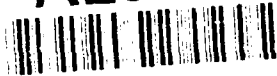


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ORGANIZING U.S. NATIONAL CAPABILITIES FOR
THE CHALLENGE OF THE 1990s
- LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT -

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL STEPHEN E. RUNALS
United States Army

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ORGANIZING U.S. NATIONAL CAPABILITIES FOR THE CHALLENGE OF
THE 1990's - LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDIES PROJECT

BY

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The recent breakup of the former Soviet Union signals the end of over forty years of Cold War. The relative "certainty" of EAST-WEST confrontation is now replaced with a multi-polar world dominated by internal regional issues and potential conflict. Based on our Cold War experience, the U.S. ability to develop, coordinate and implement National Security strategy and policy to effectively respond to regional issues is questionable. In light of the emerging realities of the "New World Order", the U.S. must now reexamine how it develops National Security strategy and policy and how its National security agencies are organized and managed to implement that policy. A strong NSC and supporting staff with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, limitations and properly resourced is required to meet the challenges of the 1990's.

INTRODUCTION

The 1989 peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe and the 1991 failed coup in the Soviet Union signal the end of almost a half century of Cold War. The relative "certainty" of Soviet - U.S. global confrontation is now replaced by a multi-polar world filled with opportunity, challenge and uncertainty. Internal regional issues rather than global East-West tension and confrontation will dominate international relations for at least the next decade. The U.S. must examine how and where its national interests will be affected by regional issues and conflict. Equally important, it must reexamine how to organize and coordinate the application of its national power to deal with those issues and conflicts it identifies as vital to its national interests.

The Cold War has left a legacy of policies, procedures and institutions designed to respond and deter a major war with the Soviets. Equally important is the mental paradigm which has developed over the same period for how we apply the elements of National power (political, economic, military, informational) to promote and protect our national interests. The unexpected success in reversing the growing tide of Soviet "aggression" has left the United States

without an international "enemy" and a foreign policy void which asks the question - who and where next? If internal regional interests and concerns are to play a major role in our national future - are our National security agencies organized to meet the requirements of this uncertain and challenging future?

This paper attempts to examine the role and importance that current and future regional conflict will play in attaining U.S. National policy and interests. It questions how well our National Security agencies are organized to coordinate, integrate and supervise the effective application of all elements of national power to respond to regional issues. Finally, it proposes a possible solution for how we might better organize and coordinate our national efforts to meet the challenges of the 1990's.

Clearly beyond the scope of this study is the most fundamental issue required to effectively deal with the complexities of regional conflict - how to develop a clear, comprehensive, agreed upon National Security strategy and policy for the coming decade and beyond.

The Challenge

Regional Issues:

Throughout the decades of Cold War, U.S. involvement in regional conflict was, with few exceptions, an outgrowth of global East-West confrontation, operationalized by a National strategy of containment.¹ The ending of the Cold War now allows the complex internal social, economic, religious and political antagonisms which played only peripheral roles in the broader U.S.- Soviet confrontation to fully develop.² Resolution of these internal regional issues will be marked by confrontations between peoples and systems rather than modern armies and nations.³ Issues to be resolved will run the range from nationalism and religious fundamentalism to narcotics trafficking and terrorism.

Regional issues have roots decades, even generations, old, focusing primarily on fundamental political questions of the function and legitimacy of the governments in power and locations of national boundaries.⁴ Attempts to resolve these issues will take form in a range of violence extending from street demonstrations to armed civil war. One only has to look at the ethnic violence between Serbs and Croats in Yugoslavia and growing unrest in the former Soviet Republics

to see the scope and intensity regional conflict holds for the future. While each conflict will be a unique product of the circumstances which set it in motion, preventing easy, short term generalized solutions, the end of the Cold War has provided a common legacy to our uncertain multi-polar world.⁵

U.S. - Soviet confrontation produced both the organizational and physical means to expand the level of regional violence and with it the external impact of these conflicts. The capability to organize violence, initially through training assistance provided by the Soviets but now available from an ever increasing number of nations and organizations, is readily available to anyone willing to use violence to resolve political or religious issues. This training, combined with large supplies of sophisticated, readily available weapons and space age communications equipment, insures that regional conflict has the potential to reach levels of violence the international community, growing increasingly economically interdependent, is ill prepared to accept.⁶

A further, but as of yet understated, legacy of the Cold War is the growing reality that future regional conflict will become increasingly complicated by the influence of the international illegal drug trade. Funding

to support revolutionaries, counterrevolutionaries and terrorist, who for so long were supported as an outgrowth of East-West confrontation, will increasingly turn to the drug trade for money and equipment to support their operations. In return, drug dealers will find increasing opportunities for new markets within regions torn by internal domestic strife.⁷

