

Honing the Sword

Strategy and Forces After 9/11



MARCUS CORBIN

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"A Swift Elusive Sword: What if Sun Tzu and John Boyd Did a National Defense Review?" Chester W. Richards, May 2001.

"Reforging the Sword: Forces for a 21st Century Security Strategy," Col. Daniel Smith (Ret.), Marcus Corbin and Christopher Hellman, September 2001.

"Homeland Security: A Competitive Strategies Approach," F.G. Hoffman, March 2002.

"Mr. Smith is Dead: No One Stands in the Way as Congress Laces Post-Sept. 11 Defense Bill with Pork," Winslow T. Wheeler, October 2002.

"Less Talk, More Walk: Strengthening Homeland Security Now," David Isenberg, November 2002.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marcus Corbin is a Senior Analyst at the Center for Defense Information, where he leads the Military Reform Project. He co-authored a broad review of national security policy at CDI in 2001 entitled *Reforging the Sword*. Since 1989 he has written on defense issues including U.S. military strategy, force structure, budgets, procurement, defense industry, and military reform, at the Project On Government Oversight and the Federation of American Scientists as well as at CDI. Corbin earned a Masters degree in International Relations from the School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C., and an undergraduate degree in Public Policy from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University.

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Executive Summary

In 2001, prior to the attacks of Sept. 11, the Center for Defense Information published a national security review and force structure entitled *Reforging the Sword: Forces for a 21st Century Security Strategy*. Happily for the authors of *Reforging*, the Sept. 11 attacks did not make it obsolete. To the contrary, its emphases on working more closely with allies, on lighter, more agile forces, on intelligence, and on the importance of nonmilitary components of a conflict were important elements of the conduct of the counterattack by the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush. The events of Sept. 11 and Operation Enduring Freedom have reinforced the need raised in *Reforging* to prepare for new threats, and have enhanced the prospects for some of its proposed new directions, particularly in the area of allied collaboration if a multilateralist administration took office. This report updates *Reforging the Sword* in light of events on and since Sept. 11, 2001. The suggestions here use as a foundation the predilections spelled out in *Reforging* for working with allies, for taking the nonmilitary elements of modern war into consideration, and for trying to keep humans in the war-fighting loop.

Although the Afghanistan operation provides a useful illustration of new types of wars the military might face in the 21st century, there is the ever-present danger of basing too much future planning on “refighting the last war,” or even the current one. To the extent that similar factors may not recur in other situations, the lessons of Afghanistan will be less relevant in those cases. Nevertheless, central characteristics of the Sept. 11 attacks and the operations in Afghanistan are likely to be harbingers of the future – the first war of the 21st century – rather than vestiges of a past era of conflict.

Asymmetric Threats and Opportunities

Sept. 11 showed that, for at least some enemies of the United States, the lessons on how to successfully attack the world's superpower have sunk in: avoid U.S. military strengths and strike at its vulnerabilities. Although most warfare in history has had such "asymmetric" elements, the degree of asymmetries seems greater now, with U.S. conventional global military might unchallenged, yet a few people with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) able to kill thousands in the "hyperpower" homeland. Now asymmetric strategies are being implemented close to "the battlefield" against U.S. interventions abroad – for example by attacking barracks rather than forces on the battlefield, and, as in the case of Sept. 11, the strategy can be taken to an extreme and be implemented against America itself, bypassing U.S. deployed forces completely.

Two other elements help define current asymmetric conflict: that it tries to win disproportionate strategic gains at relatively small cost, and that its ultimate targets are often psychological rather than physical – particularly, political will. How relevant the military remains against these new threats – that is, whether there are terrorist-supporting infrastructures, governments, and targets available for attack – may depend on the degree to which enemies make themselves vulnerable by establishing conventional targets and supporters, versus how much they operate covertly.

The U.S. counterattack showed that in particular cases, if the United States plays its cards right, terrorist organizations that fail to move principally into a globalized, stealthy, transnational, method of operating – i.e., that succumb to the temptation of developing overt, conventional capabilities, such as the training camps in Afghanistan – can be vulnerable to traditional U.S. military strengths. The United States possesses "positive" asymmetric strengths of its own that can be used effectively when adversaries fail to counter them sufficiently with their "negative" asymmetric strategies. These U.S. strengths should be used whenever possible – the question is how much opponents will "consent" to fighting on "battlegrounds" where those strengths can be readily applied against them.

One of the overriding lessons of Operation Enduring Freedom is the possibility of making substantial use of allies – local allies, regional allies, and global allies. The local allies provided the valuable service of performing most of the ground fighting; regional allies provided the bases that eased deploy-

ment and operations of U.S. forces; and the global allies provided political support as well as some small military forces. All of these allies, plus Russia and China, created a climate of strong international support for a while that was important in the political battle with al Qaeda and the Taliban for the hearts and minds of Muslims both in the region and in the broader Islamic world.

What did *not* work well in Afghanistan also should be gleaned for lessons. For some time, the political fallout of the bombing campaign and the related conduct of the political/cultural/information war endangered a successful outcome against the Taliban. And the long-term effects of the operation on the overall al Qaeda organization, on Afghanistan, and on other U.S. foreign policy goals, such as democracy promotion, are uncertain and troubled. Much of al Qaeda's leadership is unaccounted for, presumed alive, and the state of the surviving network outside of Afghanistan is unknown, presumed dangerous.

Apart from successes and failures, a key capability was not deeply tested by Afghanistan operations: the ability of the U.S. military to deal with opponents' current asymmetric tactics and strategies. Al Qaeda and the Taliban did not come up with effective asymmetric approaches against U.S. methods in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Countering Ultraterrorists

The 9/11 attacks demonstrated that fanatical groups can, even with substantial effort devoted to track and destroy them, organize sufficiently undetected to conduct devastating attacks. Second, the attacks demonstrated the prominence of new type of "ultraterrorist" groups with essentially unlimited aims and willingness to cause massive slaughter among others and commit suicide themselves.

Proliferation

In addition to an escalation in aims among nonstate opponents, globalization – particularly the relatively easy flow of information, money, people and materials around the world – has given such previously marginal groups much greater power to wreak destruction on their targets. Nonproliferation programs, particularly efforts to help secure materials and knowledge that could be used for WMD attacks if obtained by hostile groups, address the easier part of the means-plus-motive threat. Detailed recommendations on nonproliferation programs are beyond the scope of this paper, but action in this

area is a central part of any program to reduce the need for offensive operations against would-be users of weapons of mass destruction.

To cost-effectively reduce the threat of WMD, greatly increase the funding for weapon dismantlement and security in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere.

Enemy Political Centers of Gravity

Although the hard-core ultraterrorists are unlikely to be influenced by changing conditions in the world, in the name of leaving no stone unturned in the war on terrorism it might well be profitable to attempt to sway the second tier of supporters, collaborators, accomplices, and occasional assistants by addressing perceived grievances – the core or political “center of gravity” to which the terrorist leaders hitch their wagons. Al Qaeda uses its “message” of perceived grievances as its force-generation tool to recruit from the large pool of sympathizers in the Islamic world.

While the primary means to address resentment and hostility are diplomatic, economic, social and informational, the second-order effects of military policies are important, for example popular opposition to the presence of U.S. military personnel or forces in Saudi Arabia, the site of the main Islamic holy sites, Mecca and Medina. More broadly, while world leaders are careful not to blame terrorism on poor people, even Bush has acknowledged that poverty and poor government serve as a breeding ground for terrorism. The point of trying to rebuild failed states or prevent their appearance may not be so much to prevent the states helping terrorists – future terrorists may evolve away from relying on bases and other vulnerable nation-based support – as to try to limit assistance to the principal terrorists from second tier accomplices and sympathizers.

The military should recognize and seek to **minimize the negative second-order effects of its actions abroad**. This means:

- **recognize the resentment that can be engendered by deployment of U.S. forces and by demonstration of overwhelming U.S. power;**
- **work with other countries as much as is feasible to reduce perception of the United States as a sole global policeman and hegemon;**
- **intrude as little as possible on host country cultures in deployments and basing while maximizing the benefits of engagement.**

Overall federal resources should be allocated such that pre-emptive measures and broad policies to limit sympathy and support for hard-core terrorists are better funded – including economic aid, information programs to improve understanding of each other’s politics and societies, new initiatives to address global culture clash, financial support for moderate and democratic institutions and organizations abroad, and military participation in humanitarian assistance.

Strategies for Fighting the New Conflicts

Homeland Security

The military may be the best tool for providing “homeland defense” against conventional military threats – ballistic missile, cruise missile, or bomber aircraft – but may not be strategically suited to providing “homeland security” against the unconventional forms of threat that the country may face in the 21st century. The school of strategic thought that focuses on the idea of “fourth-generation” warfare now being used against the United States suggests that the military role in homeland security may be limited because 21st century opponents are likely to deliberately pursue strategies that will make the military less relevant. One way to describe the complex phenomenon of fourth-generation warfare is: war between societies, about culture, by irregular combatants, against nonmilitary as well as military targets, to influence the mind of the other side – rather than war between nations, about borders, by regular armed forces, against other armed forces, to destroy them. Ultra-terrorists are likely to try to use fourth-generation warfare to bypass their enemy’s strengths. In the case of the United States, that means trying to bypass dominant U.S. regular armed forces, exactly what al Qaeda did on Sept. 11. The more proactive and promising role of the military in “homeland security” is conducting offensive operations when possible, ideally using fourth-generation warfare strategies against opponents.

- **Preserve the active duty military for its primary role, taking the offensive and combating threats abroad.**
- **For disaster response to successful attacks, focus on use of National Guard ground units rather than active component forces.**
- **Establish new federal civilian units comfortable operating in the civilian U.S. environment.**

- **Preserve, clarify, and strengthen posse comitatus and related guidelines restricting the use of active duty military forces in domestic situations.**

Offensive Operations

Timeless principles of warfare first hinted at by the ancient Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu are particularly relevant at defeating elusive fourth-generation warfare foes. **Some of the principles include:**

- **strive to minimize the use of force;**
- **focus on destroying the cohesion of the enemy rather than his forces;**
- **be agile and use the unexpected;**
- **gather allies;**
- **develop good intelligence.**

Seeking to win using the least amount of force minimizes collateral damage and growth of resentment among foreign populations. When force is used, ending the campaign quickly helps avoid planting the seeds for future conflict while winning the current one.

Attacking the cohesion of the enemy aims to paralyze him, rather than destroying him directly, which is particularly difficult for covert terrorist networks. **A strategy of pursuing multiple nonmilitary (for example religious, financial, and social) as well as military fronts against the cohesion of the enemy should be pursued to keep terrorist groups on the defensive, off-balance, and hopefully, paralyzed. A strategy of using the unexpected implies, in general, creating forces that are flexible, scalable, provide commanders with multiple options, and can switch between different thrusts quickly.**

To the extent that terrorists move away from links to and support from governments, the lessons of Operation Enduring Freedom will not be fully representative of the future war. The real shape of future war may be fourth-generation warfare, often waged by the new ultraterrorists. Al Qaeda so far only really waged “three-and-a-half”-generation warfare: on Sept. 11 it struck asymmetrically against a nonmilitary target in fourth-generation fashion but it had also established infrastructure in Afghanistan that was vulnerable to a third- (or even second-) generation counterattack.

The implication of this is that in future cases there may not be a government or authority to deter or remove, as there was in Afghanistan, in order to cripple a terrorist organization. Then the military role in Afghanistan of overthrowing the Taliban and deterring future government supporters of terrorism becomes moot. If enemies learn lessons from Operation Enduring Freedom, nonmilitary action to address transnational and subnational problems and threats are likely to play the dominant role in U.S. responses if for no other reason than that the more clever adversaries will deny the United States the opportunity to use force by not presenting any targets. The primary tools to counter these threats would default to police work, financial sleuthing, border control and intelligence gathering.

Nevertheless, there may continue to be cases where terrorists seek and receive active support from governments, or more likely, where terrorists find some advantage in using or hiding in the anarchy of failed states or conflict zones. U.S. military forces would be needed to follow strategies of changing hostile governments, or helping to prevent entire states or areas within a country from falling outside of the control of nonhostile governments. Eliminating zones of anarchy globe-wide is, of course, a daunting task. Narrowly-selected operations could be useful to help end a specific conflict that was proving to be of use to a terrorist group.

Apart from pre-empting the creation of potential havens for terrorists, if fourth-generation threats grow, military forces might also have a role in assassinations, arrests, or raids. Against ultraterrorist cells not relying on conflict zones or supporting governments for sanctuary, these would best be carried out by relatively small and specialized Delta Force-type units or by precision airstrike assets.

There is no clear dividing line between heavier “legacy” forces and more agile and mobile forces but **the mix should shift somewhat toward those forces and capabilities that are more effective in unconventional warfare.**

In addition to a shift within military forces, given the lower applicability of large military forces for fourth-generation warfare threats relative to law enforcement, intelligence gathering, economic development, and other nonmilitary tools, the resource balance chosen between military and nonmilitary tools should ensure that the latter are better funded.

Allies

The success in Afghanistan was notable for the variety of allies who were recruited and assembled: *local* allies who performed the ground operations; *regional* allies who provided bases to the United States; *global* allies in NATO and elsewhere who offered united support and even military forces, and former adversaries like Russia, China, and Iran who backed, or at least condoned, the U.S. effort.

Funding and resources for regional combatant commands to conduct combined exercises, military-to-military contacts, and exchanges should be expanded with democratic countries or when increased contact will contribute to democratization in the host country rather than hinder it. For situations where access cannot be obtained or the long-term costs of collaboration with undemocratic governments are too high, the military should continue to increase its capability to project power with limited local facilities. The primary means are to strengthen amphibious forces, materiel prepositioned aboard ship, and long-range and carrier-borne strike aircraft.

