are low.

Unlike general purpose forces, ARSOFs are unusually mature. This is of critical importance. Currently, the SF branch only accepts officers at the grade of captain for training. Enlisted personnel are not permitted to apply for SF training until they are sergeants. Active duty CA and PSYOP officers normally will not complete their training and be assigned to units until they are senior captains or majors. The importance of maturity cannot be overstated. These officers and noncommissioned officers often work with Third World counterparts who are more senior in grade. To advise and assist Third World military personnel without appearing to be condescending requires tact, patience and experience, all characteristics of maturity.

It is axiomatic that the best way to gain the trust of people in other lands is to attempt to speak their language. Aside from foreign area officers and some military intelligence personnel, ARSOFs are *the only US military forces* trained in language skills. In fact, language ability is a prerequisite of entry into ARSOF. The John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School



A member of the 87th Brigade explains assembly and breakdown procedures for the M-60 machine gun during FUERZAS UNIDAS 87, Pisco Air Base, Peru.

SOFs are well practiced at operating in ways that are low in visibility. It is not at all unusual for SOFs to enter a country, perform their mission in support of a host nation, and then leave without their presence ever being reported in that country's media. According to Locher, "These soldiers, sailors and aircrew members have been actively, effectively, and quietly engaged around the world for decades."

runs its own language school for SF soldiers. Some SF officers, warrant officers and noncommissioned officers, and most PSYOP and CA officers, study languages at the well-regarded Defense Foreign Language Institute, Monterey, California, for periods up to a year. Once they are trained, it is not unusual for these soldiers to perform multiple tours of duty in positions or regions where their language skills are required. General purpose forces do not receive this kind of education or assignments consideration.

Cross-cultural communications is one of the most difficult chores for any military forces operating in the Third World. Cultural anthropologists will tell you that knowledge of a Third World culture is second only to language skills when it comes to creating a bond of trust toward establishing a working relationship. ARSOFs are trained extensively in cross-cultural awareness. But beyond this, because SF, PSYOP and CA organizations are regionally oriented, ARSOF soldiers have repetitive opportunities to reinforce and expand their knowledge throughout their careers. As a matter of policy, the SF branch attempts to assign officers to positions and locations where language and cultural skills will be reinforced.

CA and PSYOP officers undergo an especially long and rigorous training program that includes a graduate degree and not only language, but an in-depth regional course of instruction as well. The entire training program may take over two years to complete. And, according to the CA and PSYOP assignments officer at the Total Army Personnel Command, Alexandria, Virginia, they too will perform repetitive tours of duty in regions and positions requiring their linguistic and regional skills.

Capabilities

ARSOF's characteristics provide an extraordinary range of capabilities in high- and mid- as well as low-intensity conflict environments. SF skills have recently been proven on the mid-intensity battlefield—performing direct action, special reconnaissance and other special activity missions. Cable News Network reported that PSYOP leaflets were found on the majority of Iraqi prisoners of war who surrendered to coalition forces. CA personnel were deeply involved in helping the Kuwaitis rebuild their country. It is not my intent to regurgitate the missions of ARSOF here. FMs provide an excellent source for those who are interested. Instead, it

"Winning hearts and minds" is an often-quoted phrase. These days it is mentioned sometimes derisively. But if there is a central theme to US goals in the Third World, I believe this phrase captures it. It is the oppressed peoples in many countries of the Third World who long for something better than that proposed by . . . insurgents.

may be more useful to focus on the most likely ARSOF mission area in LIC in order to support my assertions.

First, I wish to highlight the fact that ARSOFs possess extraordinary capabilities as trainers and advisers. Methods of instruction are a significant part of SF basic skills. This is very important and has to do with what should be America's philosophical approach to assisting Third World nations attain freedom, democracy and stability. It is common sense that governments and political cultures seldom change rapidly without violence. Even though the United States has demonstrated a willingness, on occasion, to use violence to achieve its objectives, nonviolent means are preferred in almost every case. America desires a stable world where democratic change can occur gradually with the least potential disruption. Such disruption is too often measured in terms of human lives lost.

Third World nations must solve their own unique problems without intrusive, sometimes overbearing, US intervention. SOFs, acting as trainers and advisers in support of a foreign internal defense (FID) mission (believed by most experts to be their most likely role), can be employed in countries experiencing security problems such as an insurgency or assist in the attempt to stem the tide of violence. American lives will occasionally be lost, as in El Salvador. But this is a price the American people have been seemingly willing to bear.