Finally, as a result of the U.S. led Coalition victory in SWA and break-up the former Soviet Union, the U.S. has emerged as the sole global military super power. The recent Gulf War sent a clear message to would-be regional aggressors that as long as the U.S. is prepared to commit military power, no regional power can expect to fight and win a direct confrontation with U.S. military forces in a mid - intensity war. At least for the immediate future, military resolution of regional issues will, of necessity, be generally attempted through Low Intensity Conflict (LIC).⁸

Individually, regional conflict seldom has little direct geopolitical importance to the U.S. and its Allies. It is only when looked at in the cumulative context of lives lost, economic infrastructure destroyed, access to regional markets and resources denied and populations displaced does their impact gain significance in terms of country specific

and regional implications to U.S. National interests.⁹ The reawakening of nationalism and ethnic and religious violence in the Russian Republics and former Eastern Block countries and continued growth within Africa, Asia, South America and the Middle East insures that regional issues and conflicts will become increasingly prevalent during the 1990's.

National Interests:

As outlined in the President's August 1991 National Security Strategy for the United States, regional threats have potentially far reaching implications on the following vital interests:¹⁰

(1) the ability to safeguard the U.S. as a free and open society by threatening the use of terrorism and spread of biological and nuclear weapons.

(2) the ability to maintain a healthy and growing economy by endangering access to foreign markets, energy and resources resulting from regional internal conflict.

(3) the ability to maintain a stable and secure world by threatening legitimately established governments and internal regional balance of power.

(4) the ability to safeguard National values and institutions from the personal violence and economic destabilization resulting from the use of illegal drugs.

While not all inclusive, the above list identifies how the intensely complex internal issues underlying future

regional conflict will have long term, direct and indirect implications on our ability to attain U.S. vital interests and objectives. As a result of growing international economic interdependence, regional conflict will have increasingly significant implications for the U.S. economy. Neither the U.S. nor its Allies can long sustain the demands unchecked regional conflict will have on their economies. With growing awareness, the ability to achieve our National interests and objectives is tied to the strength and flexibility of the U.S. economy.¹¹

Despite the very real long term danger regional conflict holds for the U.S., its very nature works against a proactive, well organized national approach to responding to LIC. The initial ambiguity of regional problems with their lack of clearly defined issues, apparent total internal dimensions, limited geographical scale and lack of an explicit external threat make it difficult to demonstrate how U.S. National interests are directly threatened to an American public and Congress focused increasingly on domestic issues. This growing lack of interest makes it difficult to develop a comprehensive National Security strategy and policy to effectively and consistently deal with regional issues and conflicts. One only has to look at the heated Congressional debate over the U.S. response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to see the challenges facing

any Administration as it attempts to build an acceptable National Security policy for future, less well defined, regional conflicts.

As demonstrated during the Gulf War, the U.S. has an impressive capability in terms of political, economic, military and informational power which can be applied to help resolve regional conflict. The key to success lays in our ability to effectively balance, integrate, coordinate and supervise the application of all aspects of National power, within an overall coherent National Security strategy to meet the subtle, but very real threat, regional conflict poses to our National interests before they require a direct, large scale commitment of U.S. forces.

Current Organization for Dealing with Regional Conflict:

Since the end of World War II, the U.S. has used force or the threat of force to protect its vital interests over 500 times. Virtually all of these cases have dealt with regional conflict, generally as LIC, requiring multi-year U.S. commitments. Despite there frequency, each case has generally been treated as a first time occurrence.¹²

The U.S. historical response to regional conflict has been handicapped by three fundamental shortcomings.¹³ We as a nation tend to take regional conflict seriously only when

it breaks into open, sustained violent confrontation.

Second, once the "threat" is identified, direct, massive military intervention is seen as the best means to provide a quick solution to the problem, too often without understanding the potential long term consequences. Third, and most critical, is the absence of an effective system to synchronize and supervise the interagency efforts of our National Security agencies and departments.

The first two shortcomings are perceptual. They are the result of viewing regional conflict within a context of global East - West confrontation, implemented as part of a National Security strategy of containment and deterrence of a Soviet threat. More importantly, it represents a lack of understanding of the deeply rooted, highly emotional issues inherent in regional issues and problems that had little to do with Soviet - U.S. confrontation. While important, these shortcomings only serve to underscore a fundamental systemic problem - a lack of interagency coordination, management and long term focus in development, organization and implementation of National Security policy and procedures for dealing with regional issues despite a consensus on overall Cold War foreign policy strategy.