For long-standing U.S. allies, Afghanistan has raised the possibilities of greater collaboration in military operations. A more integrated, multinational military approach to dealing with zones of conflict and instability would require adoption of a new mindset on all sides – there has long been a defeatist attitude about the possibilities of greater allied cooperation. Real multinational capability will, of course, require a major effort on both sides to develop the doctrine, training, organization and equipment needed for improved combined military operations. **A major initiative should be undertaken to:**

- **build public support in the populations of the United States, allies, and potential partners for combined military action, and prepare them for the risks and possible casualties of combined operations;**
- **develop new strategy, operational concepts, and command structures for increased and more effective combined action;**
- **fund and develop the equipment needed for better interoperability with allies;**
- **provide the resources for expansion of combined training and exercises;**

- **increase aid to appropriate friendly countries to assist and encourage greater cooperation.**
- **to prepare for collaborating with new or unexpected allies, explore further how best to assist, equip, fight alongside, and make use of dissimilar forces;**
- **explore further the possibilities of taking advantage of highly-capable allied Special Operations Forces in combined operations;**
- **assist allies continuing to boost their expeditionary capabilities particularly in the areas of secure and interoperable communications, airlift and logistics, and precision-guided munitions.**

Nonmilitary Components

A major development brought home by the Afghanistan operation was the importance of the nonmilitary elements of a “military” campaign. The administration properly fought the conflict not just militarily in Afghanistan but also on the political, social, informational, and economic fronts, locally, regionally, and globally. Public opinion in the Arab and Muslim worlds can have enough of an effect on the military components of a campaign to emphasize the importance of improving efforts to reach and shape foreign public views by nonmilitary agencies (and military agencies where relevant). Since the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the broader “information war” to win support the world over has not proceeded well. Perceptions of U.S. unilateralism, fears of a destabilizing U.S. invasion of Iraq, and the downward-spiraling Israeli-Palestinian disaster have led to weak support for the United States. A comprehensive, long-term, and well-funded “public diplomacy” program to provide facts, credible voices, and resonant arguments supporting the U.S. cause – to win hearts and minds – is needed to help create favorable conditions for military action when it is required.

An initiative should be undertaken to **build deeper collaboration with civilian agencies and private organizations by:**

- **developing and establishing the roles, including the lead role, of agencies in transnational issues where U.S. forces are deployed abroad;**
- **developing procedures for coordinating with other agencies prior to and during foreign deployments;**

- **developing methods of cooperating with private sector relief, disaster response, and other organizations;**
- **adequately funding exercises and training to test and refine new procedures;**
- **assessing how military structures should be refined to work more closely with the rest of the foreign policy structure, especially the State Department.**

To the extent that military forces need to improve their own capabilities for dealing with nonmilitary issues, the relevant units should be bolstered:

- **Increase the number of active component intelligence, psychological operations, civil affairs, military police, and engineer units.**

Bombing

Some observers view Afghanistan as yet another win for air power and bombing campaigns. The development of stealth technology and of increasing bomb accuracy makes U.S. air power ever more efficient (yet that is precisely why enemies are pursuing asymmetric strategies to make it less relevant). Yet two problems remain for bombing-oriented strategies even with technological advances: inevitable civilian casualties (plus resentment – not just in the target population – about U.S. bombing) create major political costs, and it is still very difficult to figure out what the “levers” to be bombed are that will coerce an enemy leader or population into obedience. Strategic bombing campaigns – trying to compel a government to change its behavior without necessarily defeating its military forces in the field – have historically been notoriously difficult to conduct successfully, and may be getting even harder now with the growing salience of international political dimensions of conflict and the effect of pictures of bloody civilian casualties.

In Afghanistan it is useful to remember that before the Taliban suddenly began to collapse in November 2001, the bombing did not appear to be working. The United States was losing ground in the political war as it was increasingly portrayed as conducting a ruthless bombing campaign causing numerous civilian casualties. Part of the mixed picture of the value of the bombing campaign arises from the air strikes really having two components that had differing success: the strategic bombing effort went after fixed military head-

quarters, barracks, communication sites, and the like, as well as trying to target al Qaeda leadership directly, while the tactical bombing effort provided close air support for local allied forces and enabled interdiction of hostile forces. The strategic bombing, often in urban areas, began to cause substantial political damage, whereas the tactical bombing helped bring on the collapse of Taliban forces in the field.

Opponents may increasingly try to counter U.S. tactical bombing effectiveness by using civilians and urban settings to shield their forces. This would force the United States into the necessary evil of bombing in civilian casualty-boosting areas if it wished to advance tactically. Under these conditions, **in considering strategic bombing campaigns, civilian and military leaders should:**

- **be aware of the broader political dimensions of a widespread “military” bombing campaign against “dual-use” targets (i.e., a nation’s roads, bridges, railroads, waterways, airfields, power plants, refineries, factories, and communications lines);**
- **focus an information warfare effort on exposing and laying the blame on enemy leaders when they cause civilian casualties by putting their forces in civilian areas;**
- **better assess the tradeoff between destroying a nation’s civilian infrastructure and the resulting long-term political costs, in the target nation and globally;**
- **anticipate, prepare public opinion for, acknowledge, and take responsibility for civilian casualties when they occur;**
- **improve knowledge and comprehension of the politics and psyches of target nations and rulers;**
- **conduct the air campaigns in combination with threatened or actual ground operations.**

Forces for the New Warfare

Homeland Defense

The 9/11 attacks palpably demonstrated how easy it is to exploit the vulnerabilities of an open society like the United States and turn its strengths against it. The tough message is that, compared to defensive measures, offensive mea-

sures in the broadest sense of military strikes and also elements like intelligence operations, law enforcement actions, energetic pursuit of nonproliferation, and proactive foreign policies to prevent the growth of terrorist breeding grounds, hold the upper hand for ultimate security against terrorist attacks.

Having seen the relative ease with which the United States was damaged, if foreign groups or nations wish to conduct equally devastating attacks they are likely to prioritize more effective programs than ballistic missiles. Further, the ability of the United States to take the offensive and remove the rulers of Afghanistan and destroy the terrorist infrastructure there should make opponents think twice about launching traceable attacks against the United States.

- **Prioritize funding on programs that address more-likely and less-manageable threats than ballistic missile attacks, such as homeland security and offensive counterattack capabilities in the military.**

If there is a thrust among some of the proposed reforms relevant to reorienting the intelligence community to the threats against homeland security, it is the need to boost *analysis* capabilities compared to intelligence *collection*, particularly for “strategic intelligence” – assessing intentions and why foreign leaders and entities make the choices they do.

To improve intelligence on terrorist groups:

- close gaps in analytical capabilities, and revitalize human resources at the CIA;
- refocus some effort on strategic intelligence rather than tactical military intelligence;
- expand human intelligence capabilities;
- share information across intelligence agencies in the terrorism area (compartmentalization is primarily a defense against states, who can afford counterintelligence operations, rather than terrorist groups);
- increase links with nongovernmental expertise;
- set up innovative centers including “skunk works,” “red teams,” and gaming centers to simulate and explore terrorist strategies;
- end intelligence agency involvement in development and execution of policies and restore at least the spirit of the separation of

intelligence assessment and policy advocacy; instead refocus intelligence activities on supporting the policy-making of other agencies and administration officials with disinterested assessments and forecasts.

Offensive Forces

Although future operations will by no means duplicate those in Afghanistan, that experience can be taken as one exemplar of likely 21st century challenges. The primary limitation of drawing too sharp conclusions from the Operation Enduring Freedom experience is clear: the Taliban were a weak opponent in military terms, having little functional heavy equipment, particularly air defenses, a relatively small core of skilled troops defending a large territory, and a civil war on its hands. In addition, their political hold was shaky since they had alienated many in the population, which denied them the ability to initiate a guerrilla war and made them vulnerable to traditional Afghan factional allegiance-shifting.

The U.S. operation was conducted not by massed heavy armored divisions but by a handful of special operations troops in combination with air power and, most important, local ground troops. Innovative use of existing forces, weapons, and emerging communications equipment, proved more important than having the next round of new weapon platforms begun during the Cold War, such as the Crusader artillery piece, F-22 fighter, Comanche attack helicopter, and nuclear attack submarines.

Special Operations Forces

Special Operations Forces fit well in a future force tailored to the new threats of fourth-generation warfare. They are trained to exercise initiative and respond quickly to changing circumstances. They focus on understanding foreign cultures and peoples and working with foreign forces. In part by definition of their relatively small unit size, they are the most agile, light, fast, and flexible ground units in the military. They were perhaps tailor-made for operations in Afghanistan, and their fourth-generation warfare characteristics could make them useful in numerous other scenarios.

The more successful of the two main Operation Enduring Freedom missions, removing the Taliban government, was achieved using the formula of a few U.S. advisers, coordinators, and spotters on the ground with allied troops,

plus air strikes. The formula is not a universal solution however. The combination of Special Operations Forces and air power has had less success in the other Operation Enduring Freedom mission of finding and striking al Qaeda operatives. Following the overthrow of the Taliban, a series of attacks on the wrong targets, heavy civilian casualty tolls, and friendly fire deaths has shown the limits of the approach, particularly in what really should be a postconflict environment.

- **At a minimum, ensure that Special Operations Forces have all the resources they need for their existing forces, including weapons and training, and expand these forces if it is assessed that greater use of them would stretch them thin.**
- **Accelerate the transformation of heavy divisions and use freed resources to increase support for Special Operations Forces.**
- **Explore whether and how to improve conventional transport and attack helicopter support for Special Operations Forces.**
- **To avoid mistaken civilian casualties and friendly fire incidents when conducting bombing strikes and ground raids against suspected terrorists, improve Special Operations Forces intelligence work and increase the attention given in strategy development to the political costs of mistaken Special Operations Forces strikes and raids that kill innocent civilians.**

Air Forces

Afghanistan did *not* show that air power can win wars alone and that therefore the United States can safely focus on air forces to the detriment of ground forces. On the contrary, the case shows again the importance of “boots on the ground,” whether U.S. or allied.

- **In prioritizing U.S. forces, air power should be seen as a key complement to ground forces.**

The campaign showed the importance of close air support and interdiction capabilities – air power in support of operations on the ground. Although the case cannot be extrapolated everywhere, U.S. air-to-air capabilities were irrelevant in Afghanistan.

- **Resources devoted to air-superiority fighters should not crowd out funding for strike capabilities.**

An almost philosophical preference for short-range air power comes from a strategy that emphasizes engagement – engagement prior to hostilities, with troops on the ground during conflicts, and in security maintenance after combat, and helps explain why it might be preferable not to slight short-range air power in favor of heavy global-range bombers. Short-range air power encourages working with local partners before and during hostilities for the purpose of gaining access to bases. The engaged approach values the strength gained from working with partners, viewing the benefits as greater than hindrances. In contrast, long-range air power can facilitate an excessively disengaged approach – the United States striking anywhere around the globe from Fortress America – and can encourage the view that pinprick attacks or airstrike assassinations can achieve lasting results.

Engagement and on-the-ground deployments convey the message that the United States cares enough to get seriously involved in a conflict, whereas sending long-distance bombers or cruise missiles alone can generate resentment at the U.S. ability to strike omnipotently in complete safety. Long-range air power can provide support for deployed ground troops, as B-52s did in Afghanistan but short-range air power is both more supportive of multilateral action and more attuned to the close air support mission. (It should be noted that large heavy bombers are, in general, more vulnerable to capable air defenses and fighter interceptors – their prominent role in Operation Enduring Freedom was partly thanks to the absence of strong air- and ground-based defenses in Afghanistan.)

- **Preserve a long-range bomber capability. With the Air Force determining that B-52s are able and scheduled to fly through 2040, there is currently no urgent need to expand the fleet (research for an eventual replacement might be accelerated as a useful hedge, however).**
- **Do not slight short-range air power in favor of moving to a largely United States-based air fleet. Ensure that foreign and national security policy give adequate priority to increasing base access.**

Sea-based air power clearly can provide air strike capabilities when access for land-based aircraft is difficult. Broad foreign and national security policies can, however, strive in advance to improve access for U.S. forces in a contingency.

- **Decrease vulnerability of aircraft carriers and aircraft-carrying amphibious assault ships close to shore by developing equipment and tactics for escort vessels to better provide protection against missiles, submarines, mines, and other threats in littoral areas. Encourage development of increased allied naval air capabilities.**
- **Increase focus on and resourcing of military engagement with potential allies before crises break out.**

In a permissive environment – U.S. air supremacy – unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) provide useful potentially cost-effective reconnaissance, and even strike, capabilities.

- **Increase development and procurement of UAVs, while working to sharply decrease the attrition rate and current operational problems.**
- **Preserve the cost advantage over occupied aircraft of some UAVs by avoiding “gold-plating” future UAV designs with too many requirements and desired capabilities.**

Ensure that U.S. airlift capabilities are robust, and encourage close allies to increase their own strategic airlift capabilities.

- **Prioritize airlift and tanker aircraft upgrades and replacement over lower priority aircraft.**

Intelligence

Enemies are becoming more knowledgeable about U.S. technical capabilities – for example figuring out that U.S. satellites follow predictable flight paths and times – and are developing more effective camouflage, concealment, and deception (CCD) techniques as a result. In fourth-generation warfare, state and group opponents are likely to counter and adapt to growing U.S. technical capabilities by:

- increasingly dispersing or “distributing” their forces and facilities;
- expanding use of civilians and civilian houses, buildings, and infrastructure as “shields”;
- continually relocating equipment and units; and
- increasing use of forces that present less of a target, such as terrorist cells.

In increasingly messy wars – and particularly fourth-generation war – sorting out friend from foe (and even from neutral civilian) can be exceedingly difficult in combat situations, and unfortunately neither technical nor human intelligence alone is likely to be able to provide a complete answer. Improved intelligence and reconnaissance hardware is already a central focus of the acquisition establishment. Progress in human intelligence is more difficult to gauge but more capability within the military will clearly be useful for waging counterterrorist, as opposed to more conventional, warfare.

- **Match improvements in technical intelligence gathering with human intelligence gathering and reconnaissance team capabilities.**
- **Although sharing of raw data among intelligence agencies has improved, more needs to be done to eliminate “stovepipes.”**
- **Greater linguistic skills and technology are needed, including automated language translations and interpretation.**
- **More effort is needed to develop means of fusing data from different sources, and developing presentations systems that do not overload commanders with data.**

Beyond the Last War

As was noted at the outset, the lessons of Operation Enduring Freedom are the lessons of “the last war.” The next counterterrorism missions or wars may not resemble Afghanistan but could include:

- noncombatant evacuation or protection operations;
- long-range Special Operations Forces raids on terrorists;
- long-range air strikes on terrorists;
- security-building interventions, including peacekeeping, stabilization missions, and anti-insurgency operations;
- bombing campaigns to coerce governments;

- government overthrow, including invasions or support for indigenous opposition forces;
- intelligence operations to detect terrorist targets for strikes;
- humanitarian operations to help win hearts and minds around the world;
- exercises and training with foreign militaries;
- homeland defense;
- emergency response to attacks on the homeland.

