STRATEGIC COLLABORATION: BEYOND A STRING AND TWO CANS

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STRATEGIC COLLABORATION: BEYOND A STRING AND TWO CANS

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ABSTRACT

Why is there a need to improve upon strategic collaboration, especially in the military and Department of Defense? This new strategic environment in which leaders at all levels, especially at the strategic level, find themselves drives the need to make decisions more quickly and with more input from outside their own organizations. Gone are the days of strictly military service-specific collaboration. Today's new strategic environment requires military leaders to work with multiple stakeholders using their strategic leadership and communication skills to solve complex issues in this volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to: interagency departments, non-governmental organizations (NGO), multinational organizations, and industry.

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION: BEYOND A STRING AND TWO CANS

Collaboration: To work together, especially in a joint intellectual effort.[1] Collaboration, simply defined, is a joint, intellectual effort of working together. *Strategic*: Highly important to an intended objective.[2] This definition of "strategic" links importance to an objective. When fused together these provide a working definition of strategic collaboration: A joint intellectual effort focused on a highly important, intended objective.[3] These definitions of "collaboration" and "strategic" provide a critical framework to the discussion that follows.

Two additional definitions help establish the framework for the remainder of this paper. The United States Army War College (USAWC) defines strategic leadership as "the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy and directive, and building consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats."[4]

Another relevant definition to place the upcoming discussion in context is for strategic communication. Joint Publication 1-02 defines strategic communication as "focused United States Government efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of United States Government interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power."[5]

New Strategic Environment

Why is there a need to improve upon strategic collaboration, especially in the military and Department of Defense (DOD)? The new strategic environment in which leaders at all levels, especially at the strategic level, find themselves operating drives the need to make decisions more quickly and with more input from outside their own organizations. Gone are the days of strictly military service-specific collaboration. Today's new strategic environment requires military leaders to work with multiple stakeholders using their strategic leadership and communication skills to solve complex issues in this volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to: interagency departments, non-governmental organizations (NGO), multinational organizations, and industry. Enhancing the ability of senior leaders to collaborate strategically will result in better strategies, better relationships, and better strategic results.

The stakeholders listed above all have different models for collaboration. They may require their members to follow a strict hierarchical method of collaboration that adds to the layers of bureaucracy to complete an action. Some allow their members to collaborate freely within the organization and sometimes freely outside of the organization. Others will adopt a method somewhere in between these extremes. The bottom line is that all organizations have distinctly different ways of conducting business and the methods of collaboration they use in the conduct of this business add to the complexity of finding solutions as they collaborate with stakeholders who operate differently.

A significant paradigm shift is required for strategic collaboration to be effective. No longer can the military rely on the simple tactical collaboration that occurs between

multiple company or battalion level commanders as they plan military maneuvers. No

longer can the military rely on the simple operational collaboration that occurs between

brigades, divisions, and occasionally between services as they plan theater level

operations. And most importantly, the new world environment requires improved

strategic collaboration between military services, interagency departments, non-

governmental organizations, multi-national organizations, and quite possibly industry

partners.

This new strategic collaboration has already been identified in the business

sector and efforts are being undertaken to grasp it and take advantage of it. Ralph

Welborn and Vince Kastern define the strategic reasons for collaboration:

> Collaborations are an inherently risky yet necessary business option. The
> uncertainty we face and dynamic pressures with which we all deal require
> an agility to respond as competitive plates shift, opening up specific
> market inefficiencies and opportunities that need to be exploited quickly
> and with alacrity. A problem many organizations face, however, is the
> difficulty in responding quickly and effectively. The processes we've
> established and the business model that has made our companies as
> successful as they are often become obstacles when it is necessary to
> quickly exploit short-lived market arbitrage opportunities. Collaborative
> ventures are a means around our well-structured processes. They offer an
> opportunity to build on core strengths of one, two, or more companies in a
> nascent business environment that can be structured outside of our
> traditional processes to take advantage of particular market opportunities.[6]

For similar reasons, strategic collaboration in the defense and national security

arenas allows transcending traditional rules of operation to achieve widely considered

solutions to complex global challenges.

