

Running head: SPECIAL FORCES UNIT OF COMMAND

United States Army Special Forces Unit of Command

SGM Brian S. Shrout
SGM Ronald N. Sampson
SGM Jerry D. Patton
SGM Duwayne Jones

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

M03--Sergeant Major Robert E. Johnson

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SGM ShROUT (Chairman)
SGM Patton
SGM Jones
SGM Sampson

Broad Subject: Special Operations Unit of Command

Narrowed Topic: United States Army Special Forces Unit of Command

Thesis Statement: The conventional forces of U.S. Army were trained and prepared to conduct force on force warfare, but as we transitioned to fight insurgencies, we had ongoing challenges with readiness. Influence of the US Army Special Forces unconventional warfare methods has had a significant impact on the adaptation of conventional Army forces ability to fight and win in an asymmetric environment.

I. (SGM Jones) Conventional Forces Preparation for warfare

- A. Before 9-11
- B. After 9-11

II. (SGM Sampson) Evolution of US Army Special Forces.

- A. History
- B. Transformation
- C. Task Organization

III. (SGM ShROUT) US Special Forces Missions

- A. Primary Missions
- B. Secondary Missions
- C. Ongoing Operations
 - a. Iraq
 - b. Afghanistan
 - c. Other

IV. (SGM Patton) US Special Forces Impacts on Conventional Forces Transformation

- A. MTT-Compares to FID (Foreign Internal Defense)

- B. Small Unit Tactics-with ability to make decisions on the ground
- C. CA type activities- Collateral SF Mission
- D. Interpersonal skills-The Special Forces Soldier's mastery of interpersonal skills and cultural awareness is critical to the achievement of our operations.
- C. Political Contacts.

Abstract

The forces of the United States have trained for years for full-scale force on force combat. However, the aftermath of toppling the Afghanistan and Iraqi governments ultimately leads to lawlessness and insurgencies. Combating insurgencies is something conventional forces were not prepared to deal with. As we transition to this form of combat, we draw much of our knowledge from the U.S. Special Forces (USSF) who are experts at this type of warfare. The essay examines the U.S. Army conventional forces readiness before and after 11 September 2001 and affects of long-term combat on readiness. Further discussed is the history and organization of USSF, USSF missions, and impacts USSF has made on conventional forces abilities to fight and win against insurgents.

United States Army Special Forces Unit of Command

Introduction

Were the armed forces of the United States of America prepared for the combat that ensued after the attacks on 11 September 2001 (9/11)? Anyone in power at the time will shy away from away this question. Traditionally, the United States (US) prepared its military to defend, attack, combat, and win wars against large nation-states. Most notably, we prepared for years for potential wars with the Union of Socialist States Republics (USSR), North Korea, China, and other communist nations. However, 11 September 2001 proved to us that we are a nation that is still vulnerable to other threats. Once the US declared a war on terrorism, we had to adjust our focus. There is no doubt that the United States Army (US Army) could attack and defeat any nation state's military in a force on force war; however, what happens after the war is over? The civilian populace resists—how does the US combat civilian resistance? To go on the offensive against terrorism, we must attack where it breeds, where it lives, and where they plan their attacks. Although we have prevented further attacks against our nation, we still must remain vigilant and transform to meet the threat at hand. In this research paper, we will examine the contributions of the United States Army Special Forces unit of command to our transformation. The best way to examine this is to explore conventional forces focus before and after 9/11, where Special Forces (SF) came from, what they do, and how SF have helped us transition to the threat of today.

DJ-Convention Forces Pre and Post 9/11

What is "readiness"?

For the purposes of this memo, it refers to the capacity of a military organization to fully realize in short order the potential power implicit in its size, personnel, material assets, organization, and doctrine. (Conetta, 2006, pg1)

Considerable controversy surrounds the effects of America's post-9/11 wars on its armed forces -- more specifically, their effects on military readiness. And there are grounds enough for concern in the August 2006 admission by General Peter Pace, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, that two-thirds of the US Army's active and reserve combat brigades registered in the two lowest readiness categories. However, it is important to note that our military, up until 9/11, had conducted symmetrical warfare with a pre-cold war mentality. From the establishment of the "pre-cold war" air land battle doctrine, the U.S. armed forces had engaged in combat with little change even after the first Iraq war. We were prepared for contingency operations with nation states such as China and the USSR, however, not such an asymmetrical enemy as a terrorist organization. Our conventional style of fighting aligned force on force with emphasis on strike first, strike hard and attempt to crumble the enemy's will to fight. Our forces were very ready and prepared to engage in war against any situation. We had regional commands assigned and ready to inflict casualty on the enemy on their battlefield in almost any corner of the world. We had a well trained, planned, and competent group of leaders who were able to react and deploy at moments notice.