Americans recognize that SOF volunteers are significantly different from regular soldiers. Americans know that SOF members have accepted unusual risks inherent in performing their

various missions. This is especially important when one considers America's difficulty in developing a national strategy for addressing LIC. The employment of SOFs, in times of relative peace, is acceptable to the people of the United States and supports the use of a second best strategy.

Counternarcotics, although historically not a formal mission area for SOFs, is rapidly becoming one. "By the direction of the Secretary of Defense, the Department is substantially engaged in the national fight against illegal drugs."¹⁵ Narcotics also threaten other nations: "... drug trafficking constitutes a clear and present danger to the very survival of democracy in certain countries long friends and allies of the United States."¹⁶

There is little question that the American people generally support DOD involvement in the war on drugs. But the drug war's efficacy to date is in question. Although some SOF activities are classified, it is known that they are currently engaged in training and advising Third World militaries in their attempt to stem the flow of narcotrafficking. SOF personnel are also engaged in training Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) personnel in countering the techniques of guerrilla warfare, which has, in some cases, been adopted by narcotraffickers.

Although the problems of Third World insurgency and narcotics trafficking seem dissimilar at first glance, upon deeper examination the potential solution for both may be remarkably alike. According to two experts, "... both insurgency and narcotrafficking have similar root causes and are susceptible to similar countercampaigns."¹⁷ America's military has been predominantly focused on the attempt to stem the flow of illegal drugs into the United States through air, sea and land interdiction. But the most effective way to halt the drugs, aside from diminishing the demand, is to attack and eliminate the sources of drugs found mostly in the Third World.

The joining of forces between the drug cartels and insurgent movements in Central and South America highlights the problem. In the words of one knowledgeable officer, "SOF help provide a balanced response of social development,



US and Ecuadoran airmen discuss various pick-up techniques during BLUE HORIZON 85.

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training and interdiction which . . . will have a significant impact on the present US cocaine epidemic."¹⁸ This officer shares my opinion that domestic demand reduction is the best policy to follow. But, if that is not possible, a second best strategy using SOF has considerable utility.

"Winning hearts and minds" is an often-quoted phrase. These days it is mentioned sometimes derisively. But if there is a central theme to US goals in the Third World, I believe this phrase captures it. It is the oppressed peoples in many countries of the Third World who long for something better than that proposed by tyrants or Marxist insurgents. It is characteristic of tyrants and successful Marxist insurgent groups to muzzle their press and brutally suppress dissent. According to FM 33-1, *Psychological Operations*, Army PSYOP elements in FID support:

- Assisting the host nation in gaining the support of its people.
- Assisting the host nation in defeating the insurgents.
- Establishing a favorable US image in the host nation.
- Favorably influencing neutral groups and the world community.
- Assisting the host nation in supporting defector rehabilitation programs.

- Providing close and continuous PSYOP support to maximize the effect of CA operations.¹⁹

Hussein used his control of the Iraqi media for over a decade in order to control his population successfully. PSYOPs can be an extraordinary US tool in attempting to get *the truth* to those people suffering oppression. Through organic print, audio and visual media, PSYOP units can assist either fledgling democracies or democratic insurgent movements in developing PSYOP campaigns aimed at demonstrating to the people of a Third World country the legitimacy of the democratic cause. It is, after all, the people who decide whether their government is legitimate. But in order to do so, they have to be told the truth.

There is another military component to winning hearts and minds. That is the component best addressed by CA. According to an initial draft of Joint Publication 3-57, *Doctrine for Joint Civil Affairs*, "Use of CA assets in support of special operations (SO) is most likely to occur in FID and unconventional warfare operations. . . ."²⁰

A fledgling democracy may have significant difficulties in attempting to redress the legitimate complaints of disenfranchised classes or ethnic or religious minorities. Given the poverty

FORMER PRA MEMBERS
Your corrupt Leaders have
surrendered, knowing resistance is
USELESS



Turn in your weapons and report to the
Caribbean Peacekeeping Force
Join your countrymen now in rebuilding
a truly democratic Grenada

PSYOP leaflets
used during Operation
Urgent Fury, October 1983

Progress at Last !



**Grenadians
Building Grenada**

It's Working

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of much of the Third World, this is not surprising. CA advisers can provide valuable technical expertise in developing national infrastructures to address the root causes of popular discontent within the capabilities of the host nation.