Additional military programs that could assist in these missions include:

- **For noncombatant evacuation operations, develop the ability to fly in from very distant bases when a Navy/Marine amphibious group is not in the area or the conflict zone was not close to the sea.**
- **Aircraft should be developed to stealthily deliver, provide fire support for, and retrieve raiding forces at very long ranges.**
- **Development of a stealthy global-range UAV could be useful for reconnaissance and guiding long-range air strikes, particularly with the long flight times required for global-range strikes.**
- **More fully redesign part of the force with peacekeeping, stabilization and related operations in mind. If unit types, number, and equipment, plus training, doctrine, organization, personnel management policies, and logistic capabilities are thus reshaped, the unit readiness and personnel cost of these numerous operations could be reduced, and the difficulties of performing widely varying operations with the same units minimized. Explore with close allies a more coordinated approach to military burdensharing in peacekeeping and stabilization operations.**
- **Further developing the military's ability to interact successfully with the nonmilitary (e.g., political, cultural, economic) elements of conflict will enhance its insurgency-winning capabilities.**
- **Accelerate development of doctrine, organization, and equipment to fight third- and fourth-generation warfare, and difficult asymmetric challenges, including the following:**
- **Develop unmanned ground vehicles to reduce casualties in urban combat.**

- **Improve equipment and training to defend against and maintain effectiveness while under chemical or biological attack.**
- **Make forces lighter and less dependent on large supply facilities.**
- **Use ground troops to force enemy units to concentrate or move and hence become vulnerable to strikes.**
- **Bolster military security in the homeland, including defense of military transportation networks within the United States.**
- **Increase capability to wage political and informational war.**

The U.S. military clearly faces a diverse, complex, and demanding challenge in a global counterterrorism campaign. The task of figuring out how best to train, equip, and structure its forces for such a broad and uncertain task could be regarded as overwhelming. *Reforging the Sword* argued that the trick will be to keep in mind, in the midst of hashing out the details of military transformation and of introducing new technologies, what its authors saw as the fundamentals of warfare focusing on the human element. Such fundamentals can provide a useful orientation in tackling the large challenge of figuring out how to prepare for the new threats. Although this review, *Honing the Sword*, described new shapes of warfare and possible responses, it found such principles of warfare to be as applicable as ever.

Key recommendations of *Honing the Sword*

1. Recognize and minimize the negative second-order effects of military operations, actions, and deployments in global political and social arenas.
2. To reduce the threat of WMD proliferation, greatly increase the funding for weapon dismantlement, control and security.
3. Allocate overall national security resources so as to better fund measures that pre-empt the growth of terrorism, limit sympathy and support for it, and mobilize nonmilitary tools to stop it, including measures in political, social, religious, informational, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement areas.

4. Boost resources for intelligence gathering and reform the intelligence community structure.
5. Take advantage of the possible contributions of local, regional and global allies by developing new doctrine, command structures, equipment and training for combined operations with allies, and by engaging in peacetime military cooperation with potential allies (while keeping in mind the potentially negative political, social, and economic effects of that cooperation with nondemocracies).
6. Build up U.S. military effectiveness in, and capabilities for, peacekeeping and stabilization operations, including establishing better collaboration and coordination with civilian agencies and private organizations.
7. Reorient portions of the National Guard to deal with new homeland security missions, and create new civilian capabilities and units where appropriate, to preserve the active duty military's focus on, and capabilities for, offensive operations abroad.
8. Continue to push development of the doctrine, command structures, unit organization, and personnel policies that enhance U.S. military capabilities in asymmetric or fourth-generation warfare, including further increasing capability for joint operations.
9. Boost Special Operations Forces capabilities.
10. Prioritize air programs that act in concert with and support ground operations, including particularly close air support, interdiction, UAV and airlift capabilities.

Introduction

On Sept. 10, 2001, the Center for Defense Information published a national security review and force structure entitled *Reforging the Sword: Forces for a 21st Century Security Strategy*. On Sept. 11, the terrorist organization al Qaeda struck the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Both the attacks on the United States and the U.S. counterattack in Afghanistan in the months that followed bore novel hallmarks – if the nature of war had not changed, at least its forms had. A new international climate of cooperation among major powers also flowered briefly after Sept. 11: the attacks derailed the incipient deterioration of U.S.-Chinese relations, improved U.S. relations with the Russian government, and led to new levels of military cooperation with allies in Europe and the Pacific. The cooperation has withered terribly since then but the curtain was drawn back on a vision of a possible more collaborative future. This review updates *Reforging the Sword*, taking a look at changes in the global security situation following 9/11, assessing their implications, and drawing lessons from the attacks and the counterattack.

Happily for the authors of *Reforging*, the Sept. 11 attacks did not make it obsolete. To the contrary, its emphases on working more closely with allies, on lighter, more agile forces, on intelligence, and on the importance of non-military components of a conflict were important elements of the Bush administration's conduct of the counterattack. Events have reinforced the need raised in *Reforging* to prepare for new threats and have enhanced the prospects for some of its proposed new directions, particularly in the area of allied collaboration.

Although the Afghanistan operation provides a useful illustration of new types of wars the military might face in the 21st century, there is the ever-present danger of basing too much future planning on “refighting the last war,” or even the current one. Special political and military characteristics of the operation in Afghanistan included:

- strong international sympathy and support for the U.S. effort engendered by the shocking 9/11 attacks;
- the existence of civil war in Afghanistan, and of military forces opposing the Taliban;
- terrain in Afghanistan that, although often mountainous, was not heavily covered with foliage, easing targeting for aerial bombardment;
- a long tradition of rapid changes of allegiance by Afghan factions, combined with lenient treatment of the “losers,” which facilitated the reversal of government;
- a political situation in Pakistan that permitted a rapid change of political alignment and reduction of support for the Taliban;
- political conditions in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan allowing deployment of U.S. forces;
- overlap of interests in opposing terrorism with Russia and simultaneous desire to improve relations on the part of the Russian leadership.

To the extent that similar factors may not recur in other situations, the lessons of Afghanistan will be less relevant in those cases. Nevertheless, central characteristics of the 9/11 attacks and the operations in Afghanistan are likely to be harbingers of the future – the first war of the 21st century – rather than vestiges of a past era of conflict.

Before Sept. 11, 2001, commissions, independent observers, and military voices themselves had long called for restructuring the military for the post-Cold War world. What the 9/11 attacks and the U.S. counterattack brought home was how unexpected and difficult the challenges that opponents could throw at the strongest military power in the world would be. The conflict has shown how far the military needs to go in changing not just its forces, but also its thinking. It has also shown, as some observers have long noted, that the new threats are here now, not in the distant future, so the time for transformation is today.

This review will briefly look at how the military might alter its doctrine, forces, organization, and personnel management to better prepare for post-9/11 challenges and asymmetric warfare. Each section will look at new realities and lessons in the post-9/11 security world and attempt to draw out implications for the military. The sections separately discuss the attacks of Sept. 11 themselves, and then the counterattack in Afghanistan. The emphasis ends up on the latter, since U.S. military forces are best at the offensive element of counterterrorism, rather than the defensive element.

Reforging the Sword laid out elements of a broader national security strategy and a proposal for a transformed military force. *Honing the Sword* suggests how to refine that military force in light of the events and experience since Sept. 11, 2001. As Lawrence Korb shows in the alternative military force options laid out in *Reshaping America's Military*, broad assumptions and approaches about the international security situation and about strategy can lead to alternative credible, but widely differing, prescriptions for armed forces.¹ The suggestions here use as a foundation the predilections spelled out in *Reforging* for working with allies, for taking the nonmilitary elements of modern war into consideration, and for trying to keep humans in the war-fighting loop. Those approaches and the resulting proposals for force structure, organization, and weaponry are not spelled out again here – for more background see *Reforging* itself.²

This discussion focuses on the military components of national security, while acknowledging that the primary ingredients of a successful war on terrorism will be political, economic, social, and informational, and that the most important resource decisions will be made not necessarily for the Defense Department but for agencies involved in international and domestic law enforcement, intelligence-gathering and assessment, transportation security and border control, disaster response, biological/chemical/nuclear protection, and defense of the nation's information, financial, and energy systems.

¹ Korb, Lawrence, *Reshaping America's Military: Four Alternatives*, Council on Foreign Relations, 2002.

² Smith, Col. Daniel, Marcus Corbin, and Christopher Hellman, *Reforging the Sword: Forces for a 21st Century Security Strategy*, Center for Defense Information, 2001.

9/11 and Afghanistan: Successes, Failures, Challenges

The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 and their aftermath crystalized trends in the international security environment that had been underway for some time. The events demonstrated not just U.S. vulnerability to attacks at home but also the vulnerability under certain circumstances of terrorist groups and weak governments that harbor them to U.S. counterattack.

9/11: U.S. VULNERABILITY TO ADVERSARIES' ATTACKS

Sept. 11 showed that, for at least some enemies of the United States, the lessons on how to successfully attack the world's superpower have sunk in: avoid U.S. military strengths and strike at its vulnerabilities. Although most warfare in history has had asymmetric elements, the degree of asymmetries seems greater now, with U.S. conventional military might unchallenged, yet a few people with weapons of mass destruction able to kill thousands. Now "asymmetric" strategies are being implemented close to "the battlefield" against U.S. interventions abroad – for example by attacking barracks rather than forces on the battlefield, or, as in the case of Sept. 11, the strategy can be taken to an extreme and be implemented against America itself, bypassing U.S. deployed forces completely.

Lt. Col. Kenneth McKenzie suggests that adding two other elements to a simple definition of asymmetric attack usefully expands our understanding of it: that it tries to win disproportionate strategic gains at relatively small cost, and that its ultimate targets are often psychological rather than physical – particularly, political will.³

Although the military has only a limited role to play in asymmetric attacks on the homeland (for example, short of getting into the business of shooting down U.S. airliners – a particularly undesirable role – there is not much the military could have done on 9/11), it may well have to face numerous asymmetric challenges when it is deployed abroad. Former Army intelligence officer Melissa Applegate has argued that pursuit of utter conventional military dominance in the Defense Department's *Joint Vision 2020 (JV2020)* strategy may encourage the development of asymmetric responses and capabilities by opponents who realize the futility of taking on the United States on its own terms. Her description of asymmetric warfare illustrates how asymmetric tactics can be used against U.S. might:

“A conflict spectrum dominated less by large, force-on-force battles and more by disorganized, civilianized, and primitive warfare, conducted by individuals and nonstate actors, offers limitless opportunities to employ niche capabilities against a construct like *JV2020* with crippling effects. ...

Adversaries will seek to break the ‘continuity of will’ between U.S. leadership, the American people, and our allies. While we think dominant maneuver, adversaries think counteraccess. ... They have or want a host of counterprecision-strike capabilities; some of the more notable include the growing use of a variety of cover, concealment, and deception technologies and methods including deep underground facilities and multispectral obscurants. Finally, adversaries are emphasizing any number of counterprotection capabilities that are designed to inflict mass casualties even against well-protected or dug-in military forces.”⁴

³ The best comprehensive definition and description of asymmetric conflict and what it means in real terms is found in McKenzie, Kenneth F. (Jr.), *The Revenge of the Melians: Asymmetric Threats and the Next QDR*, National Defense University, 2000. McKenzie's full definition of asymmetric warfare is: “Leveraging inferior tactical or operational strength against American vulnerabilities to achieve disproportionate effect with the aim of undermining American will in order to achieve the asymmetric actor's strategic objectives.” (p. 2).

⁴ Applegate, Melissa, *Preparing for Asymmetry: As Seen Through the Lens of Joint Vision 2020*, U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, September 2001, p. 5.

The 9/11 attacks also made plausible the possibility that the “anti-access” strategies – attacks on transportation and other infrastructure that would hamper deployment of military forces – first widely emphasized by the National Defense Panel in 1997 could be applied to targets within the United States as well as to facilities abroad.⁵ Enemies may be emboldened by the success of the 9/11 attacks to devise unforeseen and novel ways to tie up U.S. deployment capabilities, now that the relative porousness of the United States itself has been brought to the fore.

The difficulty of defending the United States against infiltration attacks like those of 9/11 raises questions about the very relevance of the powerful U.S. military. Al Qaeda appeared at first to have been dealt a near fatal blow by the U.S. counterattack in Afghanistan. But the U.S. attack was against the tangible, identifiable infrastructure of the organization, not its presumed international network, which is a more dangerous threat empowered by the new, open global flows of communication, people, and goods. How relevant the military remains against these new threats – that is, whether there are infrastructures, governments, and targets available for attack – may depend on the degree to which enemies make themselves vulnerable by establishing conventional targets and supporters, versus how much they operate covertly.

AFGHANISTAN: ADVERSARIES’ VULNERABILITIES TO U.S. ATTACKS

Successes

Despite the tremendous vulnerabilities of an open society to suicide attackers demonstrated in the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. counterattack showed that in particular cases, if the United States plays its cards right, terrorist organizations that fail to move principally into a globalized, stealthy, transnational, method of operating – i.e., that succumb to the temptation of developing overt, conventional capabilities, such as the training camps in Afghanistan – can be vulnerable to traditional U.S. military strengths. The United States possesses

⁵ *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century*, Report of the National Defense Panel, December 1997, pp. 12-13.

“positive” asymmetric strengths of its own that can be used effectively when adversaries fail to counter them sufficiently with their “negative” asymmetric strategies. In conflict situations, these U.S. strengths should be used whenever possible – the question is how much opponents will “consent” to fighting on “battlegrounds” where those strengths can be readily applied against them.

Operation Enduring Freedom can be viewed as having two missions for U.S. forces – destroying a government that hosted the terrorist organization al Qaeda, and destroying elements of al Qaeda itself. Despite problems of poor “readiness” in certain areas, the U.S. military successfully overcame substantial obstacles of long distance, unsure base access, harsh climate and terrain, an unexpected scenario, and tricky local and regional politics to accomplish the first mission, while suffering few U.S. casualties. Indeed the narrow success of the Afghanistan operation has presumably strengthened the U.S. hand in potential future such operations, largely by impressing people and governments with U.S. power – in the words of a friendly Afghan leader, “No country in the world has the power now to obstruct America.”⁶

The second mission, to dismantle al Qaeda, principally by killing or capturing al Qaeda members, has proven more difficult. In the period after the fall of the Taliban, a fair number of bombing attacks on the wrong targets or strikes that produced heavy civilian casualties soured some of the good feelings among Afghans toward the United States.