The controversy would be less acute if there were a supportive national consensus on the necessity of America's most demanding post-9/11 operation: Iraqi Freedom. It is not a secret that the Iraq war has grown very gray with the American public and it is truly the people's belief that we went to war for the wrong reason and without said justification. This gives it a unique

political salience. It poses neither a "guns versus butter" nor a "war versus peace" choice, but rather a "war versus future security," one. Of course, even in "wars of necessity" that enjoy consensus support, it is important to keep account of costs -- lest these capsize or bankrupt the effort before the fight is won.

The present policy displaces risk not only "laterally", but also -- and perhaps predominantly -- *into the future*. According to Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker, "resetting" all the Army's war-worn equipment may take up to three years beyond the end of the Iraq conflict. Restoring training regimes to pre-war standards may take longer because these are partly dependent on the availability and restoration of equipment,". Any significant decrease in the average quality of personnel, due to the loss of experienced soldiers or to lower recruiting and promotion standards, could easily extend the remedial or "refractory" period to five years.

(Shultz, 2006, pg1). Unfortunately, the current cost to restore our military to P1/P2 status would take a significant under-taking. The war has cost us, to date, 1.5 billion dollars and the price continues to climb. Most importantly, can the supply of the war keep up with the demands placed on it? The current operating force in Iraq has to deal with an ever changing situation. The equipment that they use, the conditions it's used in, the constant changes in the counter-insurgency operations all have challenges that require attention and training for the success of our troops.

How serious is the broader decrement in military readiness associated with today's wars? What is the likelihood of serious consequences today or in the postwar period? The nature of "readiness" makes this hard to calculate with any precision -- especially with regard to future risk. Many of the variables contributing to readiness (recounted earlier) can be partially

quantified -- but it is their synergistic interaction that counts, and this is far more difficult to figure. Some of the relationships are governed by thresholds -- for instance: the effectiveness of unit training falls off rapidly when equipment or personnel shortages dip below a certain value. (Conetta, 2006, pg 3) This suggests that the overall relationship between what we see (quantifiable inputs) and what we get (a degree of "readiness") may be nonlinear. Moreover, there may be "catastrophe points": certain combinations of seemingly moderate shortfalls that produce profound declines in readiness. At minimum, we should expect that a ten percent deficit across the range of readiness indicators will produce a force far less than 90 percent ready. Given this dynamic, a reasonably cautious approach would be to take quite seriously any unusual and broad decline in readiness indicators.

Focusing on the active component...about 23 percent are now engaged in combat/peacekeeping operations overseas in various parts of Asia. During most of the 1990s (after Desert Storm), the proportion overseas was approximately 17-17.5 percent. What is more telling, however, is that the average proportion of active-component troops involved in actual operations today is five times larger than in the mid- to late-1990s. And much of this stress is focused on the Army, which now routinely has one-third of its active component personnel (and more than one-half of its active combat brigades) stationed or deployed overseas.

Together with other commitments, the war has required Marine units to deploy at rates more than 25 percent higher than what the service considers acceptable for long periods. Active Army units have been exceeding their deployment standards by 60 percent. These rates would have been even higher but that DOD leaned heavily on National Guard and Reserve units, deploying as many as 100,000 reserve personnel overseas at one time for tours averaging 342

days. The reserve components have not been leaned on so heavily for such an extended period since the Korean War.

High rates of deployment tempo (deptempo) maintained over long periods are known to adversely affect training, morale, and discipline -- causing a degradation in capability and, eventually, problems in personnel retention and recruitment. High tempo also wears down equipment, increasing the needs for maintenance, overhaul, and (eventually) replacement.