The U.S. government finds it difficult to deal with LIC because the issues are unclear and no single agency can

address the underlying causes of conflict. Even during the Cold War, the principle obstacle to effective U.S. response to regional conflict was a lack of interagency coordination between executive agencies.¹⁴ Three former ambassadors to El Salvador cited lack of coordination in policy and operations as the single most serious issue with which they had to deal.¹⁵ Information and operations were too often "stove piped" directly from agencies headquartered in Washington to in-country field agents without cross reference and coordination with the country Ambassador. These comments echo those made by Gen Bruce Palmer and Robert W. Komer, former Ambassador to Vietnam, in their analysis of the fundamental shortcomings of U.S. National policy and operations during the Vietnam War.¹⁶

Effective U.S. response to LIC requires the focused integration and coordination of all elements of U.S. diplomatic, economic, military and informational power at the three levels of policy development and implementation: national- strategic, operational-regional, and tactical-country. Each element of power must be directed toward a commonly identified objective and executed with clear consistent, but frequently reviewed and updated, implementation guidance.¹⁷

Interagency coordination and integration of U.S. Security policy begins at the strategic or National level within the National Security Council (NSC). Implementation of policy is then executed through the Chief of the U.S. diplomatic mission, usually an ambassador, assigned to an individual country. This process, while providing essential elements of organization necessary for policy development and coordination, fails to meet operational requirements because of its lack of operational level supervision and refinement during policy execution.

Even before the end of the Cold War, Congress recognizing that governmental planning and execution for regional conflict was flawed. In an amendment to the FY 1987 Defense Authorization Bill, the 99th Congress refined the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 to establish an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) and the Joint Special Operations Command (SOCOM). More importantly for this discussion, they directed the President to establish within the NSC a LIC Board to "coordinate the policies of the United States for Low Intensity Conflict".¹⁸

The LIC Board was established to provide an organization which can give the President clear, consistent advice on how best to respond to LIC, replacing the previous

ad hoc patchwork of interagency groups which had developed over time to accomplish the same purpose. These attempts to improve interagency coordination at the National level are important steps in the right direction but fail to provide the long term direction, integration, coordination and supervision necessary for successful execution at the critical regional-operational and country- tactical levels.

A Flawed Process:

As recognized by the 99th Congress, interagency coordination for national policy and strategy for regional conflict must begin within the NSC. The Regional Policy Coordinating Committees (PCC's), subordinate elements of the NSC, are the principle interagency organizations charged with identification and development of National policy issues within their specific regional areas of responsibility. Each PCC must identify early-on, from input from the widest possible sources, those regional issues that require development and/or refinement of National policy by the NSC.

Once policy decisions are approved by the NSC, an expanded Senior Review Group (SRG), meeting as the LIC Board and chaired by the President's National Security Advisor, provides policy implementation guidance to its members.¹⁹

As currently authorized, the execution and implementation of approved NSC policy becomes the responsibility of the individual agencies and departments of the Executive Branch under the overall direction, coordination and responsibility of the Department of State.²⁰ This responsibility is then executed through individual country Ambassadors and their "country teams".

The process of developing National Security policy, developed over the Cold War years, is flawed in two significant aspects. First inter-agency decision making is normally a long term process in consensus building. This holds true within the NSC. Each agency represented within the NSC holds the power, although varying by agency and issue, to assist or delay the building of the all important consensus for situations short of a crisis. In an environment where views and priorities clash, the resolution of issues and development of policy is a negotiated, not directed, process. Decisions are too often the result of compromise and trade off.²¹ From the resulting consensus "the best possible", not the best policy solutions appears. From these policies of consensus, come implementation priorities and allotment of resources.

Consensus building takes time even during the best of situations and is further complicated by each agencies

ability to handle competing internal priorities. What may be of prime importance to the ambassador of a specific country or a field agent on his "country team" may not be a priority to the State Dept or parent agency operating in Washington and dealing with a broader range of international issues and problems.

In contrast, while regional conflict is long term in focus, it is dynamic and reactive in nature and execution, modifying its form and methods of operation based on the action or inaction of the internal and external factors and forces which effect it. By the time a solution is developed and agreed upon in Washington, it may not meet the new reality of the situation on the ground.

During a crisis, the process of consensus building can be significantly shortened.²² Modern communications insures that solutions for crisis situations can be quickly provided to individual Ambassadors. Unfortunately, they all too often suffer from the result of crisis management, tending to be ad hoc, piecemeal and lacking in understanding of long term implications.²³ Short term successes, resulting from crises management, do not substitute for a comprehensive National Security strategy or policy.