Technology and Tools

In this complex environment it is imperative that the proper tools and

technologies are leveraged in order to increase organizational effectiveness and allow

strategic leaders the maximum opportunity to make decisions. Many organizations have or are adopting web portal technology allowing them to integrate information from multiple sources. Web portals provide a single point of access to a variety of content and core services, and ideally offer a single sign-on point. Portals give users a managed online experience, and can be particularly helpful as a start and return point for those new to the web. Portal content is dynamically managed through databases, application windows, and sometimes cookies. Portals often include calendars and to-do lists, discussion groups, announcements and reports, searches, email and address books, and access to news, weather, maps, and shopping, as well as bookmarks. Web portals often organize information into channels, customizable page containers where specific information or an application appears. Channels make it easy to locate information of interest by categorizing content.[7]

Another critical technology integrated into portals are gadgets. Gadgets are pieces of application functionality that can be embedded in portals, letting users perform common tasks that would normally require switching to a separate application. These tasks can range from checking e-mail to ordering supplies.[8] Gadgets allow users to access information from their e-mail program directly from within their web browser. They also allow them to link to multiple databases from a single location using hyperlinks or embedded programs within the web page. The functionality exposed by gadgets is just one of the ways in which portal technology is changing to meet business needs. Improved development and integration tools are making it easier to deploy increasingly sophisticated portals that can serve as knowledge-management and content-management interfaces, as well as real-time collaborative workspaces. From an

organizational standpoint, many companies organize their sprawling Web sites by consolidating logical groupings of sites under a single, centrally managed portal.[9] This gives the user the ability to see and access nearly all of their required business-related information and applications from within a single web page, significantly reducing the requirement to have multiple applications open on their computer desktop. This portal technology will also decrease software costs for organizations in the future as more and more portals are deployed and applications become more web based. This decrease in cost comes from the reduced number of client-based licenses required to be installed on multiple user computers.

Technology cost reductions are just one way that Defense Department organizations are leveraging technology and tools to transform themselves for the future. In order to maximize these reductions and not impact the high operational tempo of operations currently ongoing in the Department, it is imperative that a new way of doing business is implemented. To this end the Office of the Secretary of Defense designated Four Pillars of Force Transformation in its "Elements of Defense Transformation" in October 2004. The four pillars are: (1) strengthening joint operations through the development of joint operations concepts and architectures; (2) exploiting existing U.S. intelligence advantages through enhanced exploitation and broader dissemination of global surveillance and reconnaissance information; (3) innovative concept development and experimentation through wargaming, simulations and field exercises; and (4) developing new transformational capabilities.[10] These four pillars, along with the overarching umbrella of transformation they fall under, all require a new

level of collaboration beyond just the tactical and operational collaboration that has become second nature within the Department of Defense.

In an effort to leverage these cost reductions and strengthen joint operations the Department of Defense has undertaken an initiative called the Global Information Grid (GIG). DOD defines the GIG as a "globally interconnected, end-to-end set of information capabilities, associated processes, and personnel for collecting, processing, storing, disseminating, and managing information."[11] The GIG is being designed to facilitate and improve interoperability and collaboration among all of the Department of Defense organizations and entities. In addition to allowing DOD forces to gain information superiority over an adversary it will allow DOD organizations to ensure their collaborative efforts are fully supported. The GIG's role, as defined by the Department of Defense, is to:

> Create an environment in which users can access data on demand at any location without having to rely on (and wait for) organizations in charge of data collection to process and disseminate the information. Data could emanate from a variety of sources, including weapon systems belong (sic) to other military services, space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance satellites, and DOD logistics, financial, and other systems that carry out business operations.[12]

This description provides a snapshot of the types of information available to multiple users simultaneously, thereby enhancing collaboration among numerous actors and potentially resulting in powerful, informed decision-making.

Transformation

This new level of collaboration focused at the strategic level will require a dynamic shift in the culture of our armed forces, along with the agencies with which they collaborate. The former Secretary of Defense, Donald H. Rumsfeld, in a speech at the

National Defense University addressed this required shift in culture. He said, "We must transform not only our armed forces, but also the Department that serves them by encouraging a culture of creativity and intelligent risk taking. We must promote a more entrepreneurial approach to developing military capabilities, one that encourages people, all people, to be proactive and not reactive, to behave somewhat less like bureaucrats and more like venture capitalists; one that does not wait for threats to emerge and be validated, but rather anticipates them before they emerge and develops new capabilities that can dissuade and deter those nascent threats."[13]