Of special concern are rising attrition rates among Special Operations Forces (SOF) personnel -- especially among the enlisted personnel. Prior to 9/11 the attrition rate for the latter was about 10 percent. With the implementation of targeted occupational "stop loss" orders, this rate fell to below 6.5 percent in 2002, rising only slightly with the onset of the Iraq war in 2003. However, the stop-loss policy as applied to occupational specialties ended in June of that year (although it continued for deploying units). Immediately thereafter, the attrition rate for SOF enlisted personnel rose to 12.9 percent, which is 25 percent higher than the pre-9/11 level. (The rate for officers also rose substantially, but not to the pre-9/11 level.) Of course, the demand for SOF personnel is much higher today than prior to 9/11 -- and it is growing with efforts to expand this sector of the forces. (Shultz, 2004, pg 1)

The situation of SOF forces also illustrates how high deptempo can affect training. Between 2000 and 2005, the proportion of SOF forces that were operationally deployed at any one time rose from an average of 31 percent to 80 percent. Commensurate with this, the proportion involved in training declined from 61 percent to 17 percent. The amount of time spent in training specifically geared to maintain battle skills has declined by 50 percent. (Shultz, 2004, pg 1) Of course, operational deployments themselves help hone some skills -- but not all skills

(unless deployments are spread evenly across the conflict and mission spectrum, which they presently are not). Finally: some of the routine training and exercises undertaken by SOF (and other) units have vital secondary functions -- such as building a wide range of joint and multi-national connections. There is no substitute for these.

Recognizing the problems associated with reduced training time, the Special Operations Command set a policy in August 2005 requiring a 50/50 split between time deployed and time at home. According to GAO, however, the services have failed to consistently or fully implement this regulation. (Arkin, 2006, pg 2)

Current optempo for regular Army units is not as demanding as that for SOF units -- although it, too, is disruptive of training and reconstitution cycles. In recent years, the Army has continuously deployed 50 percent or more of its active combat brigades in operations, on average. This pace requires that reconstitution activities that would normally occur during a two-year period at home be squeezed into one -- or simply postponed. The squeeze can compel trade-offs between, for instance, training and sending unit equipment to depots for higher-level maintenance, as the GAO has reported. Of course, training with equipment that needs repair can also be suboptimal.

Training problems as well as other shortfalls -- lack of personnel, equipment, or fully-rehabilitated equipment -- have combined to result in lower than normally acceptable readiness ratings for most active Army and Guard combat brigades outside Iraq and Afghanistan. In fact, according to Senate testimony given by JCS Chair, General Peter Pace, on 3 August 2006: "about two thirds of the brigades...would report C-3 or C-4," which are the lowest readiness

levels. (This estimate applies to the total compliment of active - and reserve-component Army combat brigades.) (Shultz, 2006, pg 5)

Reportedly included among the low readiness units are some deploying for Iraq. The Pentagon maintains, however, that all Iraq-bound units are brought up to readiness for their tasks once they enter the theater, "fall on" the equipment stocks there, and conduct whatever remedial training their missions require. This may be so, but it implies that most of the Army today is brought up to a high readiness level for one purpose only: occupation duty in either Iraq or Afghanistan. And, even in the case of these operations, there were several serious lapses in readiness.

Now that we thoroughly discussed Army readiness before and after 9/11, we will consider the methods that conventional forces are using for operations in Iraq. As we transition from a force on force combat mentality, we had large gaps of knowledge in dealing with the threats in Iraq. After the conclusion of combat, we faced growing insurgencies from both inside the country and out. Dealing with this type of threat was never a real focus of the conventional forces of the Army. We trained to go to war force on force and defeat the opposing force as quickly and efficiently as possible. However, the insurgency has caused conventional forces to learn how to deal with this threat rapidly. The knowledge to deal with this new type of warfare came mostly from our United States Special Forces (USSF). We will now examine the history and organization of the USSF.

RON-The Road to SF

History

The United States Army Special Forces has a unique history and it is their history and evolution that has been instrumental in the overall transformation of the United States Army.

