

Civilian Research Project Senior Service College Fellow

Irregular Warfare as a Containment Strategy in Afghanistan

by

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IRREGULAR WARFARE AS A CONTAINMENT STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

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A security environment dominated by the threats of terrorism and insurgency is the new (and old) normal. For the United States this poses a “wicked” problem, which we cannot win, but can be managed with the right balance in strategy. Full integration of Irregular Warfare into our national policies and strategy will allow the United States to manage this enduring problem. Afghanistan serves as the most immediate and relevant venue for implementing a strategy using Irregular Warfare as the main effort. Given that the insurgency in Afghanistan does not threaten the continental United States, is not supported by an outside power, and given that the U.S population will likely resist continued expenditure of resources, it is possible to “contain” the insurgency in Afghanistan with irregular techniques. This approach calls for a small footprint of U.S and coalition forces, that can be sustained long enough for Afghanistan to become a functioning state and once “Afghan Good enough” is achieved, an even smaller, more permanent commitment.

IRREGULAR WARFARE AS A CONTAINMENT STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

“This is another type of war new in its intensity, ancient in its origins-war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him...it requires in those situations where we must counter it...a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training.”¹

-President John F. Kennedy, 1962

An environment dominated by the threats of terrorism and insurgency is the New (and old) normal. For the United States this poses a “wicked” problem, which we cannot win, but can be managed with the right balance in strategy. Full integration of irregular warfare into our national policies and strategy will allow the United States to manage this enduring problem. Afghanistan serves as the most immediate and relevant venue for implementing a strategy using irregular warfare as the main effort. Given that the insurgency in Afghanistan does not threaten the continental United States and is not supported by an outside power and given that the U.S population is resistant to continued expenditure of resources, it is possible to “contain” the insurgency in Afghanistan with irregular techniques. This approach calls for a small footprint of U.S and coalition forces, that can be sustained long enough for Afghanistan to become a functioning state and once “Afghan good enough” is achieved, an even smaller, more permanent commitment.

I will address this problem and argument primarily based on personal experience and opinion, but using other references as required. I have served multiple tours in Afghanistan, including two rotations as a Special Forces Battalion Commander and

most recently for 14 months as the J-3, Director of Operations, for the Combined Forces Special Operations Command- Afghanistan. I conducted operations in Afghanistan at tactical, operational, and strategic levels, helping in the design and implementation of initiatives that senior military and political officials have labeled as “game changers.” I have built relationships with senior Afghan leaders that can only be built over time, and because of this have been able to engage in candid discussions about the complex problem sets that face Afghanistan. Despite this experience, I am no expert on Afghanistan. The more experience I gain by operating on the ground there, the more I appreciate the complexity of the situation and how one small event or issue, either not considered, or put in context (and not necessarily a Western context, but an Afghan cultural context) can lead to lack of understanding, with significant security or stability repercussions.

The strategy I propose for Afghanistan post-2014 has several important pillars. The first pillar that I believe must be addressed is the question of where does Afghanistan fit into the bigger picture in regard to the priorities of the United States? In order to determine where Afghanistan fits, we need to establish an overarching national strategy driven by a constant and evolving process. The second pillar is to understand that winning in Afghanistan will look different than winning a conventional war. We can define winning in Afghanistan as simply denying the Taliban insurgency rural safe havens while preventing an implosion of the Afghan national political and military structure. This pillar is also based on the Afghan “good enough” concept in that we only apply the minimum amount of resources to accomplish our goals and we do not raise the standards and expectations to a level unsustainable by the Afghans. The third pillar

is to devise and execute an on-the-ground strategy that is less demanding on U.S. military resources, while still accomplishing the requirements set in the second pillar. This third pillar will be based on the umbrella concept of Irregular Warfare executed by a tailored Special Operations-centric command structure.