Responding to this call for transformation by the Secretary of Defense, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) submitted a Request for Information (RFI) to industry in order to describe innovative ideas and concepts supporting strategic collaboration. The focus of the RFI aligns directly with the concept of this paper:

> The recent and increasing prominence of Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations pose a qualitatively and quantitatively new type of problem for the US military. SSTR/HADR operations are considerably more complex than traditional single-service, joint-service, or even coalition operations, in that they typically involve a large, diverse mix of military organizations, non-military government organizations, regional and international government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private volunteer organizations (PVO's), individual volunteers, and the local population. These operations are:
>
> 1. Large-scale: Entire regional or national populations can be affected by natural disasters or conflicts, engaging thousands of responders and stakeholders with diverse skills, resources, fields of expertise, orientations, cultures, objectives, and languages.
>
> 2. Dynamic, Structurally and Interactively Complex: Involving both structured organizations and dynamic, ad hoc, and emergent teams, SSTR/HADR operations are event-driven and rapidly evolve under unforeseen and often urgent circumstances. Responding organizations

and individuals arrive on-scene, and are reinforced or depart according to their own schedules, resources, political realities, or other circumstances.

3. Ad Hoc: Every SSTR/HADR operation is unique. Most of the responders and stakeholders have never worked before (a) with each other, (b) with the indigenous populations, (c) with the host governments, (d) with local military and paramilitary forces, or (e) with civilian service organizations. Some responding organizations, particularly military and paramilitary groups, may have highly structured command and control (C2) hierarchies, while other groups may be less rigorously organized.

4. Cross-domain: Effective operations require those involved to cut across multiple organizations and institutions, fields of expertise, and cultures.

5. Many and Diverse Actors: Typically, there are 1,000s of participants/stakeholders from 100s of organizations with diverse skills, orientations, cultures, interests, objectives, and languages.

6. Emergent: Solutions require spontaneity, innovation, creation and combinations of both new and old techniques. Supporting emergence requires, among other things, a system, which provides near real time feedback of actors and their locations, capabilities, expertise, activities, and teams in non-intrusive and intuitive ways. System transparency and feedback are essential attributes for effective self-organization. The problems found in these situations exceed the ability of any one actor or organization to solve or even to comprehend. No single person has the experience or expertise to detect, recognize, conceptualize, represent, and experiment with these problems in order to solve them. SSTR/HADR operations require participants to collaborate across domains, organizations, cultures, and languages.[14]

The GIG, mentioned previously, represents a collection of initiatives aimed at designing and developing a secure network and its corresponding set of information capabilities and applications. The GIG program models itself after the Internet. It will allow warfighters, policy makers, and support personnel to collaborate in real time and make rapid, critical decisions immediately. The DOD believes that commanders will identify threats more effectively, make better informed decisions, and respond with greater precision by having the ability to access a myriad of information quickly, reliably, and securely through linked systems and military components.[15]

<u>Organizational Structure</u>

Adapting to this new collaborative environment requires significant changes beyond utilizing new tools and technology. The ways members of an organization work with and among each other are as critical as the tools and technologies they will employ. Put an organizational chart in front of any employee and he will tell you the boxes and lines only partially reflect the way work gets done in his organization. Informal relationships among employees often reflect the way work really happens in an organization, compared to work relationships established by position within the formal structure. However, these informal relationships are often invisible or at least only partially understood by managers – a problem that is growing with delayering of organizations, virtual work, and globalization.[16]

Most governmental and many business organizations are hierarchical in nature. Princeton University, in its online dictionary WordNet, defines hierarchical structure as "having several levels arranged in a treelike structure."[17] Hierarchical structure is that structure that fosters competitive behavior. Hierarchy is the major structural component that creates and reinforces competitive behavior in organizational settings.[18] In order for DOD and the services to develop mentally agile leaders it is imperative that this competitive behavior disappear and an environment of collaboration permeate the organizations. Collaboration, more importantly strategic collaboration, requires non-competitive interaction in order to allow a free flow of ideas and possibilities.