The methods used by the U.S. Army to train and fight today has been a result of where the Special Forces started and ultimately where they are today. The history of unconventional warfare in the United States Armed forces dates back to the early settlers of the nation. As early as the 1670's forces like Roger's Rangers were using "tactics of secret march and ambushes" to protect settlers on the frontier (Origins: Army Special Operation, n.d, ¶ 1). Although this marked the first use of unconventional warfare, it took hundreds of years before any official special operation departments were established. According to the Special Operations Command, the Special Forces were spawned out of the Office of Strategic Services during World War II (Special Forces, n.d., ¶ 1-2). The experience gained by COL Aaron Banks, COL Wendell Fertig, and LTC Russell Volckmann was used to develop the doctrine for unconventional warfare, which became "the cornerstone for the Special Force" (¶ 1). In May 1952 the Special Operations Division of the Psychological Warfare Center was activated at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In June 1952, 10th Special Forces Group (SFG), the first of many SFGs, was started and commanded by COL Aaron Banks. In addition to the 10th SFG start, the Psychological Warfare School which was later named the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School was also established. The 10th SFG (Airborne) was move to Bad Tolz, Germany in September 1953. They saw their first action in the Republic of Korea in 1953 as well. The cadre that remained at Fort Bragg formed the 77th SFG and in May of 1960 the 7th SFG was formed. Working as advisors to the Royal Laotian Army on Operation White Star was the mark of the first Special Forces Operations in Vietnam. In the 14 years in Vietnam, the Special Forces conducted numerous missions and also formed the 5th SFG. Over the next three decades the Special Forces continued to hone their craft all while participating in Operation such as, but not limited to, Grenada, Haiti, Panama, Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. Over the same

three decades 1st, 3rd, 19th, and 20th SFG were also formed. The training, experiences, and lessons learned over the years by the Special Forces made them experts at unconventional warfare.

Transformation

In 1999 General Eric Shinseki had a vision to transform the entire U.S. Army strategically into a force more relevant to the 21st century. In year 2003 the Army started its transformation into the force that is seen today. The Special Forces were not exempt from the changing tide of Army transformation. The intent of the transformation is to modernized Army systems with speed, efficiency, and flexibility (Land Warfare, 2002, ¶ 1). This has been the objective of the Army Special Force and the Special Operation Command for years prior to transformation ever being considered by big Army. Prior to transformation when a Special Forces Group deployed to an operational location they took along a service detachment responsible for basic engineer support, vehicle maintenance, Class I-IX supplies to include water, and medical support. A Brigade Combat Team (BCT) Unit of Action, as a result of transformation, has the same type of configuration only on a larger scale. In a light infantry division a typical BCT will consist of four infantry battalions, one Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) responsible for sustainment and medical support, and one Brigade Troops Battalion (BTB) responsible for MP, intelligence, and engineer support. In addition, a light infantry BCT has a field artillery battalion not found in a SFG. This concept allows a BCT commander to have most of the assets needed to conduct missions without having to go to outside agencies for support. They can move his assets quickly to location when he needs them and where he needs them.

The small unit tactics used in the asymmetrical environment has transformed the Army into the force we see today. In places like Iraq and Afghanistan Soldiers on the battlefield have advance equipment, body-armor, and use small unit tactics that start with Special Operation units. Although conventional forces do not have the capability to match a twelve man operational detachment alpha from a SFG, the USSF paved the way. Today because of the pioneering efforts put forth by the USSF, conventional forces are better prepared for the fight in an unconventional environment.

Task Organization

The task organization of a Special Forces Group is unlike any conventional force found in the United States Army. There are currently five regular Army Special Forces Groups in the inventory and two National Guard (USASFC, n.d.). The following are a list of the different Special Force Groups which are a component of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), the United States Army Special Operation Command (USASOC), and the United States Army Special Forces Command (USASFC):

- 1st Special Forces Group
- 3rd Special Forces Group
- 5th Special Forces Group
- 7th Special Forces Group
- 10th Special Forces Group
- 19th Special Forces Group [ARNG]
- 20th Special Forces Group [ARNG]

Special Forces Groups were affected by the Army transformation whereby the each gained a Group Support Battalion (GSB). The GSB replaced the individual service detachments that were found in each battalion and are configured much like a conventional BSB. The overall configuration of a SFG is three operational battalions, one GSB, and a headquarters company.

A Special Forces battalion configuration is nothing like any other U.S. Army conventional battalion. Each Battalion consists of 4 companies, a headquarters company and three operational companies. There are 6 Operational Detachment Alphas (ODA) teams in each company and they have 12 men per team. Each team consists of 2 specialists from 5 different MOS specialties: operations, medical, engineer, communications, and weapons. The headquarters company, also called Operational Detachment Bravo (ODB), provides a command and control element. The Operational Detachment Charlie (ODC) is found in the battalion headquarters and provides the staff element and administration for the battalion.