Pillar 1: Grand Strategy- Why we need a National process before we can set a strategy for Afghanistan

The United States faces a “wicked” problem in Afghanistan, and solving it will require a strategy that is cheaper than the current course, domestically acceptable over the long term, and which will accomplish the mission. Compromise will be required. We must first ascertain how Afghanistan fits within our national priorities. How do we integrate it, and future potentially similar conflicts, into a comprehensive national grand strategy? Although a daunting prospect, until we have a true, constantly evolving process to evaluate and understand the Ends (requirement), Means (available resources), and Ways (adapting our strategy), we will find ourselves in the same Do-loop and stuck in the same problems we currently face in Afghanistan.

In the Fall of 2011, I attended a course in American Grand Strategy at Duke University, through the United States Army War College Fellows program. This class was taught by Dr. Peter Feaver, a political science professor and Director of the Triangle Institute for Security Studies. During the Bush administration, Feaver served as a special advisor for strategic planning and institutional reform on the National Security Council. The class was designed to examine the challenges and opportunities confronting the United States and the efforts (or failures) of U.S. policymakers to craft a

Grand Strategy to address them. One of the more interesting aspects of the class was listening to the varying opinions on what defines Grand Strategy and discussing the current lack of a process for creating a Grand Strategy for the United States. Given the current economic and security challenges facing our country, the United States needs a Grand Strategy that transcends political administrations, and which is driven by a transparent evolving process of analysis. The key is the “process,” which the nation currently lacks.

The process that our nation requires to guide our Grand Strategy must be driven by what is truly vital to the nation and to that end we must clearly define those areas where we are unwilling to compromise, and those must drive our Grand Strategy. We must first define the concept of Grand Strategy as it applies to the contemporary environment, before we can establish a process to create and then guide the strategy itself. Grand Strategy has been defined many different ways and too often in the narrow context of security. Liddell Hart wrote, “The role of grand strategy – higher strategy – is to co-ordinate and direct all the resources of a nation, or band of nations, towards the attainment of the political object of the war – the goal defined by fundamental policy.”² In the context of today’s globally networked environment, and competition for limited resources, we must take a broader and more pragmatic view of what constitutes Grand Strategy. In The Political Economy of Grand Strategy, Kevin Narizny defines Grand Strategy “as the general principles by which an executive decision maker or decision-making body pursues its international political goals. It is much like foreign policy, but at a higher level of abstraction, focusing on broad patterns of behavior rather than specific decisions”.³

Others have written about the need for a process to form and execute strategy for our nation. In 2006, Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley wrote “A New Project Solarium,” published in Joint Forces Quarterly.⁴ Flournoy and Brimley voice their concern for a lack of process to guide our nation’s Grand Strategy. They write,

“More than 4 years after September 11, 2001, there is no established interagency process for assessing the full spectrum of threats and opportunities endemic to the new security environment and identifying priorities for policy development, execution, and resource allocation. The articulation of a national vision that describes America’s purpose in the post–September 11 world is useful—indeed, it is vital—but describing a destination is no substitute for developing a comprehensive roadmap for how the country will achieve its stated goals. Various institutions in the national security apparatus have attempted strategic planning, but these efforts have been stove piped within individual agencies and have varied in both approach and quality. There is still no systematic effort at strategic planning for national security that is inclusive, deliberative, and integrative.”⁵

Their key argument is that in the absence of a deliberate process for decision making, one that provides analysis and integrates across departments, our decision making and therefore our strategy is dominated by the present needs of whatever crisis is current. In more colloquial terms, our national “strategy” is to put out fires as they happen. Flournoy and Brimley argue for establishing a process that

“includes three key elements: a quadrennial national security review that would identify national security objectives and priorities and develop a security strategy and implementing guidance for achieving them; an interagency process for regularly assessing the threats, challenges, and opportunities posed by the international security environment and informing the decisions of senior leaders; and a resource allocation process that would ensure that agency budgets reflect both the fiscal guidance and the national security priorities of the President.”⁶

To me, Grand Strategy for the United States must be based on a foundation of macro tenets that are based on our nation’s core values. These become the never changing goals that drive the doctrine of our Grand Strategy and should be developed in the initial stages of process development. The supporting objectives to each goal will evolve and that is why we need a process that will constantly analyze and make recommendations for changes.