The second and most critical failing is a lack of coordination and supervision during the actual

implementation of National policy. No individual or organization actually performs these critical functions. The Dept. of State has repeatedly demonstrated it is unable to provide the direction and supervision required to insure effective integration and management of National Security policy. Every President since Kennedy has found the State Dept. unable to coordinate the implementation of National Security strategy or policy.²⁴ The National Security Council (NSC), charged with the responsibility to "advise and assist the President in integrating all aspects of National Security policy ... domestic, foreign, military, intelligence, and economic" by the National Security Act of 1947, has also failed to provide the supervision and coordination necessary to effectively implement National Security policy. The questionable success of the National Drug Strategy is a case in point.²⁵

Supervision and coordination of National policy are legitimate functions for the NSC and its staff but should not be confused with an operational role during actual policy implementation.²⁶ From the findings of the Tower Commission investigation into the Iran-Contra affair:

It is the responsibility of the National Security Advisor (and staff) to monitor policy implementation and ensure that policies are executed in conformity with the intent of the President's decision. Monitoring includes initiating periodic reassessments of policy or

operation, especially when changed circumstances suggest that the policy or operation no longer serves U.S. interests.²⁷

Consistent with this second shortcoming is the failure of the LIC Board to serve any real purpose. From its inception, the Board suffered from a lack of clear roles and responsibilities.²⁸ Development and coordination of National policy was already vested within the NSC and its PCCs. Little "value added" was achieved by establishing an additional agency to essentially accomplish what should have been the responsibility of the NSC PCCs. Clearly, development of effective National Security policy for and advising the President on LIC crosses many functional and organizational boundaries but such is the case for any effective National Security policy.

LIC is unique only in that its essential political nature and limited geopolitical scale make its threat to U.S. interests generally less direct than the Soviet threat of the Cold War. Political rather than military power becomes the principle element of National power for prevention or resolution of issues and conflict. Under the current Administration, the NSC Deputies Committee serves as the LIC Board. When it meets, the Committee addresses a full range of issues which too often deal with current issues, many of which only indirectly relate to LIC, rather

than regional or specific LIC issues requiring long term solutions.

As stated above, the present methods for dealing with regional issues fail to achieve the necessary long term focus and interagency coordination and supervision required to effectively deal with regional issues and their associated LIC. This process fails because, in fact and practice, the U. S. has no comprehensive, fully accepted and effective process to develop and manage the implementation of National Security strategy or policy for responding to regional conflict. The military Unified Commands are the only National Security organization which monitor regional political, economic and social issues for possible impact on U.S. interests and through which the efforts to apply the full range of U.S. national power are managed and synchronized during policy implementation.

Organizing for the 1990's

The increasingly complex nature of international relations in a multi-polar, post Cold War world requires a more thorough integration and coordination of the elements of National power than at any time since the start of the Korean War and adoption of NSC 68.29 The challenge U.S. faces for the 1990's is how to effectively fill the void in its long range National Security policy focus and ability to effectively coordinate and manage that policy to effectively deal with an ever broadening spectrum of regional issues and conflict. Many solutions to these problems are possible but to be practical, must pass the tests of fiscal responsibility, long term application and reality of interagency protectionism.

Creating new structure is an easy solution to difficult problems. Unfortunately, this too often leads to further organizational problems because existing roles and responsibilities become blurred and power, authority, and accountability become diluted. This was the outcome of the Congressional approach to LIC when it established the LIC Board. The underlying problems of long range policy focus and interagency coordination and policy management were not addressed. These shortcomings remain despite Congressional efforts to correct them.

A second approach to resolving systemic and organizational problems is to clarify and maximize the roles, functions and authority of existing structure. One solution to improve our institutional ability to effectively deal with the reality of our emerging post- Cold War world is to utilize this approach. Such a solution would structure and empower the NSC to full fill its 1947 charter and the role it as in fact assumed under every Administration since Kennedy.³⁰ The NSC and its staff must become the principle agency responsible for developing long range National Security Strategy and policy and then effectively managing the implementation of that Strategy.

The NSC and A Policy Management Support Team:

Only the President and his National Security Council have the perspective and authority to effectively develop and manage National Security strategy and policy. The NSC serves at the pleasure of the President, having little institutional structure or memory and no authority beyond what the President gives it.³¹ The NSC staff is, however, an institutional body and as the extension of the NSC, the logical choice for developing National Security policy recommendations and policy management - integration, coordination and supervision.

Implementation of National Security policy must remain the responsibility of individual Executive agencies and departments, executed under the "tactical" direction of the State Dept and its Presidentially appointed country ambassadors. Policy execution, carried out by well meaning professionals, must, however, be supervised, coordinated and reviewed to insure it is applied within a regional context, conforms to the intent of the NSC and remains relevant to the current situation. The Andean Drug Strategy provides a relevant model for examining the difficulty of achieving policy intent without an effective structure to supervise implementation.