The United States Army Special Forces USSF for many years has been the quiet professionals of the US Army. A brief look into their history and task organization as given in order to gain a better understanding of what USSF has done to maintain the democracy of America. As we look further into the USSF missions, the reader will see a direct correlation with conventional army forces and how they are currently operating in Iraq and Afghanistan.

BRIAN-US Special Forces Missions

The United States Army Special Forces are subject matter experts in many areas. Their training allows them to go behind enemy lines and operate autonomously to achieve an overall objective established by the US government. The Army long ago identified the need for these specially trained warriors to serve the nation in deterring full-scale wars or conducting covert operations to prevent the spread of Communism. The Special Forces of today are extremely well trained, capable of adaptive thinking and working without support from conventional forces. Their specific missions are many and each has a specific purpose. This section will explain each of the doctrinal missions of the Special Forces.

Primary Missions

America is at war with a transnational terrorist movement fueled by a radical ideology of hatred, oppression, and murder” (*National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 2006*). Since 11 September 2001, the role of the SF has expanded to meet the needs of our nation. The United States Army Special Forces (USSF) now performs seven primary doctrinal missions. These missions are Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, Combating Terrorism, Counter-proliferation, and Information Operations (SOC Website, 2007)

Unconventional Warfare

Unconventional Warfare (UW) consists of a wide variety of military tactics trained and conducted by Special Forces (SF) Soldiers. This type of warfare is not aimed at direct confrontation of enemy combatant forces, but rather to harass and cause unrest in the ranks of those forces or populous. If a communist regime took over a smaller democratic country, SF can assist that country with this expertise. Instead of direct confrontation by the United States Army conventional forces, the SF could assist the countries own occupants in rebelling against the occupiers. Unconventional warfare as defined by the Department of Defense (DoD) is,

A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces that are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery (*DOD DoMT*).

These specific warfare skills are an invaluable tool to the United States government as it may prevent a full-scale war by conventional forces.

Foreign Internal Defense

The Foreign Internal Defense (FID) aspect of the SF is useful during periods of peace or war. The concept behind this mission is to train another nation's military or police force to protect their own nation-state. SF Soldiers trains the nation's defense forces to maintain order and discipline by is own people, stop drug trafficking, stop warlords, prevent terrorism and defend against invasion forces. This was a major mission during the Cold War to stop the advancement of communism.

Special Reconnaissance

The Special Reconnaissance (SR) may possibly be the most valuable aspect of the Special Forces skill set. For an SR mission, SF Soldiers deploy into hostile territory to collect information without detection. SF Soldiers can speak the native language of the people and can blend into the local populous covertly gathering information on enemy capabilities. The intelligence gathered on the enemy such as size, locations, types of weaponry, and maneuver capabilities assists US commanders in mission planning. The payoff for this type of intelligence gathering is having actual eyes on the target. If the US forces were planning to raid a terrorist camp, USSF can deploy before hand, positively identify the target (PID), to ensure forces do not attack an empty camp or harm innocent personnel.

Direct Action

Direct Action (DA) by SF Soldiers is restrictive in nature by the value of the objective versus the value of the team. As stated previously Special Forces are masterfully trained and invaluable to our capabilities. The SF direct action is for times when the probability of success is very high and there is a low risk large scale combat. For example, an SF team can extract a person of great interest or high value to the US. The direct action missions of the SF are very fast infiltration and exfiltration missions and they rarely encounter resistance due to their speedy

tactics. If possibility exists of heavy resistance, the US will most likely pursue the target with one of two alternate options. The first and most favorable option is for USSF to act as a force multiplier with partner nation forces. In this option, USSF assumes command and control of the partner nation forces to conduct the direct action attack. The secondary option is to utilize conventional US forces to attack the target.

Combating Terrorism

Combating Terrorism (CT) is a mission of SF that is well within their capabilities due to their expertise in covert skills. According to Adams (1998), combating terrorism includes antiterrorism (measures to reduce vulnerabilities to terrorist acts) and counterterrorism (offensive measures to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism), taken to oppose terrorism throughout the entire threat spectrum (p. xxii). As the United States continues the global war on terrorism, this mission becomes more important than ever. US Special Forces Impacts on Conventional Forces Transformation as discussed later in this essay will explain how the SF expertise is benefiting the conventional Army forces as well.