Pillar 2: Defining “winning” in Afghanistan

Although we have not yet built a proper process for determining the nation’s Grand Strategy, we nevertheless continue to produce guiding documents. “The National Security Strategy” published in May 2010, outlines the key tasks for Afghanistan: “deny al-Qa’ida a safe haven, deny the Taliban the ability to overthrow the government, and strengthen the capacity of Afghanistan’s security forces and government so that they can take lead responsibility for Afghanistan’s future.”⁷ To accomplish these tasks we must take a long term view of Afghanistan. We must

understand that we are in a conflict that will not be won in a traditional defining moment, with a tangible score. The key to victory in Afghanistan is to recognize that the environment there is so complex, at every level, that we cannot expect to win in a clear cut traditional fashion. What we must do is manage the effort in Afghanistan so as not to lose. This means a long term strategy, committing just enough resources, both in human and fiscal capital, to achieve and maintain “good enough,” and to do so for as long as the environment there is seen to be a threat to our National interests. This is the single most difficult aspect of the conflict in Afghanistan for both American civilians and military alike to get our heads around, because it goes against our culture. The average American kid grows up watching, football, baseball or basketball where there is a clear cut winner and loser. When we go into the military we are taught that to close with, engage with our weapons and destroy the enemy combatants will lead to a tangible victory. The first thing we must do in order to win in Afghanistan, is to redefine “win” and truly accept this definition and concept as it pertains to fighting in an Irregular Warfare environment. Victory in Irregular Warfare is more about not losing, than winning. By taking on this mindset, and then by applying the principles of Irregular Warfare to achieve that more limited result, we can develop a strategy that will contain the threat in Afghanistan and achieve the task directed in the National Security Strategy.

Pillar 3: Irregular Warfare (IW)

Achieving this recalibrated definition of “victory” can best be accomplished through less traditional means—even “irregular” means. The Department of Defense

(DOD) has already begun to move in this direction. The Defense Strategic Guidance, published January 2012, describes a shift in strategy across the DOD, including the use of Irregular Warfare as a key strategy for Afghanistan. The Guidance says

“To protect U.S. national interests and achieve the objectives of the 2010 *National Security Strategy* in this environment, *the Joint Force will need to recalibrate its capabilities and make selective additional investments* to succeed in the following missions:

Counter Terrorism and Irregular Warfare. Acting in concert with other means of national power, U.S. military forces must continue to hold al-Qa.'ida and its affiliates and adherents under constant pressure, wherever they may be. *Achieving our core goal of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al-Qaida and preventing Afghanistan from ever being a safe haven again will be central to this effort.* As U.S. forces draw down in Afghanistan, our global counter terrorism efforts will become more widely distributed and will be characterized by a mix of direct action and security force assistance. Reflecting lessons learned of the past decade, we will continue to build and sustain tailored capabilities appropriate for counter terrorism and irregular warfare. We will also remain vigilant to threats posed by other designated terrorist organizations, such as Hezbollah.”⁸