A national consensus on threat, executive branch and bipartisan Congressional support which provided focus and emphasis, and involvement of all relevant departments and agencies resulted in development of a comprehensive, integrated Andean Drug strategy which addressed not only objectives but allocation of resources. A special PCC was established within the NSC and continues to meet twice weekly to address interagency issues. This PCC however does not have the authority to in fact direct the coordination and integration of the implementation of that strategy by executing agencies, or direct its implementation to achieve long term policy objectives within the larger context of a comprehensive South American regional policy. As a result,

the implementation of the Drug strategy is plagued by many of the same problems discussed in this paper. Because there is no single organization to monitor and direct the integration and coordination of the actual execution of the Strategy, bureaucratic inertia, parochialism and professional, well intended but disjointed efforts, have led to ineffectiveness, frustration and lost opportunities.³²

As previously indicated, while the supervision and monitoring of National Security policy is a legitimate and important role for the NSC staff, it should be neither staffed, organized or tasked to perform an operational role.

Implementation is the responsibility and strength of the departments and agencies. The National Security Advisor and the NSC staff generally do not have the depth of resources for the conduct of operations. In addition, when they take on implementation responsibilities, they risk compromising their objectivity.³³

In the wake of the Iran-Contra affair, great care was taken to insure that the NSC and its staff "shall not be responsible for the execution or implementation" of National Security policy.³⁴ This has resulted in NSC staff manning levels which make it difficult for the Staff to perform even the most critical functions necessary to insure effective National policy development and management.³⁵ The challenge is one of balance. The NSC staff must be resourced and empowered to full fill its functions of supporting the NSC

in the development of policy and the President by monitoring and coordinating the implementation of that policy. These responsibilities must be balanced against the danger it will become a large, uncontrolled operational bureaucracy which challenges the role and function of other executive agencies and departments. The specific roles and responsibilities of the NSC staff should include:36

- serve as the staff of the NSC under the direction of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA), responsible for the administration of the NSC system
- coordinate and integrate policy recommendations in preparation for submission to the NSC and for supervising the implementation of Presidential decisions to insure implementing agencies and departments achieve Presidential policy intent - supervision includes interpreting specific application of approved policy and monitoring implementation to insure it remains relevant in its regional context and current situation
- support the APNSA during crisis management through the coordination of all relevant agencies to insure that presentations of options and implementation of crisis management decisions include long term regional strategy/policy considerations
- convene crisis management working groups subordinate to the NSC and be responsible for crisis management planning
- support the APNSA as a personal staff to the President providing, through the APNSA, recommendations on National security matters, to include LIC

To assist the NSC staff in accomplishing the roles and responsibilities described above, each of the regional and

functional PCC's should be chaired by a member of the NSC staff operating under the direction of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. This would serve to focus PCC effort and assist in inter PCC coordination. As an integral part of their primary function to identify and develop policy issues for consideration by the NSC, each regional PCC should be required to conduct periodic reviews of its area of responsibility to determine U.S. interests in that region. Such a review should include an assessment of current policies to insure they remain valid in the context of long term policy requirements to achieve and/or protect those interests. This regional review is especially important now in light of the changing relationships resulting from the end of the Cold War.

PCC's should not only be the principle organization to develop long term regional policy but to also recommend policy implementation guidance for responding to regional crisis. This helps insure that policy recommendations for crisis situations remain within a long term regional strategic context. The State Dept. must retain its authority and responsibility for directing and coordinating the implementation of foreign affairs policy through two important functions.

Tactical implementation and coordination of policy must be executed through its Presidentially appointed ambassadors and the State Dept. Foreign Service Corps. Secondly, the Sec of State must remain the President's "point man" for specific, high visibility foreign affairs issues such as building international agreement on a Middle East peace plan and negotiating a diplomatic solution to an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. While both functions are critical to the success of our foreign policy, they do not substitute for developing long term National Security Strategy and managing policy implementation. This alignment of roles and responsibilities addresses the critical requirement for long term National Security Strategy/policy focus but policy without effective management remains the most critical short coming of our current institutional structure.³⁷ Correcting this shortcoming should also utilize existing structure.

The current LIC Board should be refocused and structured into a "Policy Management Support Team" (PMST) responsible as the primary organization within the NSC staff to monitor and supervise policy implementation.³⁸ Such a Support Team should be chaired by a former Ambassador, preferably with hands-on experience in dealing with LIC. The PMST would be composed of civilians and military selected for their experience in the Washington interagency process and LIC, from executive agencies represented on the

NSC PCC's. Normally composed of a small number of personnel, its manning could be expanded as specific regional situations develop but not to the point where it begins to assume an operational role.

The PMST would serve as the key policy management and supervision link between the National policy decisions of the NSC, implementation guidance by member agencies in Washington executed by individual Ambassadors and their "Country Teams". In essence, the PMST would serve as an unbiased, honest broker of the NSC to insure that all elements of National power are fully integrated and coordinated by the implementing agencies and that execution matches Presidential intent. Such a role would still allow the PMST/LIC Board to advise the President on LIC issues. A PMST would provide for the President and his NSC what the Unified Commands provide to the Defense Department, a single organization to integrate and coordinate policy guidance addressing regional issues and actions. To perform this critical role the PMST must have access to strategic and operational information.