Counter-Proliferation

Special Forces Counter-proliferation (CP) mission is another specialty mission that requires certain abilities. The covert abilities of SF to observe and gather intelligence information is necessary to conduct this mission. SF Soldiers can prevent terrorists or nation-states that support terrorist from obtaining weapons of mass destruction (WMD). SF can furthermore take on a direct action mission, if necessary, to prevent proliferation of such materials. According to DoD counter-proliferation is:

“actions (detect and monitor, prepare to conduct counter-proliferation operations, offensive operations, WMD, active defense, and passive defense) taken to defeat the threat and/or use of weapons of mass destruction against the United States, our military forces, friends, and allies” (*DOD DoMT*).

The attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001 was by an enemy that wishes to destroy our nation, our ideology, and our people. Keeping this enemy from obtaining WMD is critical to the future of our nation.

Information Operations

Information operations (IO) are a mission of the SF to achieve information superiority.

According to U.S. Field Manual Information superiority is:

“the operational advantage derived from the ability to collect, process, and disseminate an uninterrupted flow of information while exploiting or denying an adversary’s ability to do the same” (*FM 3-0, 11-2*).

IO is yet another critical mission often undertaken by the SF warriors. Although, we have other Soldiers in the Army that possess this skill set, these Soldiers do not go into countries without conventional forces. USSF will utilize IO to attempt to win the heart and minds of the local populous and government. SF furthermore uses their IO abilities to counter the enemies IO campaign toward us. One instance where we can associate this type of IO by SF is when Al Qaeda or Taliban says the US is targeting civilians, women, and children. In this example, USSF can counter this rumor by spreading the truth to village elders within the affected region.

Secondary Missions

Special Forces frequently have additional or collateral missions apart from their primary missions. These missions can be a wide range of tasks that their expert skills allow them to handle proficiently. These collateral activities are coalition warfare/support, combat search and rescue, security assistance, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, humanitarian de-mining and counter-drug operations (*SOC Website, 2007*).

Coalition Warfare Support

SF sometimes deploys as force multipliers to assist in coalition warfare role. The SF unique skills and abilities provide the conventional commander an additional asset to accomplish a mission. Commanders often request SF assistance to capture or kill a high value person of interest. This is often the case when a small-scale operation is the best option to secure the target.

Combat Search and Rescue

Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) support is a collateral mission that SF can assist in accomplishing. The SF abilities make them uniquely capable of locating and rescuing missing or captured friendly government or non-governmental persons. Although SF was not directly associated with this specific mission, an example is locating and rescuing Soldiers of the 507th Transportation Company at the onset of hostilities in Iraq.

Security Assistance

SF sometimes provides security assistance or protection force for visiting dignitaries or prominent political figures within a host nation. Due to the level of training, the SF abilities to operate, as a well, orchestrated fighting team is unmatched by many conventional units. SF can also blend into their surroundings and observe the crowds for suspicious behavior or threats.

Humanitarian Roles

SF also contributes in humanitarian roles when needed. SF assists in anything from providing direct humanitarian assistance, to security of humanitarian organizations and even humanitarian de-mining support. The Special Forces are contributing extensively to Iraq for a multitude of purposes. However, since we did not actually declare war on the criminal elements in most of these cases, their role is mostly Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, and Combating terrorism.

Counter drug

Another major role of SF is counter drug activities. The Special Forces have assisted countries in South America for years in combating drugs. SF teams deploy to these countries and train their military and drug enforcement forces to locate and destroy drug networks, drug supply, or facilities. Although laws prevent SF from actually participating in the drug raids, their assistance to these countries has a direct impact on reduced drug flow into the US.

Ongoing Operations

Special Forces have many operations currently around the world. Some of these locations are in Iraq, Afghanistan of course, but there are many other smaller scale deployments in support of US interests as well. We can not disclose these other smaller scale operations due to sensitivity of the missions. SF Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan provide a direct impact to the fight. The SF teams' special abilities mention previously, provides the commanders on the ground an asset not normally present in conventional units.

Now that we know the many missions of the Special Forces, we will examine some SF impacts on the conventional forces and transition of the US Army. After the conclusion of conventional combat in Iraq, our mentality and focus had to change. We quickly learned that we must now deal with insurgencies. How did the Army know how to fight insurgents and deal with radical fundamentalists? I think we can closely associate this knowledge with our Special Forces mission. What the SF trains for and what they have actually been doing for years is extremely close to what we are facing now.