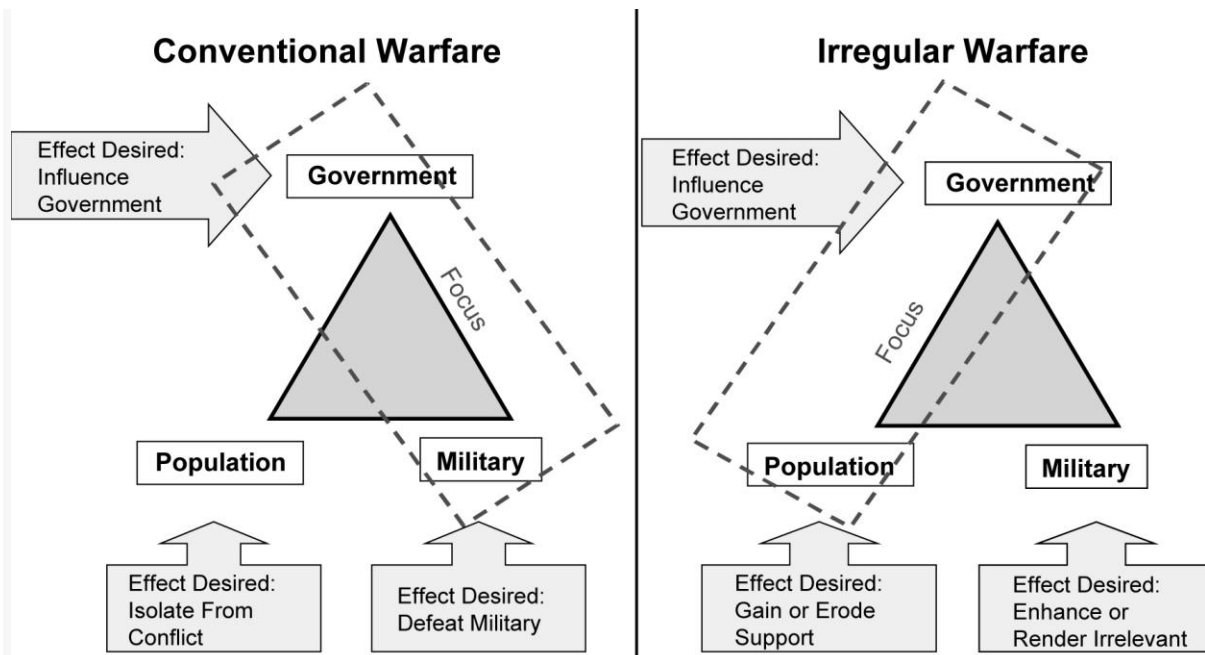
Irregular Warfare (IW) is defined in Joint Publication- 1 as “a violent struggle among state and nonstate actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may

employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence and will.”⁹

IW is people centric and more art than science. IW is about understanding the culture, history, and social dynamics of the target society. In IW the ability to understand and influence people is much more important than technology or weapons platforms. IW is a violent struggle, but not all people participating are armed. The keys to success in IW are culturally aware people who can build relationships at all levels in order to influence other participants, armed or unarmed to act in a desired manner.¹⁰

IW is not a standalone activity but is achieved through the art of integrating unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency and stability operations. This can mean applying one or all these activities together as appropriate to achieve the desired outcome. There are also supporting activities that must be integrated such as, strategic communications, information operations, psychological operations, civil-military operations and support to law-enforcement, intelligence and counterintelligence operations.¹¹

The diagram below, taken from FM3-05.130, contrasts Conventional Warfare with Irregular Warfare.¹²



The two primary differences between IW and conventional operations are the focus on the population and the emphasis on an indirect approach.¹³

In my opinion, IW as it applies to Afghanistan begins at all levels by first taking the time to understand the environment and culture. Second it is about identifying key influencers and building relationships with a multi-echelon strategy of how to use those relationships to manipulate and influence larger groups among the Afghan political structure, the military and the general population. The final consideration is the application and integration of capabilities that focuses on the population but which is sustainable in the long term. This capability must be balanced between forces that specialize in an indirect population-centric approach and a kinetic direct action approach.

Understanding the threats

The Taliban are not the main threat to achieving our goals in Afghanistan. From a strictly tactical standpoint, we have never lost a battle to the Taliban, and never will. We have a high degree of tactical overmatch in any sort of traditional force-on-force battle with the Taliban. The best illustration of this occurred when the Taliban were arguably at the height of their strength, and we were the weakest, at the start of the war in 2001. What we saw was that a few hundred Special Operations Forces personnel, partnered with a few dozen CIA operators, an estimated \$18 million in operational funds to incentivize a few thousand Afghan allies, supported by an average of 100 Close Air Support sorties a day, militarily defeated an estimated 45,000 Taliban fighters, in less than 30 days.¹⁴ At the 2012 capability level of the Taliban, a small footprint of Special Operations Forces, partnered and fostering mobilization at the local level, is all that is required to deny the Taliban the most critical rural safe havens and support of the populace that they require to survive. With an integrated strike force to assist in reducing threats to a mobilized rural Afghan population, as well as disrupting the Taliban in areas that are not conducive to local mobilization of the population, the tactical containment of the Taliban is manageable for the long term and at a reasonable cost.