Although Operation Enduring Freedom was of course unique, some lessons can be gleaned for other operations if they occur in similar circumstances. One of the overriding lessons for regime change missions is the possibility of making substantial use of allies – local allies, regional allies, and global allies. The *local* allies provided the valuable service of performing most of the ground fighting; *regional* allies provided the bases that eased deployment and operations of U.S. forces; and the *global* allies provided political support as well as some small military forces. All of these allies, plus Russia and China, created for a while a climate of strong international support that was important in the political battle with al Qaeda and the Taliban for the hearts and minds of Muslims both in the region and in the broader Islamic world. Although the climate was short-lived, it was important at that point.

⁶ Susan B. Glasser, Leader Hazrat Ali, quoted in “Afghans Say U.S. Scuttled Surrender: Commanders Cite Pressure To Keep Attacking Al Qaeda,” *Washington Post*, Dec. 13, 2001.

Most useful of all for the government overthrow mission was obtaining local allies who were able to change the dynamic of the conflict by avoiding the need to introduce large numbers of U.S. ground troops to conduct the war. With no need for substantial U.S. ground forces, the conflict could not be portrayed as a conflict of Afghans against an outside invading power, as was the case with the Soviet intervention of 1979-89. Local forces allowed the United States to bypass the logistical difficulties of mounting a large-scale intervention of landlocked Afghanistan, the military challenge of hostile operations in often-mountainous and rough Afghan terrain, the domestic political risk of suffering large-scale casualties, and even the budgetary cost of a larger deployment.

Although the unsavory character and duplicitous actions of some Afghan warlords who led local allied forces, and nondemocratic nature of regional allies, including Pakistan, caused complications for the United States and hurt some of its interests, overall, local and regional allies did play a key role in the mission of changing the regime in Afghanistan. As with other lessons learned from Operation Enduring Freedom, however, this does not mean the lesson is applicable everywhere – perhaps the lesson learned is better described as an “option learned.” Most immediately, local forces are likely too weak, and the government too strong, for a crude parallel model to be used for regime change in Iraq.

Tactical Success, Strategic Uncertainty

What did *not* work well in Afghanistan also should be gleaned for lessons. The political fallout of the bombing campaign and the related conduct of the political/cultural/information war endangered a successful outcome against the Taliban. But eventually Operation Enduring Freedom successfully overthrew the Taliban rulers of Afghanistan, destroyed al Qaeda infrastructure there, and killed or captured some of al Qaeda’s leaders. However, the long-term effects of the operation on the overall al Qaeda organization, on Afghanistan, and on other U.S. foreign policy goals and relationships are uncertain and troubled.

Much of al Qaeda’s leadership is unaccounted for, presumed alive, and the state of the surviving network outside of Afghanistan is unknown, presumed dangerous. “Winning” for al Qaeda at this point in the war is merely surviving. Local allies proved far less useful in sweeps to catch al Qaeda members

than in throwing out the Taliban. The failure of the Tora Bora operation to net al Qaeda members is often blamed on too much reliance on local troops. Although the case is debatable, it is clear that at best the primary interest of allied fighters across the country was removing the Taliban rather than hunting down every last al Qaeda member and sympathizer.

Although the U.S. military succeeded in the mission of destroying a regime that was hosting terrorists, it is not yet clear whether the goal of eliminating the country as a base for terrorists in the long run has yet been accomplished. With U.S. military operations in pursuit of the mission to destroy al Qaeda continuing as if little has changed, with small amounts of aid arriving relative to the needs of the new government, in the absence of re-establishment of law or stable central authority, and given a precarious political situation, the outlook is not positive. The long-term goal can only be met through reconstruction, yet the Bush Administration appears to have put reconstruction behind other military and financial goals.

Another major long-term question mark is whether the administration's policy of cooperation with undemocratic, conflict-prone, or authoritarian governments will backfire and entail high costs in the long run. Prominent cases that may turn sour include:

- turning a blind eye to Russia's bloody war in Chechnya;
- increased cooperation with Uzbekistan, currently repressing political opposition and jailing thousands of Muslims;⁷
- greater ties with the Pakistan government of President Musharraf, who effected a so-far successful major political realignment against hard-line Muslim factions in Pakistan;
- increased cooperation with autocratic governments in the Persian Gulf;
- increased participation against the Muslim insurgency in the Philippines, including deployment of U.S. forces into combat situations;
- expanded U.S. military aid and involvement in the renewed drug war in Colombia.

⁷ Steven Mufson, "Foreign Policy's 'Pivotal Moment': From Chechnya to China, U.S. Sees Relations in a New Light," *Washington Post*, Sept. 27, 2001.

In the Uzbek case, the U.S. position changed from shunning its government to welcoming President Islam Karimov into the White House in March 2002. An agreement upgraded U.S. interest in Uzbekistan's security, stating that the United States would "regard with grave concern any external threat" to the country.⁸ The administration also agreed to closer cooperation on economic, legal, humanitarian, and nuclear proliferation matters, and tripled foreign aid, increasing it to \$160 million. The administration did, however, raise privately and publicly concerns over Uzbekistan's political prisoners and the reported torture and deaths of Islamic dissidents.

The success or failure of greater cooperation with authoritarian governments will likely turn on the broader set of U.S. foreign policies followed, such as whether substantial sums of development assistance are provided to stabilize their economic and political situations, and steady progress toward democratization is encouraged.

What Was Not Even Tested

Apart from successes and failures, a key capability was not deeply tested by Afghanistan operations: the ability of the U.S. military to deal with opponents' asymmetric tactics and strategies. Al Qaeda and the Taliban did not come up with effective asymmetric approaches against U.S. methods in Operation Enduring Freedom, perhaps because they did not foresee a U.S. counterattack in the first place. (The best military strategists, however, are supposed to be able to quickly respond to, and make opportunities out of, unforeseen events.) But some future opponents are likely to mount a much more capable opposition, and some observers have made the case that *JV2020*, the broad U.S. military doctrine, does not sufficiently address effective asymmetric war. Applegate argues:

"There is no adequate capability within the *JV2020* force construct to achieve full victory or *win* against the kind of conflicts that characterize today's global security environment. Civil wars, insurgencies, cross-border incursions where the United States is not a

⁸ Dana Milbank, "Uzbekistan Thanked For Role In War," *Washington Post*, March 13, 2002.

target, or there is no identified ‘enemy’ force, are especially problematic. U.S. forces operating under *JV2020* can control events, situations, and terrain, but only by exerting constant pressure and perpetual presence. ... With no direct operational or enabling concepts dedicated to overcoming the potential for asymmetric approaches in *JV2020*, U.S. forces are left to defend, adapt, or develop operational concepts in an ad hoc manner – because asymmetric approaches still lack formal legitimacy under *JV2020*.⁹

She suggests that *JV2020* needs to be improved to prepare for these new threats in some of the following ways:

- Military strategy-making needs to “provide a deeper insight into adversaries”; “wargame how employment of forces using *JV2020* operational concepts will affect the contextual situation on the ground”; “orient on the totality of efforts by all players within a given operational environment”; and include other contributing players – “allies, coalition partners, other agencies, humanitarian organizations, and private sector elements.”
- Improved training “will mean allowing asymmetry to be a valid, legitimate partner in training, education, exercises, and experimentation.”
- Operational strategy-making should stress “balanced response” by including processes for anticipating and assessing how U.S. actions can have cascading, unintended consequences and can actually prompt asymmetric responses.¹⁰

In light of the new experiences outlined above of vulnerability at home and mixed successes abroad, what observations can be made for shaping U.S. military forces and strategy?

⁹ Applegate, Melissa, *Preparing for Asymmetry: As Seen Through the Lens of Joint Vision 2020*, U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute, September 2001, p. 12.

¹⁰ For more detail, see *Ibid.*, pp. 17-23.

How to Avoid Fighting – Prevention

Ideally, of course, U.S. goals would be met without recourse to war, which most observers agree in concept should be the national security tool of last resort. What are the new conditions following 9/11 that influence efforts to prevent the rise of threats and the need to use force?

9/11

The New Ultraterrorists

The 9/11 attacks demonstrated that fanatical groups can, even with substantial effort devoted to track and destroy them, organize sufficiently undetected to conduct devastating attacks. Second, the attacks demonstrated the prominence of a new type of terrorist group.¹¹ Rather than traditional terrorists who had specific and limited goals – and correspondingly measured attacks – groups with essentially unlimited aims (such as destroying American culture) have materialized that are willing to cause massive slaughter among others and commit suicide themselves. In addition to an escalation in aims among nonstate opponents, globalization – particularly the relatively easy flow of in-

¹¹ For more on the new face of terrorism see Hoffman, Bruce, *Inside Terrorism*, Columbia University Press, 1998; Stern, Jessica, *The Ultimate Terrorists*, Harvard University Press, 1999; and Hoffman, Frank G. *Homeland Security: A Competitive Strategies Approach*, Center for Defense Information, March 2002, pp. 18-19.

formation, money, people, and dangerous materials around the world – has given such previously marginal groups much greater power to wreak destruction on their targets.

Proliferation

One principal approach to prevention is to try to constrain the new opportunities afforded terrorist groups by globalization in the first place – to prevent them from obtaining particularly powerful weapons, such as nuclear, radiological, chemical, or biological weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Non-proliferation programs may significantly raise the barrier to mounting WMD attacks on the United States. The programs include efforts to help secure materials and knowledge around the world, and particularly in Russia, that could be used for WMD attacks if obtained by hostile groups.

An initially-skeptical Bush administration has become a convert to the value of many of these programs. In December 2001, the president released a statement after a long agency review saying that “Most U.S. programs to assist Russia in threat reduction and nonproliferation work well, are focused on priority tasks and are well managed” – a level of endorsement of a government program that is quite rare in Washington.¹² Many of these programs are in the national security budget (run by the Departments of Defense and Energy rather than State) and are cost-effective tradeoffs compared to other military programs given that they address the problem at its source, rather than downstream. Detailed recommendations on nonproliferation programs are beyond the scope of this monograph, but action in this area is a central part of any program to reduce the need for offensive operations against would-be users of weapons of mass destruction.

Recommendations

To cost-effectively reduce the threat of WMD, **greatly increase the funding for weapon dismantlement and security in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere.**

¹² Mike Allen, “Bush Pledges More Aid For Russian Arms Cuts,” *Washington Post*, Dec. 28, 2001.

AFGHANISTAN

Enemy Political Centers of Gravity

The classic guerrilla war strategy of “draining the sea” that the terrorist “fish” swim in can have some limited relevance to a terrorist war. Although the hard-core ultraterrorists are unlikely to be influenced by changing conditions in the world (negative conditions are the source of their ostensible political causes, which they exaggerate in order to justify their activities), in the name of leaving no stone unturned in the war on terrorism it might well be profitable to attempt to sway the second tier of supporters, collaborators, accomplices, and occasional assistants by addressing perceived grievances – the core or political “center of gravity” to which the terrorist leaders hitch their wagons. Al Qaeda uses its “message” of perceived grievances as its force-generation tool to recruit from the large pool of sympathizers in the Islamic world. But this center of gravity can be countered: the “repentant” terrorist from Algeria on trial in Germany in April 2002 is an example of how it is possible to persuade the second-tier type of terrorist.¹³

While the primary means to address resentment and hostility are diplomatic, economic, social, and informational, the second-order effects of military policies are important, for example popular opposition to the presence of U.S. military personnel or forces in Saudi Arabia, the site of the main Islamic holy sites, Mecca and Medina. The Saudi-U.S. relationship is complex and there are many factions determining Saudi policies towards the United States, but at least some Saudi officials reportedly favor a reduction in U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia,¹⁴ and indeed the U.S. military itself is reexamining the size of its deployment there, in part because of the desirability of and new possibilities for establishing and expanding other bases in the Middle East and Central Asian regions.¹⁵

¹³ See Peter Finn and Erik Schelzig, “Repentant Algerian Tells of Bomb Plot,” *Washington Post*, April 24, 2002 for the psychology of one nonhard-core terrorist.

¹⁴ Robert Kaiser and David Ottaway, “Saudis May Seek U.S. Exit,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 18, 2002.

¹⁵ Elaine Sciolino with Eric Schmitt, “U.S. Rethinks Its Role in Saudi Arabia,” *The New York Times*, March 10, 2002.

More broadly, while world leaders are careful not to blame terrorism on poor people, even President Bush has acknowledged that poverty and poor government serve as a breeding ground for terrorism. In a landmark speech announcing a 14 percent increase in aid to developing countries, he noted,

“We work for prosperity and opportunity because they’re right. It’s the right thing to do. We also work for prosperity and opportunity because they help defeat terror.

Poverty doesn’t cause terrorism. Being poor doesn’t make you a murderer. Most of the plotters of September 11th were raised in comfort. Yet persistent poverty and oppression can lead to hopelessness and despair. And when governments fail to meet the most basic needs of their people, these failed states can become havens for terror.

In Afghanistan, persistent poverty and war and chaos created conditions that allowed a terrorist regime to seize power. And in many other states around the world, poverty prevents governments from controlling their borders, policing their territory, and enforcing their laws. Development provides the resources to build hope and prosperity, and security.”¹⁶

Some observers have argued that poverty is demonstrably not the problem because the bulk of the 9/11 terrorists were not poor.¹⁷ But this is a logical

¹⁶ Remarks by the President on Global Development, Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002, White House Office of the Press Secretary.

¹⁷ “The Futile Search for ‘Root Causes’ of Terrorism,” Michael Radu, E-Notes, Foreign Policy Research Institute, April 23, 2002.

¹⁸ For example, Osama bin Laden listed his charges against the United States in his 1998 declaration: “For more than seven years the United States is occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of its territories, Arabia, *plundering its riches*, overwhelming its rulers, humiliating its people, threatening its neighbors, and using its bases in the peninsula as a spearhead to fight against the neighboring Islamic peoples.” (Emphasis added.) Bernard Lewis, “Jihad vs. Crusade,” *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 27, 2001.

fallacy – some of the terrorists appear to be inspired, rightly or wrongly, to act on behalf of what they perceive as economic oppression of their Islamic peoples, among other grievances – regardless of whether or not they are personally poor.¹⁸ The test is not whether the terrorists are poor themselves, but whether they are motivated by, and try to build support from, the poverty of others.