JERRY- US Special Forces Impacts on Conventional Forces Transformation

U.S. Army Field Manual 3-05.201, Special Forces Unconventional Warfare Operations, states, “Guerrilla warfare consists of military and paramilitary operations conducted by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces against superior forces in enemy-held or hostile territory. It is the overt military aspect of an insurgency.” It continues with, “A successful insurgency is the most important political power in a newly liberated country. Guerrillas, existing and fighting under conditions of great hardship, develop extremist attitudes and become very jealous of their prerogatives to determine the postwar complexion of their country. These attitudes may make it difficult or impossible to establish a government that is sympathetic to U.S. national interests”

USSF has understood and applied the principles of UW and COIN to combat our enemies. The conventional US Army had not begun to understand the UW and COIN principles until recently following the many successes in the conduct of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) by USSF most notable in Afghanistan against the Taliban. Following these successes, the US Army has begun to adopt many of the USSF tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and now has begun to understand the UW warfare model and how to fight in it. One example that the conventional army is changing is it’s writing of new doctrine. Field Manual 3-05.201 has been in existence and utilized by USSF for years successfully. The US Army realized this and finally wrote FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, to be used by Conventional forces on the present day battlefield. It has been 20 years since the U.S. Army published a manual solely on counterinsurgency operations intended for conventional forces. This new FM on counterinsurgency demonstrates that Conventional forces are adapting and changing to be more effective on the battlefield. FM 3-24 states, “The Conducting of a counterinsurgency campaign thus requires a flexible, adaptive force led by agile, well-informed, culturally astute leaders. It is our hope that this manual provides the necessary guidelines to succeed in such a campaign, in

operations that, inevitably, are exceedingly difficult and complex.” By adapting and understanding unconventional warfare and integrating these tactics into military training, the U.S. Army has begun to level the combat playing field in the GWOT.

USSF has been conducting Foreign Internal Defense (FID) operations since its beginning in 1952. It is a primary mission of USSF and has been very successful from Central and South America, To Europe and its former Soviet Eastern Bloc countries, all the way to the Philippines in the Pacific. Small teams of 2 to 12 USSF soldiers have deployed throughout the world as advisors, trainers, and force multipliers to US friendly nations that needed assistance in their struggle for democracy. As a result, the US Army has developed small and specially trained soldiers to conduct FID type operations. In Iraq, the Iraqi Army has been very successful against insurgents throughout Iraq, and much of that is due to these small US Army teams called Military Transition Teams (MTT), which are assigned to each Iraqi Army battalion. Their mission is to train and advise its troops. MTTs embeds themselves with the Iraqi Army forces, living with them for long periods of times, just as USSF soldiers do during their FID operations. The MTTs consist of 11 members, both officers and NCOs who have backgrounds in different MOSs typical in a conventional US Army battalion. In Afghanistan, the USSF FID model is also being utilized by conventional soldier serving in an Embedded Training Team (ETT), a team of U.S. soldiers embedded with the Afghani army. The mission of the ETT is much like that of the MTTs in Iraq. They serves as advisers and mentors to ANA battalions where they instruct training in small unit tactics. ETT will also assist the ANA by accompanying them on combat operations and serving as liaisons between the ANA and U.S. or allied forces. The typical ETT will be one commissioned officer and one noncommissioned officer attached to an ANA Rifle Company or “Kandak”.

The success of the US Army's combination of changes in training, application of lessons learned and the ability to flexibly deal with the changing insurgent tactics has been demonstrated during the US Military surge in Iraq. These successes can be attributed closely with the re-focus of the small unit tactics and the ability of the commanders who have their boots on the ground to make timely tactical decisions. This has always been a practice of USSF. USSF conducts operations in very small units where the ground forces commander, whether he is an officer or a senior NCO, has the authority to make tactical decisions without waiting for approval from the higher chain-of-command. This authority has always empowered USSF of the battlefield and now is prevalent within conventional small units who are fighting in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

In a study on the conduct of operations by USSF early in Afghanistan, the following was written: "the ground forces involved could not have functioned as they did, without highly specialized training and expertise in special operations, mountain warfare, and highly mobile combat." The U.S. has relied on USSF and light combat units to fight in Afghanistan. The difficult mountainous terrain was an ideal environment for the Taliban to fight in and allowed numerous avenues for escape. The USSF were able to adapt to their surroundings and improvise to create the Northern Coalitions with Afghan forces and enlarge their fighting force. USSF served as forces multipliers by organizing these different groups to focus on the common enemy: Taliban and other al Qaeda forces.