The cornerstone for timely, effective and responsive National Security policy is intelligence. This requires U.S. intelligence agencies to collect, analyze and disseminate processed information to appropriate government

agencies to allow planners to anticipate not only potential regional violence but political and economic trends with long term impact on U.S. interests. Early identification of potential problems allows the U.S. and its Allies to develop effective, "discriminating" counters before direct, high visibility responses are required.³⁹ Proactive National policy decisions come only as a result of a focused, coordinated effort directed toward the collection and analysis of strategic and tactical information.

Today, information from potential areas of regional conflict is too often "stove piped" from field representatives directly to their Washington headquarters. Once there, this information is processed as part of each department's global responsibilities, often absent consideration within its regional context. A PMST charged with policy management should review data from field agents, keeping it within its regional context, and provide that analysis to regional PCC's and potentially effected executive agencies for final evaluation and analysis. Expanding and formalizing the roles and responsibilities of the NSC as indicated above raises valid concerns, especially in light of the Iran-Contra.

First and most important is that the National Security Act of 1947, while assigning broad missions and

responsibility to the NSC, does not specify how it will be organized and function. Each President has the opportunity to redesign the structure, organization and functioning of the NSC to suit his own requirements. This includes the role and relationship of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA). What is of interest is that despite differences initial structure and responsibilities of the NSC and role for the APNSA, those Administrations which developed effective National Security policy structure and process established or evolved essentially the same NSC structure and implementing structure.⁴⁰ While each President must be allowed the flexibility to mold the NSC and its staff into an organization with which he can work, critical roles, organizations and relationships must become institutionalized.

The APNSA must have direct, unrestricted access to the President. This was not the case within the early Carter and Reagan Administrations. Access to the President is critical to assure that the APNSA and the NSC staff have the authority to operate within the Washington bureaucracy. A strong case can be made that the abuse of NSC staff authority during Iran-Contra was the result of a weakened NSC staff attempting to operate from a functional - authority mismatch rather than from a position of power.⁴¹

The APNSA must have the total trust and confidence of the President and aggressively insure the effectiveness and operation of the NSC and its implementing staff:

It is his (APNSA) responsibility to ensure that matters submitted for consideration by the Council cover the full range of issues on which review is required; that a full range of options is considered; that all relevant intelligence and other information is available to the principals; that difficulties in implementation are confronted.⁴²

In this capacity, the APNSA must be an honest, unbiased protector of the National Security policy development and management process. This requires that he insure the NSC staff keeps a broad, long term focus, avoiding the pit falls of dealing in crisis management or a fixation on only high visibility issues. Issues requiring long term focus must receive decision maker, i.e. the President and full NSC, visibility.

Great care must also be exercised that the NSC staff remains small, flexible but effective. The tendency will be to allow the Staff to grow beyond a strength of 50-60 professionals.⁴³ An organization significantly smaller will prevent it from performing its principle functions and any larger will make it less flexible, more bureaucratic and increase the tendency to become an operational staff. There

is also the danger that changes in Administrations will destroy continuity within the staff.

Continuity will certainly be an issue within the NSC itself which is made up of Presidential appointees and all but the APNSA confirmed by Congress. The NSC staff, however, can retain continuity of function if its basic structure and responsibilities in relation to the State Dept. become Congressional mandated, the Staff remains primarily focused on long term issues - which despite changes in Administrations remain essentially apolitical - and insuring that the NSC remains an honest, unbiased broker for policy development recommendations and management. Some changes in NSC staffing will take place between administrations but this should result in a strengthened NSC, refreshed by new ideas and approaches to enduring problems and assured of continued Presidential backing.

Finally, increasing the role and function of the NSC staff should not include direct control over funding. The NSC staff will, in fact, exercise a great deal of indirect fiscal power as it preforms its role as the President's manager of NSC policy. Such management should certainly require executing agencies and departments to account for how effectively they spent authorize monies in their efforts to achieve NSC policy intent. Adding direct control over

the execution of implementing funds would only add one more layer to an already cumbersome Washington bureaucracy and increase the likelihood for NSC staff to become an operational organization.

To effectively manage implementation of National Security strategy and policy, the NSC staff must be given the authority and responsibility to "seek out" how well policy is being implemented and correct misdirected policy execution. This requires staff members getting out of Washington to visit individual countries within specific regions and conducting periodic policy reviews. The intent of such visits and reviews is to insure that National Security policy remains valid for the existing conditions, that thorough and effective integration of all executive agencies and departments is on going and that future trends and potential problems are identified and receive NSC attention early-on. The NSC staff must function as the President's "eyes and ears" to insure that policy implementation matches policy intent.