A positive strategy of attempting to pre-empt the growth of threats has been called a “conditions-based” strategy.¹⁹ It suggests action to proactively develop the conditions that provide an infertile ground for terrorism – such as freedom and democracy, rule of law, economic prosperity, limited resort to violence – rather than following a reactive “threat-based” strategy that responds to specific threats and relies on being able to foresee them. The point of trying to rebuild failed states or prevent their appearance may not be so much to prevent the states helping terrorists – future terrorists may evolve away from relying on bases and other vulnerable nation-based support – as to try to limit assistance to the principal terrorists from second tier accomplices and sympathizers.

The Israeli March and April 2002 military offensives in Palestinian cities against terrorism provides one illustration of the difficulty of executing purely military solutions to terrorism: even Israeli military officers readily acknowledged that the campaign would not stop terrorism, merely disrupt it temporarily. A senior intelligence official noted, “Nobody in the Shin Bet [intelligence agency] thinks these [military] operations will stop terrorism. It’s impossible to end this wave of terrorism without a political process.”²⁰

Recommendations

The military should recognize and seek to **minimize the negative second-order effects of its actions abroad**. This means:

- **recognize the resentment that can be engendered by deployment of U.S. forces and by demonstration of overwhelming U.S. power;**

¹⁹ Wass de Czege, Huba and Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Toward a Strategy of Positive Ends*, U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, September 2001, p. 10.

²⁰ Lee Hockstader, “Some Israelis Questioning Effectiveness of Offensive,” *Washington Post*, March 16, 2002.

- **work with other countries as much as is feasible to reduce perception of the United States as a sole global policeman and hegemon;**
- **intrude as little as possible on host country cultures in deployments and basing while maximizing the benefits of engagement.**

Although it is beyond the scope of this monograph, broader national security policy should similarly work to reverse the growth of breeding grounds for terrorism:

Federal resources should be allocated such that pre-emptive measures and broad policies to limit sympathy and support for hard-core terrorists are funded more – including economic aid, information programs to improve understanding of each other’s politics and societies, new initiatives to address global culture clash, financial support for moderate and democratic institutions and organizations abroad, and military participation in humanitarian assistance.

How to Fight – Doctrine

When diplomatic, economic, and other nonmilitary instruments of national security fail to pre-empt attacks on the United States or its important interests, resort to force of arms becomes necessary. What has changed in how the United States can fight in the post-9/11 world?

9/11

“Fourth-generation” Warfare and Homeland Security

The Defense Department has a role in preventing conventional military attacks such as with ballistic missiles against the United States, but a much more limited role in trying to detect covert attacks. Its role in emergency response to disasters is also secondary to civilian agencies, especially for the active component of the military, although the role may be growing. Army Secretary Thomas White, the Defense Department (DoD) executive agent for Homeland Defense, has noted regarding DoD, “We’re not the lead agency for the homeland security task.”²¹

The military may be the best tool for providing “homeland defense” against conventional military threats – ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, or bomber

²¹ Gail Kaufman and Frank Tiboni, “Pentagon Plays Supporting Role in Security,” *Defense News*, Oct. 29 – Nov. 4, 2001, p. 44.

aircraft – but may not be strategically suited to providing “homeland security” against the unconventional forms of threat the country may face in the 21st century. The school of strategic thought that focuses on the idea of “fourth-generation” warfare suggests that the military role in homeland security may be limited because the new 21st century opponents are likely to deliberately pursue strategies that will make the military less relevant.²²

First-generation warfare is characterized by line and column tactics of the Napoleonic era. Second-generation warfare is “industrial” war of attrition, best epitomized by the Western Front in World War I. Wearing down the enemy by massive application of materiel was also largely the U.S. operational strategy in World War II, and remains an influence in the U.S. military today. Third-generation “maneuver” warfare was practiced by German forces in World War II using *blitzkrieg* tactics to target enemy cohesion, rather than destroy enemy forces *per se*. To escape from the terrible destruction and casualty cost of second generation warfare, the Germans developed this method of “asymmetric” attacks to bypass enemy strengths. The classic example of this strategy of creating chaos, anxiety, mistrust, paralysis, and panic is the rapid defeat of France in 1940.

One way to describe the complex phenomenon of fourth-generation warfare is: war between societies, about culture, by irregular combatants, against nonmilitary as well as military targets, to influence the mind of the other side – rather than war between nations, about borders, by regular armed forces, against other armed forces, to destroy them.

Fourth-generation warfare often features asymmetric attacks similar to third generation warfare but off the “battlefield” as well as on it, and targets the cohesion, will, and minds of the other side. As noted previously, the United States has great asymmetric strengths of its own, but if used injudiciously its military asymmetries, such as overwhelming destructive power, can easily backfire in fourth-generation conflicts that are as much political and economic as military.

Fourth-generation attackers can be terrorists, guerrillas, other irregulars, and computer hackers as well as conventional forces, and targets can be vul-

²² For extensive description and discussion of fourth-generation warfare see the Defense and the National Interest website, www.d-n-i.net.

nerable infrastructure, institutions, populations, cultural icons, culture itself, as well as armed forces. One side is often not nation-based but international or transnational – operating outside of the framework of nation states entirely. Ultraterrorists – the new terrorists who pursue essentially unlimited goals – are likely to try to use fourth-generation warfare to bypass their enemy's strengths. In the case of the United States, that means trying to bypass dominant U.S. regular armed forces, and is exactly what al Qaeda did on Sept. 11.

The armed forces are unlikely to be able to plug every hole in homeland security. For example, if the military had been conducting air patrols over U.S. cities on Sept. 11, and had orders to shoot down errant commercial aircraft (a policy with obvious problems of its own), the al Qaeda attacks could have been prevented. However, although attacks using airliners as missiles could have been prevented, al Qaeda would likely simply have chosen some other target and means of attack that bypassed that military defense. The air patrols that have continued for months after Sept. 11 at great expense addressed a threat that likely no longer existed: fourth-generation enemies emphasize surprise, and they no longer possess it for passenger aircraft hijacking. Even if attackers could still seize commercial airliners, if they are effective fourth-generation warfare practitioners, they would *rather* choose some other mode of attack, in order to keep the initiative and to multiply chaos and fear in their target nation.

In terms of fourth-generation strategy, deploying large numbers of military personnel at sites like the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City is a static, defensive operation. Although it can be useful tactically to disrupt and slow terrorist planning or operations, at the level of grand strategy it cedes the initiative to the enemy.²³ A more proactive role of the military in “homeland security” is conducting offensive operations when possible, ideally using fourth-generation warfare strategies against opponents. In Operation En-

²³ There is, however, a use for such operations in the new form of warfare. Winning, in fourth-generation thinking, comes from outmaneuvering an enemy mentally. One way to do this is to put the enemy increasingly off balance by a series of varying moves and thrusts – expected and unexpected, orthodox and unorthodox, distracting and decisive. At this level of move and countermove, the military might have an important role: to distract an enemy, convincing them that the United States is reacting in a predictable and not dangerous manner – while in fact decisive moves are being prepared and conducted against the enemy. This was more or less what happened in the Afghanistan campaign.

during Freedom, the military used an unorthodox approach, not invading Afghanistan conventionally, but using a few of its own agile Special Operations ground forces in combination with air power and local allies. This mix created chaos, anxiety, and collapse in the Taliban and al Qaeda.

Apart from the challenges of applying active duty military forces to defensive operations against enemies specifically trying to bypass them, throughout U.S. history there have been serious concerns about permitting armed forces to operate among, and hence potentially against, the citizenry. In addition to the difficulties of situations involving confrontation between soldiers and citizens, the mixing of heavily-armed forces trained for intense combat and civilian populations sharply increases the chances of fatal mistakes and accidents (as has occurred frequently in the somewhat different context in Afghanistan).

Recommendations

The creation of a new Northern Command should help to clarify the command structure if military units are deployed to prevent or respond to attacks on the homeland. But when considering roles for military forces in homeland security, the question must always be answered, why use active duty combat military units, who focus on combat situations in hostile or potentially hostile foreign areas, rather than civilian organizations that are comfortable operating in a civilian environment within the United States? To the extent that civilian organizations may not have focused sufficiently on or been organized for homeland security missions and response to terrorist attacks, they can be refocused and improved to do so now, and new federal civilian units can be created where necessary.

The military includes numerous units whose focus is not combat itself, such as transportation, water provision, communications, engineering, logistics, and military police. These units could be of use in response to a devastating attack. Some of these units are already in the National Guard and Reserve, and for institutional focus and training reasons it may be best to concentrate on making those units available within the United States and expanding them as necessary to make sure that the active forces still have access to the desired level of capability.

The military's skills in chemical and biological situations are limited in scope and difficult to transfer to the civilian context. It is hard to imagine that a

civilian unit with specialized counterterrorism and disaster management training would not be at least as effective as an active duty military unit that had homeland security as a *secondary* mission. Focusing on developing new civilian capabilities where necessary would allow the military to focus on its primary role in “homeland security” – taking the fight back to the enemy.

The National Guard is an obvious choice for homeland security situations where lots of personnel are needed, for example to establish security cordons if a terrorist attack was discovered or to help maintain authority following a devastating attack. Former Sen. Gary Hart has called for “restoring an army of the people” that is more reserve-focused, partly for reasons of strengthening U.S. society and because it fit well with the American tradition.²⁴ In 1998, he suggested the Guard be focused on serving as a heavy reserve to the active forces, but today some units could focus on homeland security and help develop a clear purpose and mission for the Guard. Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-CT) has echoed this call for a more active Guard role now.²⁵

Such a role was called for in the work of the prescient Commission on National Security/21st Century, co-chaired by Hart. The Commission recommended giving the Guard a primary responsibility in homeland security to “fulfill its historic and Constitutional mission,” and proposed that the “Total Force” of active and reserve units should “minimize forces with dual missions or reliance on active forces detailed for major theater war.”²⁶

In sum, this report recommends that the United States should:

- **Preserve the active duty military for its primary role, taking the offensive and combating threats abroad.**
- **For disaster response to successful attacks, focus on use of National Guard ground units rather than active component forces. In contrast to the active forces, the National Guard has a long history of use in natural disasters and some cases of civil disorder. It is**

²⁴ See Hart, Gary, *The Minuteman*, Free Press: New York, 1998.

²⁵ Sen. Joe Lieberman, “The Best Defense: Leveraging the Strength of Our Military to Protect the Homeland,” speech to the Progressive Policy Institute, June 26, 2002.

²⁶ *Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change*, Phase III Report of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, Feb. 15, 2001, pp. 25-6.

“closer” to the citizenry than active forces since personnel are not in the military full-time and do not train as constantly for intense combat. Many reserve units do not have assigned roles in war fighting plans, and the active forces will be less distracted from their primary war fighting missions. Refocus training where necessary to further improve Guard units’ ability to operate effectively among the civilian population.

- If more paramilitary capability is needed for federal roles in preventing an attack from within the United States using weapons of mass destruction, establish new federal civilian units comfortable operating in the civilian U.S. environment.
- Preserve, clarify, and strengthen posse comitatus and related guidelines restricting the use of active duty military forces in domestic situations.

Although active duty U.S. military forces are less suited to securing the homeland against fourth-generation warfare threats, they can be transformed to effectively use fourth-generation strategies in taking the offensive against terrorists.

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Old Principles of War in Fourth-generation War

If the most dangerous terrorists are those groups practicing fourth-generation warfare using a dispersed, stealthy network, what strategies of fourth-generation warfare can be turned against them? Timeless principles of warfare first hinted at by the ancient Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu are particularly relevant at defeating such elusive foes.²⁷ **Some of the principles include:**

- **minimize the use of force;**
- **focus on destroying the cohesion of the enemy rather than his forces;**
- **be agile and use the unexpected;**

²⁷ For extensive discuss of this strategic approach, see Richards, Chester, *A Swift, Elusive Sword*, Center for Defense Information, May 2001.

- **gather allies;**
- **develop good intelligence.**

Seeking to win using the least amount of force minimizes collateral damage and growth of resentment among foreign populations. When force is used, ending the campaign quickly helps avoid planting the seeds for future conflict while winning the current one. This has been dangerously violated in Afghanistan, when the Bush administration continued on a war footing with military operations in searches – including some that led to incidents of fratricide – for al Qaeda operatives long after the Taliban had been overthrown, the terrorist network of bases had been destroyed, and the new government had begun to try to re-establish peaceful conditions across the country. These operations and their inhibition of operations focusing directly on security of the population and re-establishment of law may perversely contribute to instability in the country and conditions that weaken the government and increase resort to force.

Attacking the cohesion of the enemy aims to paralyze him, rather than destroying him directly, which is particularly difficult for covert terrorist networks. Ways to paralyze and outflank al Qaeda might include moving the battlefield into religion – mounting a campaign to isolate al Qaeda and its extremist interpretations of Islam by mobilizing moderate Islamic allies such as clerics, media, and thinkers. **A strategy of multiple nonmilitary (for example religious, financial, and social) as well as military fronts against the cohesion of the enemy should be pursued to keep terrorist groups on the defensive, off-balance, and hopefully, paralyzed.**

A favorite strategy of terror, using the unexpected, can be used against terrorists too. For example, after years of U.S. pinprick cruise missile attacks in the region, Afghans and probably al Qaeda were surprised that the United States actually undertook to overthrow the government and was willing to put troops on the ground to do it. Even if terrorists had expected a ground attack, the shape that it took – few U.S. troops in alliance with local forces – was an unexpected move. **A strategy of using the unexpected implies, in general, creating forces that are flexible, scalable, provide commanders with multiple options, and can switch between different thrusts quickly.**

It seems almost banal to say that allies – close historical allies, relatively friendly Arab governments, other countries that are battlegrounds between

moderate and fundamentalist Islam, former adversaries like Russia and China, and others – will be crucial for the campaign against extremist Islamic terrorism. Yet the Bush administration has not managed to create a cohesive coalition of allies for its cause. **Although allies can in theory constrain freedom of action, in a global multifaceted conflict with extremist Islam they also bring numerous strengths in a variety of areas.**

A final principle of war emphasized by Sun Tzu is good intelligence. As has been recognized, nowhere is this more important than in a struggle with nebulous terrorist cells. **A strategy that emphasizes intelligence should think of it not just as tactical intelligence on the location of terrorists, but also knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures, governments and politics.**

Will the Terrorists Move Fully Into Fourth-generation Warfare?

To the extent that terrorists move away from links to and support from governments, the lessons of Operation Enduring Freedom will not be fully representative of the future war. In effect, 9/11 may hold more important lessons than Operation Enduring Freedom. The real shape of future war may be fourth-generation warfare, often waged by the new ultraterrorists.