In the current GWOT conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the majority of US Army forces that are facing the guerrillas are not USSF. They are units that have now been trained to fight the guerrillas in an asymmetrical environment. Their understanding of UW and COIN, along with the ability to operate in squad, platoon, or company sized elements coupled with the

ability of the commander to make quick and decisive action has increased the US Army's effectiveness against our enemies.

Small combat teams were a success in Afghanistan and are now a success in Iraq. Their ability to orchestrate land and air power down to the lowest levels, by the Soldiers on the ground, and in a timely fashion, have resulted much from the way USSF has fought and won in the past. There have been countless occasions when infantry soldiers did not have the authority to operate independently in Afghanistan. They were tied down to requesting permission up through the chain-of-command to any change in plans not previously approved. And many times, the enemy was able to either escape or worse, organize and battle the US soldiers on the guerrilla's terms. As with USSF, it is imperative for each combat leader to be able to "direct fire power on the correct objective" (Hardwick). The use of small combat teams and unconventional warfare in Afghanistan allowed the United States and its allies to incorporate these factors to their advantage. A larger conventional force might not have the time or interest in interacting with the local populations and miss opportunities to achieve success faster.

In Iraq, the current mission is focused on the rebuilding of the country and stabilizing the population. A large number of the troops that are doing this are combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) troops who become prime targets for guerilla and terrorist tactics. Typically these soldiers' missions would not normally require them to conduct UW or COIN type operations. But with the changing of training and the adaption from previous experiences, including those from USSF, this area could save lives, reduce casualties, and reduce the destruction of equipment. Additionally, soldiers who find themselves under attack by insurgents now have the ability to pursue their attackers and them. New methods for counterinsurgency

tactics are developing daily from USSF experiences and applied to conventional forces who have become very successful in this asymmetrical environment.

Because our new enemy, the guerrilla, doesn't follow a written doctrine, it is imperative that our U.S. forces "know their enemy" (French). In a UW or COIN environment, the ability to understand what is important in that environment and by not imposing U.S. ideals on the local population will increase the success of future combat operations. U.S. soldiers must understand that local populace may be living under their conditions due to fear and if understood, supported, and secured, could possibly turn and support the US efforts. One of the most important principles taught to USSF soldiers from day one of training is to be culturally in tune. By this, USSF can skillfully include various factions in their operations and keep rivals apart from each other. This has been especially important in Iraq where conventional US soldiers have been very successful in their relationships with the tribes of the Sunnis and Shiites. The US soldiers have educated themselves to be in tune with both tribes and equally balanced them to work in a common goal: the stabilization and rule of an independent government in Iraq.

In summary, U.S. Army has changed its doctrine, TTPs, and mindset in the Global War on Terrorism. This is partly due to the proven effectiveness of past USSF efforts and experiences in Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency operations. Examples of these changes are its new doctrine, use of soldiers and small unit tactics, and cultural awareness, all have demonstrated that the U.S. Army has been influenced by USSF. By changing, using USSF as a model, the conventional Army has improved its effectiveness greatly against enemies in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Conclusion

The U.S. Army was prepared to deploy, attack, and defeat Afghanistan and Iraqi military forces quickly and easily. Ground wars lasting only a couple days was evidence enough that our military are experts at conventional warfare. After all, this is what the U.S. Army conventional forces were prepared and trained to do. However, after the force on force combat was finished, what happened next caused a major shift in our focus. Because of dealing with insurgents in Iraq, we changed our doctrine, tactics, and mindset in the Global War on Terrorism. This is partly due to the proven effectiveness of USSF efforts in Unconventional Warfare. Examples of these changes are its new doctrine, use of soldiers and small unit tactics, and the conduct of civil affairs type operations coupled with cultural awareness. There is no doubt that in our efforts to change, we used knowledge, tactics, and practices already perfected by the United States Special Forces. By changing using USSF as a model, the conventional Army has improved its effectiveness greatly against enemies in both Afghanistan and Iraq. After we succeed in Iraq and Iraqis assume complete control of their own nation-state, the U.S. Army will withdrawal and come home. We will refit and retrain to conduct our primary missions again (force on force combat). However, we will most likely always include counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare training as one of our primary focuses from now on.