The need to collaborate and the use of collaboration to achieve enhanced solutions and capabilities have been present in our military culture for years. However, at the same time organizational structure and the competitive rating process, specifically for officers, have created a cut-throat environment to ensure the highest personal rating

on efficiency reports which is counter to the requirement to collaborate. Additionally, compensation or performance-appraisal systems can force people to choose between the new vision and their self-interests.[19] The officer evaluation report provides a prime example of this performance-appraisal system that drives individual self-interests versus an institutional orientation. The institutional orientation is conceptualized as rooted in a calling to serve higher ideals represented by a shared vision of an organization, rather than in individual self-interests.[20] These self-interests inhibit creativity and vision causing our leaders to continue to collaborate using antiquated and time-consuming techniques. The time for breaking down the barriers created by the deeply rooted, competitive nature of our business is at hand. In order for quality, effective, and strategic collaboration to occur it must have a non-competitive climate fostered by senior leaders.

It may also be time to flatten organizations across the Department of Defense. The hierarchical structure currently in place inhibits the creative and innovative capabilities of many critical and strategic thinkers. In an environment where all ideas and information must go through a "clearing house," namely the supervisor or commander, many great ideas and innovations are stymied before they see the light of day. In order to allow all members of an organization to be contributors in a collaborative environment, it is important that leaders allow them the freedom of action they require in order to operate collaboratively to their fullest potential.

Culture

Two of the greatest challenges faced by leaders are culture and climate. Richard Lewis identifies two modes of leadership: networking and task orientation. In

networking mode, the concerns, in order of appearance, are the status of the leader, the chain of command, the management style, the motivation of the employees, and the language of management used to achieve this. In task-orientation mode, the leadership must tackle issues, formulate strategies, create some form of work ethic and decide on efficiency, task distribution and use of time.[21]

In order to comprehend these two modes of leadership it is important to understand two major culture groups described by Richard Lewis. He describes three major culture types: linear-active, multi-active, and reactive. For purposes of this discussion I will focus on the first two categories. Linear-active people are very schedule-oriented. They believe that they are much more efficient than other people because they follow a schedule and do not deviate from it. Generally, linear-active people can only do one thing at a time. Multi-active people, on the other hand, are not as concerned about schedules. They are very flexible and generally not very punctual. "Multi-active people think they get more done their way."[22]

Culture involves the members of an organization in a socially constructed reality. Organizational members share this reality in the dual senses of similarity and difference.[23] Some of the more common traits of linear-active and multi-active cultures are listed in Table 1 below.

It can be argued that, according to Lewis' analyses and conclusions, military officers tend to populate the far end of the linear-active scale. Given this, in order for a leader to begin to break down the barriers created by self-interest and competition and open the doors to a more collaborative environment he must move towards the multi-active side of the scale. It is on this side of the scale that a culture of openness and

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Common Traits of Cultures	
Linear-Active	Multi-Active
Introvert	Extrovert
Patient	Impatient
Quiet	Talkative
Does one thing at a time	Does several things at a time
Sticks to plans	Changes plans
Job-oriented	People-oriented
Plans ahead methodically	Plans grand outline only

Table 1: Common traits of Linear-Active and Multi-Active Cultures[24]

orienting on the team emerge. These characteristics are required in leaders to open their minds and the minds of their subordinates to new, strategic means of collaboration. What this really means is that leaders cannot inhibit their subordinates and must allow them to make decisions without unnecessary oversight and fear of repercussions. If they are not empowered to make decisions freely, and without fear of admonition, then we will continue to operate as a hierarchical bureaucracy and not capitalize on the promise of strategic collaboration.

Climate

Climate is critical to an organization's effectiveness. While generally inherited from the previous leadership, an organization's climate is established over time and is shaped by dynamic or complacent leaders. This "climate inheritance" presents many

new challenges to the incoming leadership above and beyond the everyday challenges

of leading an organization. Peter Senge addresses the issue of leaders who attempt

organizational changes and the challenges they face. "To the leaders, it looks as though

their efforts are clashing with sudden resistance that seems to come from nowhere."[25]

He goes on to explain:

> Whenever there is "resistance to change," you can count on there being one of (sic) more "hidden" balancing processes. Resistance to change is neither capricious nor mysterious. It almost always arises from threats to traditional norms and ways of doing things. Often these norms are woven into the fabric or established power relationships. The norm is entrenched because of the distribution of authority and control is entrenched. Rather than pushing harder to overcome resistance to change, artful leaders discern the source of the resistance. They focus directly on the implicit norms and power relationships within which the norms are embedded.[26]

Leaders that are adverse to change will be the least likely to change. It will take

longer for such a new leader to implement change once he assumes the leadership

position. As an example, if a former leader in a unit was reluctant to hold meetings other

than in person and at set hours it is difficult, and sometimes impossible, for a new

leader to attempt to modify these meeting behaviors by using video-teleconferencing on

a non-fixed schedule. Although the video-teleconferencing allows subordinates to

reduce their travel time to and from the meeting, gives them more preparation time for

the meeting, and allows them to be present at the source of their institutional knowledge

(their own office or conference room generally) many senior leaders still insist on

conducting meetings face to face. A sophisticated strategic collaborator would find the

balance between that required "face to face" meeting required to deliver important and

specific intent, and the video-teleconference meeting, thereby allowing better use of all

participants' valuable time and resources.