Al Qaeda so far only really waged “three-and-a-half”-generation warfare: on Sept. 11 it struck asymmetrically against a nonmilitary target in fourth-generation fashion, but it had also established infrastructure in Afghanistan that was vulnerable to a third- (or even second-) generation counterattack. The military side of the effort to destroy al Qaeda had tactical success against the infrastructure, but at best uncertain strategic success: many of the top al Qaeda leaders have been neither confirmed killed nor captured, and the ability of its global network to strike again is estimated to have only partly been damaged.²⁸ If substantial portions of the al Qaeda network still exist, they are less tied to overt training camps, and are less vulnerable to military action. The bulk of the remaining struggle with al Qaeda is likely to move from the third-generation battleground of Afghanistan into fourth-generation warfare, which has no clearly delineated “battleground” boundaries.

²⁸ Conetta, Carl, *Strange Victory: A Critical Appraisal of Operation Enduring Freedom and the Afghanistan War*, Executive Summary, Project on Defense Alternatives, January 2002, pp. 1-2. Al Qaeda damage estimate is from a senior FBI counterterrorism official.

If al Qaeda or other future terrorists learn lessons from Operation Enduring Freedom, they will drop overt infrastructure and government sanctuaries, and instead focus on the type of organization and activities that led to success on Sept. 11: covert, small, global cells not linked to any governments (or local forces in failed states) or other hard “targets.” In a globalized world, ultraterrorists do not necessarily need state facilities. As defense analyst Carl Conetta has noted,

“None of the terrorist capabilities demonstrated on [Sept. 11] require a large infrastructure and none require an intentionally co-operating state. Indeed, the [Sept. 11] terrorist cells were less dependent functionally on al Qaeda bases in Afghanistan than on flight schools in Florida.”²⁹

The implication of this is that in future cases there may not be a government or authority to deter or remove, as there was in Afghanistan, in order to cripple a terrorist organization. Then the military role in Afghanistan of overthrowing the Taliban and deterring future government supporters of terrorism becomes moot. If enemies learn lessons from Operation Enduring Freedom, nonmilitary action to address transnational and subnational problems and threats are likely to play the dominant role in U.S. responses if for no other reason than that the more clever adversaries will deny the United States the opportunity to use force by not presenting any targets. The primary tools to counter these threats would default to police work, financial sleuthing, border control and intelligence gathering.

Nevertheless, there may continue to be cases where terrorists seek and receive active support from governments, or more likely, where terrorists find some advantage in using or hiding in the anarchy of failed states or conflict zones. U.S. military forces would be needed to follow strategies of changing hostile governments, or helping to prevent entire states or areas within a country from falling outside of the control of nonhostile governments. Eliminating zones of anarchy globe-wide is, of course, a daunting task. Narrowly-selected operations could be useful to help end a specific conflict that was proving to be of use to a terrorist group.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Afghanistan has shown that regime change or stabilization does not necessarily require a large U.S. conventional force. U.S. military involvement with the efforts of the governments of the Philippines, Yemen, Georgia and Colombia to increase control over their territories is following the model of playing a supporting role to local allies, although on an entirely different scale than in Afghanistan. Conversely, other contingencies, such as Iraq, would currently require a large U.S. force to do the job.

Apart from pre-empting the creation of potential havens for terrorists, if fourth-generation threats grow, military forces might also have a role in assassinations, arrests or raids. Against ultraterrorist cells not relying on conflict zones or supporting governments for sanctuary, these would best be carried out by relatively small and specialized Delta Force-type units or by precision air strike assets.

Recommendations

Sept. 11 and Afghanistan have shown two important things about the large U.S. heavy ground force designed for superpower conflict, primarily in the Army: for all its might, it can be bypassed, as in the 9/11 attacks, and, in certain cases, wars can be won entirely without the heavy force, as in Afghanistan.

The rationale for sizeable heavy armored ground forces (or high-end air-to-air fighters and surface warfare ships) has by no means disappeared, particularly in light of the contingencies of Iraq and North Korea. Nevertheless, it is clear that threats are now as likely to come from unconventional opponents as from heavily-armed superpowers. In response to this threat change, the U.S. force mix should shift accordingly. There is no clear dividing line between forces – heavier legacy forces can still be useful for compelling the state sponsors of terrorism – but **the mix should shift somewhat toward those forces and capabilities that are more effective in unconventional warfare.**

In addition to a shift within military forces, given the lower applicability of large military forces for fourth-generation warfare threats relative to law enforcement, intelligence gathering, economic development, and other nonmilitary tools, the resource balance should be adjusted accordingly.

Allies

One reason the attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath held the possibility of marking a watershed was the new sense of cooperation engendered among the United States, its allies and countries with whom relations had recently been strained, most notably Russia and China, but also countries like Iran and Pakistan.

The success in Afghanistan was notable for the variety of allies who were recruited and assembled: *local* allies who performed the ground operations; *regional* allies who provided bases to the United States; *global* allies in NATO and elsewhere who offered united support and even military forces, and former adversaries like Russia, China, and Iran who backed, or at least condoned, the U.S. effort.

Local

The local allies played perhaps the most important role, enabling the United States to avoid all the grave complications of having to essentially invade and occupy a landlocked, inhospitable and fractious country with U.S. ground troops.

Although cooperating with local allies provided a successful military formula, the strategy did have a downside: local forces were often provided by “warlords,” many of whom are now in strong political and military positions, threatening the re-establishment of governance not based on force – whether by traditional local leaders or the central government. In addition, it appears that some local “allies” have exploited U.S. cooperation to fool U.S. forces into attacking rival factions, thinking they were true Taliban or al Qaeda forces.

An alternative model to cooperating with questionable local forces, such as proposed by Carl Conetta of the Project on Defense Alternatives, would have given a greater role to U.S. and international forces to overthrow the Taliban and then to establish civilian control as peacekeepers.³⁰ The fate of Afghanistan may end up again in the hands of warlords running fiefdoms rather than a more ideal model of accountable local civilian governance with an at least substantial level of central authority. If so, the track record of the warlords does not bode well for the future.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

Regional

Regional allies greatly eased the logistical and deployment challenges of the operation by providing base access in the Persian Gulf, Pakistan and Central Asia. “Access” in this situation was more important than having major U.S. units permanently “forward-based” already – no major units were in Pakistan or Central Asia.

Pakistan played an additional important role: the government of Gen. Pervez Musharraf provided key political support despite the extremely delicate political situation in the country and the strength of its fundamentalist Islamic factions. The ability of the United States to gain rapid access to bases in the region is a testament to the utility of military engagement with countries around the world. The early deployment of U.S. forces to Uzbekistan is in part attributable to the relationship built up by Central Command commanders prior to Sept. 11, before any specific need to use those bases in operations was known.³¹ Exercises by the 82nd Airborne Division were conducted with both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in 1997.

Primarily as a result of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, however, sensitivity to U.S. forces being based in some Muslim countries is growing,³² including importantly in Saudi Arabia, and a reduction in presence may be imposed on the U.S. military. More broadly, political (and economic, in the case of oil) support from Muslim countries may be crucial for the long-run conduct of the war on terrorism. Andrew Krepinevich of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments suggests the U.S. relationship with states such as Egypt, the Gulf Cooperation Council states, Jordan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey comprises one of the two components of the U.S. strategic “center of gravity” in the conflict with Islamic fundamentalist terrorism.³³

Old Adversaries

The support of former antagonist nations also removed potential roadblocks

³¹ David Stern, “US Aircraft Land in Uzbekistan,” *Financial Times*, Sept. 24, 2001.

³² For example, in Bahrain: Neil MacFarquhar, “Death In Bahrain Brings Demand That U.S. Leave,” *The New York Times*, April 8, 2002.

³³ Krepinevich, Andrew, *The First War of a New Century: A First Blush Assessment*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Sept. 28, 2001. The other component is the American people’s will to persist in a protracted conflict.

to a free hand by the United States to conduct an ambitious military operation. Russia shared intelligence and its airspace, did not object to use of former Soviet airfields in Central Asia, and provided military assistance to the Afghan Northern Alliance.

Although the improvement in the collaborative environment may not last, it is possible that a new era with qualitatively different working relationships with Russia and China has begun. The opportunity is certainly there: Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov noted in January 2002 that, “The present solidarity against terrorism provides a unique chance to begin constructing a system of international security adequate to address 21st century threats. Russian-American cooperation can play the decisive role in creating such a system.”³⁴ And U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz noted in a thoughtful interview, “I think we really are in a new era in U.S.-Russian relations. It will go through bumps and starts, and it’s not a new era in the sense that suddenly they love us and we love them. But our interests coincide in so many ways that they didn’t before.”³⁵

Unfortunately, administration policies such as continuing to consider Russia a potential nuclear target in the new Nuclear Posture Review and the deployment of U.S. troops to Georgia have tarnished the relationship. Russian political factions critical of President Vladimir Putin and his initiative to improve relations with the United States are striking a resonant chord with the Russian body politic by pointing out the military “encirclement” of Russia with the establishment of U.S. or NATO military presence over the next few years in four or even five of the Central Asian “stans,” Georgia, and the Baltic states through NATO expansion.

Global

Probably most important in the long run for how U.S. forces might be reshaped, however, was the behavior of long-time U.S. allies – European countries, Australia and Japan. These countries crossed a new line in willingness and even desire to join the military operations. Numerous complaints by

³⁴ “Organizing the World to Fight Terror,” *The New York Times*, Jan. 27, 2002.

³⁵ James Fallows, “The Unilateralist,” *Atlantic Monthly*, March 2002.

European nations that they were being left out of the operations surfaced.³⁶ Apart from Britain, which was involved in operations from the start,³⁷ France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain were prominent in offering forces.

It has long been conventional wisdom that European NATO nations would not be interested in military operations outside of Europe or its immediate environs. The dam may have been broken when the NATO collective defense article was invoked for the first time in September 2001 and NATO assets – airborne warning and control aircraft – were operationally deployed to the United States. That relatively small deployment was followed by willingness to be involved in combat in Afghanistan.

France has been particularly eager for a substantial role in the operations, which is especially noteworthy given its traditional discomfort with U.S.-led military operations.³⁸ Since 1996, France has been implementing a plan to add to its already-substantial global intervention capabilities by transforming and reducing its European-oriented heavy forces.³⁹ A significant agreement in December 2001 between the United States and France to improve military cooperation addressed interoperability issues, and established improved communication and coordination in the areas of military requirements, concepts of operation and acquisition plans.⁴⁰

Germany has undergone a sea change in willingness to use its military well beyond Europe's borders. An October 2001 poll found a majority of the German public favored using German forces in the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism, a remarkable reversal of the 76 percent opposed to using German troops in nearby Kosovo in 1999.⁴¹ Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder declared in a major speech that Germany's restricted military role in world affairs had

³⁶ Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, "EU Leaders Demand A Place in Front Line," *London Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 7, 2001.

³⁷ Statement of the Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense News Release No. 491-01, Oct. 7, 2001.

³⁸ Joseph Fitchett, "U.S. Allies Chafe at 'Cleanup' Role," *International Herald Tribune*, Nov. 26, 2001.

³⁹ Robinson, Colin, *France: Preparing for New Types of Warfare in the New Century*, Center for Defense Information, March 13, 2002.

⁴⁰ MacRae, Catherine, "Aldridge: New Agreement with France Will Bolster Interoperability," *Inside the Pentagon*, Dec. 13, 2001.

⁴¹ Peter Finn, "Germany Shifts Toward Stronger Military Role," *Washington Post*, Oct. 12, 2001.

“irrevocably passed” and that it would be ready and willing to deploy forces “in defense of freedom and human rights.”⁴²

Like Germany, Italy has been reluctant to use its military forces abroad, preferring to focus on political mediation of conflicts. But, like Germany, it built on its use of forces in combat in Kosovo to endorse military support for the war against terrorism and move toward a more active foreign and military policy.⁴³

After initial delays by the United States, combat troops from Australia, France, Germany, Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Norway and Denmark joined those of Britain and the United States in ground operations in Afghanistan. Numerous nations sent vessels, and France deployed fighter-bombers.⁴⁴

Unfortunately, the rare opportunity for a true watershed in U.S. relations with both allies and Russia appears to have been lost as the unilateralist strains in Bush administration foreign policy resurfaced. Since the period of comity following 9/11, the opportunity to build a more collaborative relationship with allies fell victim to the administration’s policies of, among others: overthrowing the government of Iraq, reportedly through invasion if necessary; declaring the existence of an “axis of evil,” bizarrely including Iran which has for years been moving away from, rather than toward, extremist Islamic fundamentalist control; refusing to contemplate participation in peacekeeping in Afghanistan; and denying prisoner-of-war rights to detainees. Apart from disagreement over the specific policies, a wide variety of European leaders have felt the administration was not consulting with allies before announcing its unilateral major policy departures. To cite just one example from a leadership position that generally refrains from policy criticisms, German president Johannes Rau pointedly stated:

“The success of future actions, both economically and politically, will not lie in isolation or policies of lonely decision-making. Especially when it comes to the use of military means, there has to

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ James Blitz, “Italy to Send Troops to Help War on Terrorism,” *Financial Times*, Nov. 8, 2001.

⁴⁴ “Afghan Mountain Battle Rages,” *Washington Post*, March 5, 2002.

be acceptance worldwide for it to be of lasting success. Partners have to be ready to speak with each other and listen to each other – but then to act jointly.”⁴⁵

Relations with Arab countries, most notably Saudi Arabia, have also suffered after the initial positive period of support following 9/11. The Bush administration’s plans to attack Iraq and the catastrophic Israeli-Palestinian flare-up have taken a substantial toll on good relations. In March 2002, the Arab League took the extraordinary step of declaring that an attack on any Arab nation, to include Iraq, would be regarded as a threat to each nation’s security.⁴⁶ In an indication of the political distance between the two countries, Saudi Arabia has said that it will deny the use of its bases to U.S. forces for an attack on Iraq even with a UN resolution supporting such action, although the final picture might change.⁴⁷

Relations with Russia and China are not as bad, but the earlier optimism about the potential for a new era in relations has worn off as U.S. policies, including particularly a substantial tilt toward Taiwan, have crimped possibilities.

In sum, 9/11 and the collaborative effort against terrorist groups did create the foundation for a qualitatively different level of cooperation with Europe, Russia and China, but unless an unlikely strengthening of the multilateralist camp in the Bush administration occurs, building on the foundation will be pushed into the future.