The main threat to the United States achieving its goal's in Afghanistan is the potential for the Afghan national government to politically implode after 2014. The fissures are already there, created by long term hatred between the former Northern Alliance/Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leadership and the ethnic Pashtu. Ethno-political posturing among both groups has already taken place in the military as well as the National political structure. One key ingredient to preventing these fractures is to direct more of

our intelligence capability toward gathering political intelligence which can in turn be integrated into planning and developing a strategy to manipulate and posture ahead of the fractures that will lead to implosion. Partnering at the highest levels is another key ingredient in the prevention of the fractures. I address the details of partnering in the next section of this paper, but maybe T.E. Lawrence said it best in the Arab Bulletin. In his writing Lawrence (of Arabia) described 27 articles or principles for the conduct of Irregular Warfare. In the 5th of the 27 principles he wrote “Remain in touch with your leader constantly and unobtrusively as you can. Live with him, that at meal time and at audiences you may be naturally with him in his tent. Formal visits to give advice are not so good as the constant dropping of ideas in casual talk.”¹⁵ Full time National level partnering must occur with the same level of commitment as seen and proven effective by our Special Operations Forces at the Tactical level. This should translate to ISAF becoming a fully integrated staff located with the Afghan Ministry of Defense (MOD).

Operationalizing an Irregular Warfare containment strategy in Afghanistan

The strategy to contain the insurgency in Afghanistan, must be pragmatic, sustainable in both human capital and fiscal resources, and be built from the bottom up. A local solution, integrating indirect and direct capabilities, with a hierarchy of headquarters built to engage power brokers at levels above the tactical level and truly to partner with Afghan military and Government officials through the National level is key. A local strategy to deny the insurgents rural safe havens is the foundation for the containment strategy that I propose. By building on the already implemented Village Stability Operations (VSO) program (described below), we will deny insurgent safe

havens and mobilize communities which can then be connected from the bottom up to, through the District and Provincial government, to the National Government.

Local Defense in Afghanistan

An April 2011 Rand interim report provides background on the history leading to the creation of the most recent local defense initiatives in Afghanistan beginning in 2009:

“The most ambitious and controversial of these efforts was the Local Defense Initiative (LDI), a program created last year by Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) and implemented by Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A). LDI called for the use of special operations teams, principally but not exclusively U.S. Army Special Forces, to create volunteer village level defense forces to fight against insurgents and, as a sort of quid pro quo for resisting insurgents, to bring development to the village. It is allegedly seen by some in both the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and the Karzai government as potentially creating militias that will weaken the central state in the long run. In early summer 2010, the program was redesignated Village Stability Operations (VSO) with a specific team living in a village conducting VSO termed a Village Stability Platform (VSP). In August 2010, the VSP program entered a new phase when the efforts to create local defense forces were recognized as important by the Afghan government. The Afghan Ministry of the Interior responded by creating the Afghan Local Police (ALP). While still receiving support from U.S. special

operations forces, the community defenders will now be official members of the Afghan police, albeit with more restricted powers than a normal Afghan National Police officer.”¹⁶

Village Stability Operations is a classic bottom-up counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy that establishes expanding security and stability bubbles around rural villages. As the security bubble expands outwards, more and more “white space” is created that is inhospitable to the insurgents and allows the establishment and solidification of legitimate local governance. As these security bubbles expand and connect, they simultaneously force the insurgents out and connect local governance to the district government, and district governance to the provincial and national governments. At the heart of VSO is a team- or platoon-sized element that embeds in the village – it moves into a local house or compound and lives there 24/7 in order to achieve persistent engagement with Afghan partners at all levels. This creates an unparalleled level of situational awareness and trust.¹⁷