Other SOFs

The ARSOF umbrella also encompasses Rangers, SO aviation, counterterrorist forces and other special mission units. Dependent on the nature of the security threat to a Third World nation, these forces are ready and available on short notice. They differ from SF, CA and PSYOP units in that they are not regionally oriented. They are predominantly strike forces. Their utility in LIC is unquestioned. SO aviation, because of its advanced avionics, night operations training, air refueling capability and ability to work in relatively unsophisticated support environments, obviously possesses significant capabilities in support of a Third World host nation suffering an insurgent movement. Ranger bat-

alions are America's premier strike units, but they have limited utility beyond their primary mission in the environment generally characterized by LIC.

The SEAL forces represent a significant capability in their strike role involving near beach and riverine operations. They were used successfully in Operation *Desert Storm*. In the past, though, they have been used sparingly as trainers and advisers to Third World militaries because they generally lack both language and cultural training, giving them generally less utility in support of Third World host nations.

Personnel of the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) are specially trained and habitually work with ARSOF. They support ARSOF in a multitude of mission areas, including counternarcotics, and are largely self-contained for internal support. They are accustomed to working in austere environments characterized by the Third World. Again, it is not my intent to review the mission capabilities

An MH-60G Pave Hawk (*right*) nudges its aerial refueling probe toward the drogue of a HC-130 Combat Shadow as a sister ship takes on fuel.



Personnel of the Air Force Special Operations Command are specially trained and habitually work with ARSOF. They support ARSOF in a multitude of mission areas, including counternarcotics, and are largely self-contained for internal support. They are accustomed to working in austere environments characterized by the Third World [and] . . . ARSOF depends on the support of AFSOC assets for infiltration, exfiltration, resupply and numerous other special activities.

of the assets of AFSOC. Service manuals are available to those interested. For my purposes, it is only important to note that ARSOF depends on the support of AFSOC assets for infiltration, exfiltration, resupply and numerous other special activities.

It is the *habitual working relationship* between ARSOF and AFSOC and their relatively new command and control architecture that I wish to highlight. By order of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act, as modified by the Cohen-Nunn Amendment, Special Operations Commands (SOCs) were formed under each of the combatant commanders in chief (CINCs). These new joint commands exercise operational control of SOFs from each service, as assigned to the theater CINC. This command and control relationship further strengthens the working relationships of multi-service SOFs. All SOFs in a given theater work for the same boss. They operate under the same

employment principles. Under a SOC, all service SOFs have unity of command, with the exception of CA and PSYOP forces, which may be assigned in peace or war to support SO missions. This situation will, without question, improve overall SOF mission capabilities and employment characteristics.

The US Army Command and General Staff College teaches a "strategic analysis model" that suggests three criteria by which to examine a potential strategy for efficacy. Those criteria are suitability, feasibility and acceptability. It may be useful to evaluate the strategy I suggest through the use of this methodology.

A strategy that relies heavily on ARSOF, supported by other service SOFs, and in support of State Department objectives, appears to be eminently *suitable* in addressing the threats posed in LIC. In addition to their new and integrated command and control structure, these forces are uniquely trained and equipped to perform the

myriad of missions characterized by LIC. They are mature, linguistically capable and culturally attuned and sensitive. The combination of their military capabilities and personal and professional characteristics mark them as unique in the US military. No other forces possess this degree of training, skills and knowledge. This gives SOF an extremely high degree of flexibility and versatility regardless of the level of conflict, but with particular applicability in LIC.

Feasibility asks the question: Is it supportable? I believe the answer is yes. SOF employment is both low cost and low visibility. SOF employment will not stretch the national budget. Remember that the greatest cost for mobile training teams is often for transportation. And, in many cases, that cost is borne by the host nation. SOF employment, also, should not give dissident groups in Third World nations cause for particular alarm. They are few in number and generally operate well outside highly politically charged urban areas.

Whether or not a strategy is *acceptable* requires a largely subjective judgment. But, I be-

lieve a strategy using SOF is acceptable to the American people, and thus Congress. Americans realize that the business in which SOF is engaged is inherently more dangerous than normal peacetime military activities. SOF personnel are the ultimate volunteers. There is no one serving in SOF that does not want to be there. The periodic deaths of SOF members, while always regrettable, are part of the price we pay for pursuing our interests and attempting to spread freedom and democracy in an often violent Third World.

Finally, it is of paramount importance to remember that the now defunct Soviet Union is going through a period of tremendous domestic political turmoil. Despite the fact that the former Soviet Union is now "perceived" as less of a threat to US interests, it is not clear that it will remain so. Until the new Commonwealth of Independent States completely embraces democracy—allowing the peoples of the former Soviet Empire to be free and stable—it would be prudent for America to develop as many friends and allies around the globe as possible. It is clear that SOF can play a critical role toward that end. **MR**

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