CONCLUSION

The Cold War victory has ended over half a century of East-West confrontation. The United States and its Allies can take justifiable pride in ending the strangle hold of communism throughout Eastern Europe and the Russian Republics. In its place, we now face a world of opportunity, challenge and uncertainty. Regional issues of nationalism and religious fanaticism, fueled by age old frictions, artificially constrained during the Cold War years, now surface as a major threat to U.S. National interests and objectives abroad and threaten our ability to take full advantage of the Cold War victory.

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in February of 1990, Gen James Linsey, former Commander-in-Chief for the U.S. Special Operations Command, warned of the growing danger regional conflict poses to our National interests and stated "The U.S. must focus on early detection of potential crises, seek peaceful solutions and maintain a capability to respond if military action is required."⁴⁴ Early detection and peaceful solutions to regional problems and conflicts requires a balanced, coordinated and synchronized long term application of all elements of

National power applied at the national- strategic, regional-operational, and country-tactical levels. The draw down of our military places an increased emphasis on the use of political, economic and informational power to safeguard our National interests abroad.

It has been said that real change in bureaucracy comes about only as a result of a major failure, a major success or a major cut in operating budget. We have certainly experienced a major unexpected success in dealing with the now dismembered Soviet Union and domestic pressures have forced equally dramatic cuts in the federal budget. As resources become increasingly limited, policy makers must insure they invest in long term, well coordinated and well administrated National Security policies and programs. Our foreign policy weaknesses in dealing with regional issues and equally dramatic domestic fiscal pressures indicated that changes in how our National Security agencies are organized and operate within a "New World Order" maybe necessary.

Change simply for the sake of change has seldom produced real solutions. Change within the federal government must overcome bureaucratic inertia and baggage built-up over years of Cold War of procedures, policies and institutions. Now is the time to formalize the NSC's role

and relationship with the State Department in developing, managing and implementing National Security Strategy and policy. A strong NSC with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, limitations and properly resourced is required to meet the reality of our post-Cold War world.

Few institutions are willing to give up power, responsibility and programs that have represented an institutional way of life for almost three generations of federal service.⁴⁵ Any attempt to change the way the U.S. executes its National Security strategy and policy will be met by institutional negativism even if the change is logical, realistic, inexpensive and most importantly, needed. Unfortunately, despite the best intentions to do otherwise, our executive departments and agencies all too often have shown they compete and not complement each others actions.

As evidenced by Congressional and Presidential concern over our current National Security policy development and management process, the U.S. government must develop a better system to effectively respond to the growing importance of regional issues and conflict. The formal empowering of the NSC and its staff is not the cure-all for the challenges we face in the 1990's. It does offer an attractive alternative to the way we currently organize, integrate and

manage the application of our still impressive National
power to meet the challenges of an uncertain future.

ENDNOTES

1. Todd R. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World (Washington D. C.: Center for the Study of Foreign Affairs, Oct 1990), p. 24.
2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Ibid., p. 10.
4. Steven Metz, "An American Strategy for Low - Intensity Conflict" (Strategic Review, Vol. XVII, Fall 1989), p. 10.
5. Michael Howard, et al., Carl von Clausewitz On War, (translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 88. Clausewitz states that "wars vary in nature by their motives and the situations which give raise to them". The fundamental issues involved in Third World regional conflict are fueled by extremely emotional issues which will "give raise" to intense motivation to achieve desired ends.
6. Ibid., p. 11.
7. Graham H. Turbiville Jr. and Harold S. Orenstein, "Drugs and Terror: Eastern European and Transnational Security Threats" (Military Review, Volume LXXI, December 1991), pp. 57 - 68. The authors provide an interesting and frightening picture of the growing impact the international drug trade is having in the Former Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries.
8. Defining LIC falls outside the purpose of this paper. For the purpose of common discussion LIC is defined as found in JCS Pub 3-07 (Test), p. 1-1. The JCS Pub defines LIC as a: "political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low Intensity Conflict ranges from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low Intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications." For doctrinal purposes, JCS Pub 3-07 groups operations within LIC into the following categories:

Insurgency and counterinsurgency

Combatting terrorism

Peacekeeping

Contingency operations

9. Greentree, p. 10.

10. The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States (Washington D.C. August 1991), p. 3.

11. Ibid., p. 19.

12. William Olson, Low Intensity Conflict: The Institutional Challenge, (Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm of Low Intensity Conflict). Westview Studies in Regional Security, Bolder, CO 1991), p. 46.

13. Greentree, p. 24.

14. These concerns exist today. One of the initial priorities given the LIC Board was to examine "how Low Intensity Conflict structure should work with regional and country specific policy planning and coordinating mechanisms", NSDD 277, p. 6. This was also a subject for review in National Security Review 27, "Low Intensity Conflict".