Success in VSO requires a mindset of presence, patience, persistence, and partnering. The goal of VSO is to permanently shape an area to support local governance and create an environment where Afghans can live prosperous lives. This process normally requires months, and not weeks, to achieve. VSO is a bottom-up, population-centric form of warfare that is conducted in four steps. These steps may occur sequentially or simultaneously. The four steps of the VSO framework are:

1. Shape: The shape phase is the first step of VSO and continues through all of the ensuing phases. This phase begins with assessment and usually ends when the SOF element has established an embed site inside the village. This is the period when the team assesses and engages the local population to gain entry into the village.

2. Hold: The hold phase is the step that creates a security bubble around the village. This phase begins when the SOF element gains entry into the village and ends when the locals no longer feel intimidated by the insurgents and there is a resident capacity for security, development and governance within their own village.

3. Build: The build phase links rural villages to the national level government through the district center. This phase begins when local village stability has achieved a stability bubble and ends when there is a clear connection between the village and the district in the realm of security, development, governance and reintegration. This includes the development of a representative local Shura, as well as projects that improve infrastructure, education, preventive medicine, and other basic needs that continue to build loyalty and commitment to the national government and solidifying the village's long-term resolve to reject the insurgency.

4. Expand and Transition: The expand and transition phase involves expanding the influence of Village Stability to other areas and transitioning security, governance, and development responsibilities to GIRoA. This phase begins when the village achieves a clear connection with the district center and ends when the entire district is considered stable and is being led and administered by GIRoA.¹⁸

To thicken SOF elements conducting VSO, conventional force U.S. Infantry battalions are employed. These battalions are task organized to augment and integrate

with SOF teams to provide additional combat power for the VSP and can be used to reinforce a full SOF team or enable split-team operations. With proper mentoring by SOF, these forces are an effective platform for expanding the VSO footprint and creating more “white space” across the CJOA.¹⁹

VSO is the foundation for IW in Afghanistan because at the tactical level it denies the Taliban insurgency the rural safe havens and support of the population that are needed for survival. VSO also creates the linkage to the central government so that as the population sees the benefits a central government can provide they will be less supportive of the Taliban. VSO provides the needed security to the rural population by establishing a legitimized local security solution in the form of the Afghan Local Police (ALP).

The President of Afghanistan established a program called Ministry of Interior (MOI) Afghan Local Police (ALP) in July 2010. The Afghan-conducted, Coalition-supported program incorporated previous, similar village and district defensive programs (LDI, CDI, etc.). The Government of Afghanistan had requested United States Government (USG) support for the program in two significant ways: 1) provide funding to the MOI; and 2) partner with the MOI for training and technical assistance. The program is now supported by a bi-lateral agreement between the government of Afghanistan and the USG.²⁰

The ALP program is a village-focused program that complements Counterinsurgency (COIN) efforts by targeting rural areas with limited to no Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) presence to enable conditions for improved security, governance and development.²¹

The MOI is tasked with providing security in villages and towns to allow citizens to lead productive lives without threat from insurgents and other illegally armed groups. To that end the MOI has developed the ALP to allow rural and isolated communities that are willing to stand with the government to participate in providing security and stability for their families and property alongside the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and Coalition Forces.²²

A district is considered validated for ALP when the National level Afghan government officials meet officially with local officials to formally agree that an ALP site is wanted by the villagers in the area and that there is a demonstrated need as determined by the group.