Strategic leaders must embrace collaboration and thus must be willing to change organizational climate to facilitate this way of operating. The challenge for mid-grade and senior leaders in all governmental organizations is that their subordinates are more highly trained in the current technologies than they are. Strategic collaborators must give their subordinates the ability to "free lance" and work across all levels of organizational hierarchy in order to best complete their assignments. Only by breaking down the overly bureaucratic barriers in place in formalized, structured hierarchies will organizations succeed in providing world class support to our servicemen and women.

This change in climate includes embracing a formal education model to support collaboration tools, technologies, and techniques. Simply deploying a portal and telling users it is available does not make it effective. Defense Department training facilities must include formal training for technology, to include standard desktop software, to ensure that future collaborative leaders are prepared to utilize and maximize technology that enables collaboration. These training facilities, with DOD in the lead, must ensure that they coordinate their efforts with external agencies so that leaders across all governmental organizations speak the same "collaboration language" in the future to achieve unity of effort.

Change

So how and when do DOD and the military services change their culture and climate in order to become more strategically collaborative organizations? The "when" is upon us right now, due to the sense of urgency to adapt immediately to the ever changing environment caused during this Global War on Terror. The challenge is managing the change in the most efficient and effective ways possible to take

advantage of the technologies available, but not to burden us with the technologies implemented. Implementing technology for implementation's sake is not an effective way of conducting business. It is critical to have a well thought out plan of action for the use of the technology. It is also important to understand the capabilities the technology brings to the table in order to support our efforts. The strategic collaboration tools available today, if planned and implemented properly, will allow our leaders to not only maintain communications with their subordinate and lateral organizations but give back a much needed commodity to leaders of all levels: time. These tools also allow our leaders and organizations to operate much more efficiently, and with more informed plans for the future. Strategic collaboration is not about technology, but increasing the capacity to lead.

Organizational change is critical to the future of strategic collaboration across the Department of Defense. John P. Kotter describes an eight-stage change process in *Leading Change* that points out common errors that occur during the organizational change process and the consequences associated with them. His analysis points out the "how" of preparing an organization for major change and how to ensure that it embraces the change.

The eight step process proposed by Kotter includes:

- Establish a sense of urgency – identify and discuss any potential crisis.
- Creating the guiding coalition – ensure that the group designated to lead the change is designed with members willing to take chances and drive change. Teamwork is critical.

- Developing a vision and strategy – a strong, clear vision will drive the change effort.

- Communicating the change vision – all members of the organization, and those outside of it, must understand and be able to articulate the vision and strategy.

- Empowering broad-based action – encourage risk taking and non-traditional ideas, activities and actions.

- Generating short-term wins – ensure that all changes are "visible" and can be clearly identified to members assisting with their buy-in.

- Consolidating gains and producing more change – find people that will implement the change vision and introduce new projects and themes.

- Anchoring new approaches in the culture – articulate the connection between new behaviors and organizational success.[27]

Organizational change does not imply that a restructuring needs to occur. In fact, restructuring may be the worst thing for an organization. Many organizations have already developed informal social networks that have developed levels of collaboration that transcend the horizontal and vertical constructs of the basic organization. Many governmental organizations fit this mold. By reorganizing or restructuring an organization the leadership may actually be causing more harm than good. In order to determine how the informal social networks operate, and how to take full advantage of them within an organization, it is imperative that a formal study be conducted prior to any potential reorganization or restructuring.

The two greatest challenges to this change are culture and climate. Once an organization manages changing culture and climate it will become more effective, and will be led by more effective leaders. Strategic collaboration requires leaders who are willing to take chances and make changes. An organization that embraces and accepts change becomes a better organization. Members of the organization "buy into" the management vision and work more effectively towards the common goal.