Recommendations

Engagement

The value of military engagement with potential local and regional allies in peacetime, in particular to gain access to deployment bases, has been reinforced by the experience in Afghanistan. There is an important caveat to this prescription, however. Close military contacts with unsavory governments

⁴⁵ Stephen Erlanger, “Europe Seethes As the U.S. Flies Solo in World Affairs,” *The New York Times*, Feb. 23, 2002.

⁴⁶ Howard Schneider, “Saudi Puts Faith In Iraqi Pledge,” *Washington Post*, March 30, 2002.

⁴⁷ “Foreign Minister: Bases Can’t Be Used,” *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 4, 2002

can backfire, so expanded contacts must be conducted on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration a range of political factors. All five of the Central Asian nations near Afghanistan that the United States has increased involvement with during Operation Enduring Freedom have undemocratic governments.

Certain types of contact, such as U.S. training of foreign military officers and forces, particularly those involved in civil wars, and U.S. advisors accompanying forces engaged in counterinsurgency operations, have long been controversial. The debate has revolved around whether the U.S. military training excluded illegitimate techniques of war (such as torture and political assassination), whether the training implied support for repressive governments, and whether deployments were the first step to the United States being drawn into new military quagmires. The expanded contacts envisioned here are generally intended for countries at peace, or at least not in the throes of widespread civil conflict.

But contacts also must be undertaken carefully with countries that merely have undemocratic regimes, as opposed to active internal conflicts. Working too closely with them can lead to (1) being perceived as linked to and supporting the regime, (2) worsening of relations with the country if the government falls, (3) weakening of the government because of the domestic political dynamics of association with the United States, or (4) encouragement of heavy-handed government repression because of perceived U.S. support. In these cases the benefits of working with unsavory regimes – whether in the military arena or in nonmilitary ways – must be balanced against the political fallout. This is not anything special, however – foreign policy decisions deal with such questions on a daily basis.

In addition, the details of the engagement are important and must be chosen appropriately. In theory, military training can be done in a way that improves the professionalism and human rights performance of the recipient military. In practice, much of the historical evidence shows little or no positive effect.⁴⁸ If the counterterrorism campaign requires lowering standards

⁴⁸ Over a third (51) of the countries receiving U.S. military training were repressive according to the State Department's 2002 Human Rights Report. Lora Lumpe, "U.S. Foreign Military Training: Global Reach, Global Power, and Oversight Issues," *Foreign Policy In Focus*, May 2002.

for nations the United States will work with, this should be balanced by redoubling efforts to make sure that U.S. cooperation does not directly or indirectly increase repressive or abusive behavior by foreign governments and militaries. Existing military training programs currently have little focus on human rights issues and international law.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, the Bush administration asked in its 2002 emergency supplemental appropriations to allow the Defense Department to allocate training money without regard to human rights issues or other conditions of congressional oversight.

Funding and resources for regional combatant commands to conduct combined exercises, military-to-military contacts, and exchanges should be expanded with democratic countries or when increased contact will contribute to democratization in the host country rather than hinder it.

Another problem with foreign bases – vulnerability to attack – may grow increasingly important if opponents gain access to weapons of mass destruction. Andrew Krepinevich has suggested they may even become “the 21st century’s Omaha Beaches.”⁵⁰

To hedge against the possibility of reduced access to bases and their vulnerability, the United States should **continue to increase its capability to project power with limited local facilities. The primary means are to strengthen amphibious forces, materiel prepositioned aboard ship, and long-range and carrier-borne strike aircraft.**

Military Operations with Allies

For long-standing U.S. allies, Afghanistan has raised the possibilities of greater collaboration in military operations. A more integrated, multinational military approach to dealing with zones of conflict and instability would require adoption of a new mindset on all sides – there has long been a defeatist attitude about the possibilities of greater allied cooperation. Real multinational capability will, of course, require a major effort on both sides to develop the

⁴⁹ “U.S. Foreign Military Training: Global Reach, Global Power, and Oversight Issues,” Lora Lumpe, *Foreign Policy In Focus*, May 2002.

⁵⁰ Krepinevich, Andrew, *Arming America’s Soldiers for a New Kind of War*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Oct. 26, 2001.

doctrine, training, organization and equipment needed for improved combined military operations.

On the allied side, the question is whether the budgetary resources and the political will exist to increase capabilities. The debate has gone back and forth, but it is clear that, even before 9/11, Europeans were taking substantial steps to increase their intervention capabilities, and that the anti-al Qaeda counter-attack in Afghanistan only strengthened the willingness of certain allies to undertake joint operations with the United States. This opportunity may be squandered, however, if concerns among allies grow that the administration is not really interested in serious multilateral collaboration.

A recent push toward specialization among European nations may also alleviate resource constraints: if governments follow through on reducing the duplication of capabilities, more funding will be available for priority areas. Examples of areas that particular countries could specialize in include biological and chemical units, Special Operations Forces, coastal protection, fighter aircraft and airlift aircraft.

On the U.S. side, the key sticking point has been the desire to maintain unilateral freedom of action – to do anything it needs to without having to deal with allies. In addition, it is often felt that greater cooperation might lead to difficult political situations domestically if U.S. casualties were sustained because of poor allied combat performance, or simply during an operation conducted at the request of an ally.

Some of these problems can be addressed at the level of overall national security strategy and foreign policy. Since the United States ostensibly shares very similar foreign policy goals with its democratic allies, a multilateralist strategy values, rather than discounts, the opinions and warnings of other close nations: in a new collaborative environment, if all allies refuse to join a military operation, it should be taken as useful feedback about the wisdom and risks of the operation.

If a combined effort is undertaken, its cause is presumably righteous enough and important enough that the U.S. public will have tolerance for casualties – and military errors are unlikely to be solely created by U.S. allies. Currently, the U.S. public might have some problems with casualties caused inadvertently by or for allies, but that could change if the appropriate new environment expecting, supporting, and enabling effective collaboration is constructed.

But more importantly, in circumstances where the United States feels it needs to conduct operations without the participation of allies, there is much leeway to improve collaborative capabilities so that there is the *option* for more effective combined action without creating the *requirement* for it. Improving collaborative capabilities would allow the United States to reap the benefits of combined action by conducting it where suited, while avoiding the drawbacks by taking unilateral action where necessary.⁵¹

A major initiative should be undertaken to:

- **build public support in the populations of the United States, allies, and potential partners for combined military action, and prepare them for the risks and possible casualties of combined operations;**
- **develop new strategy, operational concepts, and command structures for increased and more effective combined action;**
- **fund and develop the equipment needed for interoperability with allies;**
- **provide the resources for combined training and exercises;**
- **increase aid to appropriate friendly countries to assist and encourage greater cooperation.**

There has been a tendency for the U.S. military to focus on fighting alongside allies that are similar to heavy U.S. forces, equipped with the highest-technology gear, and trained to fight in similar ways. However, Afghanistan demonstrated the value in certain scenarios of fighting with poorly-equipped allies who fight with different tactical methods. The value of greater collaboration among well-trained Special Operations Forces units of well-equipped allies may also have been underappreciated, particularly since the gap between U.S. and allied capabilities is narrower for Special Operations Forces in several

⁵¹ As one small example of the benefits of more integrated multinational military capability, the stressed U.S. in-flight refueling capability was reportedly supplemented in Operation Enduring Freedom with British and Turkish aircraft, a significant boon to an aging U.S. tanker fleet. John Hendren, "War On Terrorism Puts a Load on Air Force's Cargo Fleet," *Los Angeles Times*, May 5, 2002.

cases, particularly those of Britain, France, Australia, Canada and Germany, than for general conventional forces.⁵² Recommendations made here are:

- **To prepare for collaborating with new or unexpected allies, the United States should examine how best to assist, equip, fight alongside, and make use of dissimilar forces.**⁵³
- **The possibilities for taking advantage of highly-capable allied Special Operations Forces in combined operations should be explored further.**
- **Allies should continue and boost their capabilities particularly in the areas of**
 - **secure and interoperable communications;**
 - **airlift and logistics;**
 - **precision-guided munitions.**

Nonmilitary Components

A second major development brought home by the Afghanistan operation was the importance of the nonmilitary elements of a “military” campaign. The U.S. administration properly fought the conflict not just militarily in Afghanistan but also on the political, social/informational, and economic fronts, locally, regionally, and globally. Interestingly, at the commencement of combat operations, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld described the goals this way: “The effect we hope to achieve through the raids, which, together with our coalition partners, we have initiated today, is to create conditions for sustained anti-terrorist and humanitarian relief operations in Afghanistan” – emphasis was placed on a political/economic issue.⁵⁴

As has become customary in the U.S. military for the past decade, operations were conducted with a close eye on political effects – particularly in the

⁵² Allied Special Operations Forces deployed to Afghanistan reportedly included British SAS and SBS, Australian and New Zealander SAS, German KSK, and Dutch and Canadian commandos.

⁵³ A point made by Anthony Cordesman in *The Lessons of Afghanistan: War Fighting, Intelligence, Force Transformation, Counterproliferation, and Arms Control*, draft, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Feb. 21, 2002, pp. 19-20.

⁵⁴ Statement of the Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense News Release No. 491-01, Oct. 7, 2001.

bombing, with attention to minimizing civilian casualties. Arguably, there was insufficient priority ultimately given to political fallout of the bombing, but whatever the assessment of the choices made, the political considerations were integrated into military thinking.

Military tools were also put in the service of nonmilitary goals: as well as bombs, U.S. military aircraft dropped leaflets for the information war,⁵⁵ and Air Force EC-130E aircraft served as mobile radio stations, transmitting in local languages into Afghanistan.⁵⁶

Beyond Afghanistan operations, the administration recognized the importance of putting the U.S. case forward in the media, both in industrial countries and the Islamic world. After a slow start, by November administration figures began appearing on al-Jazeera television, the channel that had broadcast Osama bin Laden previously, and in other media.⁵⁷ Public opinion in the Arab and Muslim worlds can have enough of an effect on the military components of a campaign to warrant mentioning the importance of improving efforts to reach and shape foreign public views by nonmilitary agencies (and military agencies where relevant). A comprehensive, long-term, and well-funded “public diplomacy” program to provide facts, credible voices, and resonant arguments supporting the U.S. cause – to win hearts and minds, is needed to help create favorable conditions for military action when it is required.⁵⁸

Military officials have acknowledged the late beginning on public diplomacy. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Richard Myers attributed the problem to organization: “It took too much time to put together the team. ... We missed the opportunity to send the right message, sometimes we sent mixed signals, and we missed opportunities as well.”⁵⁹ The Defense Department’s media

⁵⁵ The first flyers were dropped by Oct. 15, 2001. “DoD Continues to Drop Rations, Info to Afghan People,” Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service, Oct. 15, 2001.

⁵⁶ Bradley Graham, “U.S. Beams Its Message to Afghans,” *Washington Post*, Oct. 19, 2001.

⁵⁷ Michael Gordon, “U.S. Tries to Sway Worldwide Opinion in Favor of War,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 6, 2001.

⁵⁸ Among others, a Council on Foreign Relations task force has put together a valuable collection of specific recommendations. See *Improving the U.S. Public Diplomacy Campaign In the War Against Terrorism*, Independent Task Force on America’s Response to Terrorism, Council on Foreign Relations, Nov. 6, 2001.

⁵⁹ “Myers Speaks of Importance of Focused National Power,” Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service, Nov. 15, 2001.

approach may also have still been suffering from the Vietnam syndrome of an excessively rosy tone. Pentagon press briefings did “often seem designed more to provide day-to-day assurances that everything is perfect than prepare the world for the reality that wars still occur in a fog, still kill the innocent, drag on in ways that have drastic humanitarian costs, and are fought in cycles of failure and success.”⁶⁰

The administration did leap out to an early start on the diplomatic front, with Secretary of State Colin Powell emphasizing the importance of recruiting diplomatic allies to the cause. Similarly, attention was quickly paid to the economic and humanitarian aspects. The administration began to feature economic aid and trade issues within a week of the 9/11 attacks, offering assistance and benefits to potential allies.⁶¹ Even before the bombs started falling, the administration emphasized that the United States would be a major contributor to rebuilding Afghanistan.⁶² Again, these issues were integrated into military operations, with military forces parachuting in relief supplies during the first hours of the air strikes on Oct. 7, 2001.⁶³

Since the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the broader “information war” to win support the world over has not proceeded well. Perceptions of U.S. unilateralism, fears of a destabilizing U.S. invasion of Iraq, and the downward-spiraling Israeli-Palestinian disaster have led to weak support for the United States. In a late 2001 poll by Gallup International, only in 18 of 60 countries surveyed worldwide did a plurality of the population feel that U.S. foreign policy had a positive effect on their country – and disturbingly, only in a quarter of 16 close European partners.⁶⁴ Difficulties in the political sphere can have a substantial effect on military operations: the extensive fallout from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the resulting damage to U.S. support in

⁶⁰ Cordesman, Anthony, *Forging a Transatlantic Strategy for Terrorism and Asymmetric Warfare*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 2002.

⁶¹ Steve Mufson, “U.S. Adds Economic Weapons to Arsenal,” *Washington Post*, Sept. 18, 2001.

⁶² Mike Allen and Alan Sipress, “U.S. Talks of Aid to Afghanistan,” *Washington Post*, Oct. 4, 2001.

⁶³ U.S. Humanitarian Relief Mission to Afghanistan, Department of Defense News Release No. 492-01, Oct. 7, 2001.

⁶⁴ *Gallup International Poll on Terrorism*, fieldwork conducted November to December 2001. <<http://www.gallup-international.com/terrorismpoll2001.htm>>.

Arab countries reportedly led to delays in the administration's plans for invading Iraq.⁶⁵

Recommendations

Addressing Nonmilitary Issues

Many elements within the U.S. military have recognized the need to expand their horizons and think of conflicts in much broader terms than the straightforward combat at which military forces excel.⁶⁶ The need is to expand current "interagency" coordination outwards and downwards. For example, regarding coordination for counterterrorism work, all four major combatant commanders asked in October 2001 for officers from the FBI, Treasury Department, and possibly other agencies to be detailed to their headquarters.⁶⁷

Joint Forces Command, which is doing substantial work in developing advanced new strategies for war-fighting, has found in its large wargaming experiments that its new rapid decisive operations (RDO) concept and strategy

"was most effective when all appropriate elements of national power were applied in a single integrated, coordinated, and synchronized plan to accomplish NCA [National Command Authority] objectives. These elements go beyond military or political components and may include a wide range of interagency organizations. RDO must enhance military and interagency community collaboration through closer and more continuous links between national agencies, regional commanders in chief, and the joint force commander. To fully and effectively execute RDO, wargame participants called for improved interagency policy and procedures and increased cross training among applicable interagency elements, to include the military."⁶⁸

⁶⁵ "U.S. Envisions Blueprint On Iraq Including Big Invasion Next Year," Thom Shanker and David E. Sanger, *The New York Times*, April 28, 2002.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Jim Garamone, "Myers Speaks of Importance of Focused National Power," American Forces Press Service, Nov. 15, 2001.