The ALP is a defensive, community-oriented unit that brings self-defense, government presence, and opportunity for economic development to rural areas of Afghanistan. As a defensive force, ALP are neither equipped for offensive operations nor permitted to grow beyond the size in their *tashkil* (typically 30 per village and 300 per district). Their activity is restricted to the area required for the defense of their own village. They directly impact insurgent activities by denying them safe havens and freedom of movement.²³

Integrated Strike Force capability

The indirect approach to deny rural safe havens to the insurgents is the key to tactical level success in Afghanistan, and will be executed primarily through the described VSO program. An integrated strike capability will also be required to not only directly support the VSO effort, but also to strike insurgents in areas where it is not

feasible or efficient to maintain the VSO effort. For example in areas of Nuristan, VSO may not be feasible or efficient compared to the effort in human capital and resources required. In cases such as in Nuristan, Strike Forces would be used to conduct both unilateral as well as partnered combined Direct Action to prevent the establishment of safe havens and to contain.

Adjusted Command and Control

An IW strategy for Afghanistan will require restructuring of Command and Control of forces in Afghanistan. Special Operations Forces (SOF) will assume lead. The Regional Commands will be replaced with two Combined Joint Special Operations Task Forces (CJSOTF's), functionally aligned along lines of effort East and South and lines of effort North and West. Each of these CJSOTF's will be commanded by a one star Special Operations officer, with joint staffs made up of a combination of expertise to execute both the required VSO (main effort) and supporting Direct Action along respective lines of effort. Each CJSOTF will have a subordinate BCT or Marine equivalent, providing thickening forces to the VSO effort, augmenting the strike force effort and to fill voids in emerging requirements. Fixed and Rotary Wing aviation, from both the Conventional Forces and SOF, ISR and logistical enablers, will be assigned to each CJSOTF based on mission requirement.

A three star SOF lead headquarters would replace the current IJC and be responsible for integration of the operations conducted by the two CJSOTF's, partnership with the newly created Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC), and integration of the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTMA) capability and capacity building efforts.

Transforming Partnership

At the tactical level in Afghanistan, partnership is done well, especially by the SOF units. In my opinion lack of true partnership above the tactical level is one of our major shortcomings in building capacity. For example, the Chief of Staff of the Afghan Army, a four star general, has a Colonel as his mentor, which in reality serves as more of a liaison Officer. This is not to say that the Colonel that serves in that capacity is not competent; it is just that a Colonel, who has never served as a Chief of Staff of an Army, does not have the experience. This idea will be challenged, because the Chief of Staff of the Afghan Army is constantly meeting with General officers from NTMA, IJC or ISAF. In reality, if you are not physically located, close to 24-7 with your counterpart, in the type of conflict we face in Afghanistan, you are not partnered. This is the number one biggest shortfall among the Afghan senior leadership, no one is there, 24-7, showing them what right looks like, and making them do the right thing. The solution to this is to transform ISAF Headquarters into a partnering Headquarters and physically move it from the current location, and relocate into the Ministry of Defense compound and physically partner. The same should be considered by the State Department, relocating most of the embassy personnel work areas from the embassy compound to the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and its subordinate organizations, and physically partner. I fully appreciate how hard partnering is and the work involved. I also fully understand the hard work and sacrifice that has gone into the tactical level partnership, especially by SOF, and it is that intangible element that really makes the difference. This will also be a major ingredient in a formula for the glue that is needed to prevent the fissures that

are currently present from becoming full scale fractures leading to an Afghan National level implosion post 2014.

Conclusion

The situation we face in Afghanistan today is complex and will become more complex with time. To deal with this complexity, we must develop a strategy that is nested within the overarching strategy of our nation. We must develop a strategy that is feasible and suitable to achieve the goals over a period that will be measured in decades and generations. We must have realistic expectations of what can and cannot be accomplished in Afghanistan and be willing to accept that success there will not look like a traditional victory. By applying the principles of Irregular Warfare to a strategy designed to contain the security situation, to a good-enough level, we can manage the wicked problem of Afghanistan.

Endnotes:

¹ Joseph D. Celeski, *Operationalizing Coin*, *Joint Special Operations University Report 05-02 September 2005*, p.7

² B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*. 2nd rev. ed. (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), 322.

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