15. Greentree, pp. 37-38.

16. GEN Bruce Palmer Jr., USA, The 25 - Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam (The University Press of Kentucky. 1984), p. 193. See also Robert W. Komer, Bureaucracy at War: U.S. Performance in the Vietnam Conflict (Westview Press, London, 1986), p. 175.

17. William Olson, "Organizational Requirements for LIC" (Military Review, Vol LXVIII, Jan 1988), p. 9.

18. Public Law 99-661 (Laws of the 99th Congress, second session, Washington D.C, 1986), p. 100 SAT 3985.

19. The White House, National Security Decision Directive Number 277: National Policy and Strategy for Low Intensity Conflict (Washington D.C., June 15, 1987), p. 5. In addition to the members of the NSC Senior Review Group (SRG), the Attorney General, the Sec of the Treasury, the Sec of Commerce, and the Dir of the U.S. Information Agency will compose the eight permanent members of the LIC Board.

20. Ibid. NSDD 277 states that in accordance with NSDD 266 the President's National Security Advisor or any member of the NSC staff "shall not be responsible for" the execution or implementation of Presidentially approved LIC policy unless specifically directed by the President. JCS Pub 3-07, p. II-4 lays out the responsibility of the Dept. of State for the direction, coordination and supervision of US interdepartmental activities overseas.

21. Olson, "Organizational Requirements for LIC". p. 48

22. Interviews with DR. William Olson, currently Deputy Ass Sec of State for International Narcotics Matters; COL Richard Saunders, USA, currently assigned to the Department of State; COL Christopher Needles,

USA, currently serving in the NSC and the NSC representative on the LIC Board; and LTC Diehl, USMC assigned to the office of the ASD/SOLIC.

23. William Olson. "Low Intensity Conflict: The Institutional Challenge." p. 46. This holds true not only for LIC but other regional problems such as responding and organizing a U.S. response to natural disasters.

24. Christopher C. Shoemaker, LTC, USA, Structure, Function and the NSC Staff: An Officers' Guide to the National Security Council. (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, 1989), pp. 51-52.

25. Shoemaker, p. 38.

26. Ibid., p. 42.

27. John Tower, Edmund Muskie and Brent Scowcroft, "Report of the President's Special Board" (Washington, D.C., U.S. Printing Office, 1987), p. V-3.

28. Interview with Dr William Olson.

29. Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "Sounding the Tocsin", (International Security, Fall 1979, Vol 4, NO 2), pp. 116- 124. NSC 68 was developed in haste. The Presidential directive for policy review was issued Jan 31, 1950. The principal author, Paul N. Nitz, director of the State Department Policy Planning Staff, was appointed to head the interdepartmental working group that drafted NSC 68. President Truman received the draft policy on 17 April and directed the full NSC to review the recommendations. During the policy review process, the Korean War began, 25 June, 1950. Truman adopted NSC 68 on 30 September, 1950. Samuel F. Wells provides an excellent examination of the factors behind and development process leading to the document that essentially established our Cold War strategy for almost 20 years.

30. Shoemaker, p. 115.

31. Ibid., p. 27.

32. Interview the Dr. Olson

33. Tower, p. V-3.

34. NSDD 277, p. 5.

35. Shoemaker, p. 28. Shoemaker identifies seven functions the NSC staff has periodically performed and which are necessary to perform its role and responsibility within the National Security development and management process: administration, policy coordination and integration, supervision, adjudication, management, formulation and advocacy.

36. Shoemaker, p. 113. Christopher Shoemaker make some excellent recommendations roles and responsibilities for the NSC to which I have added a regional and long term focus.

37. Ibid., p. 38.

38. Greentree, p. 8. Greentree identifies the need for a Policy Management Support Team but does not have it working for the NSC. This was in fact done to better coordinate our National Drug Strategy. A special PCC was established within the NSC and continues to meet twice weekly to address interagency issues. It does not however, coordinate and integrate the implementation of the Drug strategy within the larger context of a comprehensive South American regional policy.

39. Report by the Regional Conflict Working Group submitted to the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, "Supporting U.S. Strategy for Third World Conflict" (Pentagon, Washington, D.C., June 1988), p. 56.

40. Shoemakers book, Structure, Function and the NSC Staff: An Officers' Guide to the National Security Council, describes the NSC structure and relationship between the APNSA and the President from Truman through Reagan, examining in detail the Carter - Reagan National Security systems.

41. Shoemaker, p. 81.

42. Tower, p. V-2.

43. Shoemaker, p. 109.

44. GEN James L. Linsey, USA, "Increased Prospects for Low Intensity Conflict" (The DISAM Journal, 1990), p. 30.

45. Olson. "Low Intensity Conflict: The Institutional Challenge." p. 47

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