The intent of this section has been to analyze the culture and climate factors that inhibit good strategic collaboration and the changes necessary to implement quality and effective strategic collaboration. The bottom line is that leaders must be willing to make tough decisions and implement changes in organizations that may have deep-rooted cultures that are resistant to change, or climates that are reluctant to change. John Kotter provides an excellent synopsis of the thoughts presented in this paper: "A strategy of embracing the past will probably become increasingly ineffective over the next few decades. Better for most of us to start learning how to cope with change, to develop whatever leadership potential we have, and to help our organizations in the transformation process. Better for most of us, despite the risks, to leap into the future. And to do so sooner rather than later."[28]

The Future

Leaders at all levels must embrace the technologies that will enable them to become more effective collaborators. Senior leaders and government officials must embrace the technologies that will make them strategic collaborators. Leaders at all levels, but specifically higher level defense and interagency, must also be introspective and understand that they may have to adapt to this new collaborative environment in

order for them and their organizations to be successful. In this fast-paced, VUCA environment it is critical that timely and accurate information be shared by DOD and the interagency. As an example, in the operational world, as future operations transition from phases one through three to phase four, it is imperative that the interagency and non-governmental assets be linked with each other with similar access to shared data sources. The interagency adaptation of this technology and new techniques for collaboration will be essential. Military leaders and organizations have historically adapted very well to challenges while the interagency has been less successful in adapting to new circumstances.

In the late 1990's the United States Army initiated an effort called Army Knowledge Online (AKO). From the onset AKO has provided users with a single e-mail address for use throughout their entire Army career. Over time, AKO has evolved into a full fledged knowledge management portal with access to personnel and medical records and integrated access to a number of protected databases. AKO offers powerful technologies to share information more effectively and make work more efficient, literally changing the way the Army conducts business. Recognizing that an organization's most important asset is its members' intellectual capital, knowledge management is a systematic process for acquiring, creating, synthesizing, sharing, and using information, insights, and experience to achieve organizational goals.[29] This service has been extended to include the Defense Knowledge Online (DKO) project which will allow members across all services (to include civilian and retired) to collaborate using shared portal information, online storage of documents, and real time, secure web-based chat.

In a larger sense than AKO and DKO, the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) has begun developing Net-Centric Enterprise Services (NCES) which will connect systems and people, allowing them to share information, both data and services. DISA's mission is "a combat support agency responsible for planning, engineering, acquiring, fielding, and supporting global net-centric solutions to serve the needs of the President, Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, and other DOD Components, under all conditions of peace and war."[30] As the lead agency for the integration of the GIG, DISA finds itself in the unenviable position of being the lead agency for change in collaboration across the Department of Defense. Without the proper leadership and funding DISA will face significant challenges in the future. Still, the future is bright for collaboration.

Conclusion

In 2001, Russia and China signed a "treaty of friendship and cooperation."[31] This treaty was not a security alliance and did not include any provisions for defense of either nation by the other. The most significant elements of the 2001 treaty, however, dealt with strategic collaboration. "In this regard, the treaty reflected shared concerns expressed repeatedly over the preceding several years about American 'hegemonism' in the international system."[32] Russia and China simply determined that it was in their best interest to maintain open and collaborative communications to ensure that the United States does not become the single global superpower. If we do not learn how to collaborate and start developing our own strategic collaborators we will struggle to maintain the moniker bestowed upon us by the Russia-Chinese treaty as the single global superpower.

At the beginning of the paper we defined strategic collaboration as a joint intellectual effort focused on a highly important, intended objective. In order for the DOD and military services to ensure that they can defeat future enemies it is imperative that they focus on training, educating, and operating in a strategically collaborative manner to capitalize on available and emerging technologies and techniques to achieve unity of effort. We've come a long way from a "string and two cans." We must capitalize on our current strategic collaboration capacity to address the pressing challenges of the new and future strategic environments. Sharing information is our key to success. Additionally, leaders must use all functions of strategic leadership and communication in order to shape their organization and to work with and affect external agencies and audiences to collaborate strategically and achieve long lasting policy goals. Sun Tzu recognized that in The Art of War, "When a commander unable to estimate his enemy uses a small force to engage a large one, or weak troops to strike the strong, or when he fails to select shock troops for the van, the result is rout."[33]

Endnotes

[1] Dictionary.com. "Collaboration." *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. http://dictionary.reference.com/ browse/collaboration; Internet; accessed: March 15, 2008.

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