⁶⁷ Eric Schmitt, "4 Commanders Say They Want Civilian Agents," *The New York Times*, Nov. 20, 2001.

⁶⁸ *Rapid Decisive Operations: Analytical Wargame Findings*, Joint Experimentation Concept Executive Report 01-01, U.S. Joint Forces Command, August 2001, p. 16.

Some military offices have emphasized that the political, economic, social, and informational elements of a conflict can influence and be influenced by military actions, and likewise that transnational issues of drug flows, international crime, migration, health and the environment impinge on military operations. To adopt the popular “best business practice” of focusing organizations on “core competencies,” however, the military should not necessarily try to specialize in these areas, too. Ideally, greater partnerships and working with the organizations whose core competencies are in these areas can take advantage of the strengths of each.

An initiative should be undertaken to **build deeper collaboration with civilian agencies and private organizations by:**

- **establishing the roles, including the lead role, of agencies in transnational issues where U.S. forces are deployed abroad;**
- **developing procedures for coordinating with other agencies prior to and during foreign deployments;**
- **developing methods of cooperating with private sector relief, disaster response, and other organizations;**
- **adequately funding exercises and training to test and refine new procedures.**

The rising importance of the regional combatant commanders, their close contacts with key military and nonmilitary officials in the countries under their responsibility, and the resulting spillover into diplomatic, economic, and law enforcement issues suggests that their roles relative to other agencies should be re-examined.

- **Assess how military structures should work with the rest of the foreign policy structure, especially the State Department. In particular, evaluate whether State should establish regional liaison offices that incorporate the liaison elements of the regional military commands, rather than separate, parallel regional military staffs.**

To the extent that military forces need to improve their own capabilities for dealing with nonmilitary issues, the relevant units should be bolstered.⁶⁹

- **Increase the number of active component intelligence, psychological operations, civil affairs, military police and engineer units.**

In Operation Enduring Freedom, the Bush administration followed the post-Vietnam practice of not engaging in a “body-count” propaganda war, often refusing to release estimates of civilian casualties caused by U.S. bombing. This had caused political problems in the bombing campaign against Serbia over Kosovo, and again did in Afghanistan. Although U.S. administrations have appropriately realized the danger of trying to measure progress in a war by counting enemy (military) casualties as was done in Vietnam, leaving usually-exaggerated opponents’ claims of civilian casualties unchallenged is to cede an important information “battleground” to the enemy.

- Although it may be difficult for the United States to try to determine accurate casualties on enemy territory, **it is worth some effort to develop at least ranges of civilian casualty estimates, and as a general principle release the information** – to do so is to recognize that the information war is an integral part of the overall war effort.

Bombing

Some observers view Afghanistan as yet another win for air power and bombing campaigns. Michael Kelly, in a three-part series in *The Atlantic Monthly*, seems to simplistically suggest that the United States will no longer lose wars because of “one of the great revolutions in military history: the revolution of airpower.”⁷⁰ The development of stealth technology and of increasing bomb accuracy makes U.S. air power ever more efficient (yet that is precisely why enemies are pursuing asymmetric strategies to make it less relevant).

Some elements in the U.S. Air Force have argued that the old air power dream of strategic victory through bombing is now finally possibly with the new technology – with very high accuracy it is no longer necessary to obliterate cities to achieve strategic results. Air Force texts have adopted and devel-

⁶⁹ Crane, Dr. Conrad, “Maintaining Strategic Balance While Fighting Terrorism,” *Defeating Terrorism: Strategic Issue Analyses*, Ed. Col. John Martin, U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2002, p. 29.

⁷⁰ Michael Kelly, “The Air-Power Revolution,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 2002.

oped some of the concepts in sophisticated modern war-fighting, such as “effects-based operations” (EBO).⁷¹ EBO tries to get planners who are thinking in “second-generation” attrition warfare terms to focus on *effects* rather than simple *destruction*. Brig. Gen. David Deptula, who worked on targeting during the Gulf War, gives the example that if enemy power plant operators turn off their power plants in order to escape the bombing meted out to a few other plants, the desired effect – no power – has been achieved without having to bomb and destroy every power plant.

Yet two problems remain for bombing-oriented strategies even with technological advances: inevitable civilian casualties (plus resentment – not just in the target population – about U.S. bombing) create major political costs, and it is still very difficult to figure out what the “levers” to be bombed are that will coerce an enemy leader or population into obedience. Strategic bombing campaigns – trying to compel a government to change its behavior without necessarily defeating its military forces in the field – have historically been notoriously difficult to conduct successfully, and may be getting even harder now with the growing salience of international political dimensions of conflict and the effect of pictures of bloody civilian casualties.

Coercion from (non-nuclear) bombing alone did not work in World War II even when the bombing was indiscriminate and designed to obliterate cities, as in the Dresden and Tokyo fire-bombings. Nor did it work in Vietnam when the bombing was conducted against urban areas but was not specifically designed to cause similar massive civilian casualties, or in the Persian Gulf War when the bombing was narrowly targeted with civilian casualties kept to a relative minimum, or even in the Balkans.

In the Gulf, although strategic bombing shut down many communication and military systems, a crushing ground offensive was required to compel a withdrawal from Kuwait. In the Balkans, the 1995 Operation Deliberate Force bombing campaign succeeded in coercing Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic only in the context of a successful Croatian ground offensive.⁷² Even what is prob-

⁷¹ For a very clear description of effects based operations (with a strong pitch for air power), see Brig. Gen. David A. Deptula, *Effects Based Operations: Change in The Nature of Warfare*, Aerospace Education Foundation, 2001.

⁷² Franklin C. Spinney, “Learning the Lesson We Want to Learn?” *Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute*, September 1999.

ably the best case for strategic bombing effectiveness, Operation Allied Force in 1999, brought Milosevic's capitulation over Kosovo only after he lost the crucial political support of Russia and an eventual NATO ground invasion became likely.⁷³ (The campaign also was only won at significant international political cost, including allied dismay about U.S. strategic blundering, particularly the early miscalculation that Milosevic would cave with only a little bombing, the failure to anticipate the Serb counterattack in Kosovo, and the lack of fallback options once the first strategy collapsed.)

Air power did contribute to success in the open terrain of Iraq during the Gulf War, and in Afghanistan working in combination with ground forces. Yet, it is not at all clear that even with all of its new hardware, with, as Kelly puts it ...

“its 12 nuclear aircraft-carrier battle groups (no other nation has anything even remotely comparable), its stealth bombers, its cruise missiles, its remarkable global guidance and communications systems (which allowed the war in Afghanistan to be run in real time, on the ground, from U.S. Central Command), its generations-ahead fleet of warplanes”⁷⁴

... the United States would have won in, say, the military combat in the jungles of Vietnam, never mind the political battle for hearts and minds in that war.

In Afghanistan, it is useful to remember that before the Taliban suddenly began to collapse in November 2001, the bombing did not appear to be working. The United States was losing ground in the political war as it was increasingly portrayed as conducting a ruthless bombing campaign causing numerous civilian casualties. One cautious assessment estimates between 1,000 and 1,300 civilian deaths directly from the bombing.⁷⁵ The danger was seen as so great that the administration undertook an initiative to try to sway interna-

⁷³ See Hosmer, Stephen, *The Conflict Over Kosovo: Why Milosevic Decided to Settle When He Did*, RAND, MR-1351-AF, 2001.

⁷⁴ Michael Kelly, “The American Way of War,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 2002.

⁷⁵ Conetta, Carl, *Operation Enduring Freedom, Why a Higher Rate of Civilian Casualties?* Project on Defense Alternatives, January 2002.

tional opinion with a coordinated tailoring of messages from the president on down, and by establishing new methods of information dissemination, particularly to the Islamic world.⁷⁶ The ensuing swift and comprehensive collapse of the Taliban has overshadowed the bleak political picture not long before.

Part of the mixed picture of the value of the bombing campaign arises from the air strikes really having two components that had differing success: the strategic bombing effort went after fixed military headquarters, barracks, communication sites, and the like, as well as trying to target al Qaeda leadership directly,⁷⁷ while the tactical bombing effort provided close air support for local allied forces and enabled interdiction of hostile forces. The strategic bombing, often in urban areas, began to cause substantial political damage, whereas the tactical bombing helped bring on the collapse of Taliban forces in the field. Even key anti-Taliban leader Abdul Haq argued in an interview shortly before he was ambushed and killed that the political cost of the strategic bombing was too high: “Military action by itself in the present circumstances is only making things more difficult – especially if this war goes on a long time and many civilians are killed.”⁷⁸ The tactical bombing, however, which slowly gained prominence in the U.S. effort, played a key role in either demoralizing or killing Taliban forces.⁷⁹

Opponents may increasingly try to counter U.S. tactical bombing effectiveness by using civilians and urban settings to shield their forces. This would force the United States into the necessary evil of bombing in civilian casualty-boosting areas if it wished to advance tactically. Better intelligence and targeting are unlikely to provide a technical solution to this problem. Although Russia was permitted by international opinion to conduct a “scorched-earth” strategy against the urban areas of Chechnya, the United States is held to a different domestic and international standard.

⁷⁶ Michael Gordon, “U.S. Tries to Sway Worldwide Opinion in Favor of War,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 6, 2001.

⁷⁷ Michael Gordon and Tim Weiner, “Taliban Leader Is Target In U.S. Air Campaign,” *The New York Times*, Oct. 16, 2001.

⁷⁸ “US bombs are boosting the Taliban,” *The Guardian*, Nov. 2, 2001.

⁷⁹ By Oct. 29, 80 percent of that day’s bombing raids were directed against front-line forces. Jim Garamone “Air Campaign Ratchets Up Against Front Line,” American Forces Press Service, Oct. 30, 2001. Gerry Gilmore, “Northern Alliance Progressing With U.S. Help, Pace Says,” American Forces Press Service, Nov. 7, 2001.

The United States faces a difficult challenge in any strategic bombing campaign: the height of the bar it has to surmount to convince world opinion that a bombing operation is relatively bloodless may be insurmountable and is probably underestimated in the U.S. government and military. Some civilian casualties are inevitable, and the resulting powerful images are quickly broadcast globally. The difficulty for the United States in conducting a strategic bombing campaign successfully arises in part from the broader context – “the impression that bombing is another example of American bullying of weaker nations.”⁸⁰

Recommendations

Bombing Not Just with Precision, But with Prescience

In future bombing campaigns, the United States faces the substantial difficulties presented by:

- the perception that bombing is a cruel and unfair weapon of the powerful United States against weak states and people;
- increasing use of the enemy tactic of siting military forces in civilian areas to make it harder for the United States to bomb them;
- the inevitability of inaccurate weapons or human mistakes killing civilians and destroying unintended targets, notwithstanding continuing increases in accuracy;
- the difficulty of winning the information war regarding bombing, particularly trying to use weapon accuracy statistics to counter powerful video images of civilian casualties and destruction;
- resentment even among sympathetic target populations over deliberate widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure (e.g., in Operation Allied Force) and environmental damage;
- the perception that the United States is not really committed to a conflict if it is conducting relatively risk-free bombing without sending ground forces;

⁸⁰ Crane, Dr. Conrad, “Beware of Unintended Consequences,” *Defeating Terrorism: Strategic Issue Analyses*, Ed. Col. John Martin, U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2002, p. 14.

- lack of political and cultural knowledge about when a given adversary will fold;
- the historical evidence that populations and governments are highly resistant to coercion from bombing campaigns alone.

Under these conditions, **in considering strategic bombing campaigns, civilian and military leaders should:**

- **be aware of the broader political dimensions of a widespread “military” bombing campaign against “dual-use” targets (e.g., a nation’s roads, bridges, railroads, waterways, airfields, power plants, refineries, factories, and communications lines);**
- **focus an information warfare effort on exposing and laying the blame on enemy leaders when they cause civilian casualties by putting their forces in civilian areas;**
- **better assess the tradeoff between destroying a nation’s civilian infrastructure and the resulting long-term political costs, in the target nation and globally;**
- **anticipate, prepare public opinion for, acknowledge, and take responsibility for civilian casualties when they occur;**
- **improve knowledge and comprehension of the politics and psyches of target nations and rulers;**
- **conduct the air campaigns in combination with threatened or actual ground operations.**

What to Fight with – Forces

What military forces should be given greater prominence in light of the 9/11 attacks and the operations in Afghanistan?

9/11

The Sept. 11, 2001 attacks palpably demonstrated how easy it is to exploit the vulnerabilities of an open society like the United States and turn its strengths against it. Al Qaeda did not even try to smuggle in weapons; instead they insidiously figured out how to turn ubiquitous items in the United States – commercial aircraft – into weapons. Unfortunately, numerous other ways exist to turn peaceful components of the American economy and society into weapons. For example, rather than smuggle a nuclear bomb into the country, the new terrorists might think of U.S. nuclear power stations as already-emplaced weapons and focus on how to turn their normally-manageable dangers into catastrophes. The tough message is that, compared to defensive measures, offensive measures (in the broadest sense of military strikes and also elements like intelligence operations, law enforcement actions, energetic pursuit of non-proliferation, and proactive foreign policies to prevent the growth of terrorist breeding grounds) hold more promise for ultimate security against terrorism.

Missile Defense

National missile defense critics have been asking for years why enemies would follow a difficult strategy of building relatively costly, unreliable, inaccurate,

low payload intercontinental missiles that carry a “return address” when a plethora of other less costly options exist for delivering weapons of mass destruction to the United States – particularly smuggling them in by ship, plane or truck. This raises a troubling strategic question: if national missile defense only provides a defense against strategies that enemies would find difficult and costly, might it not turn opponents away from difficult courses and get them thinking about easier approaches?

Defenders of national missile defense have used the events of 9/11 to suggest that the attacks *increase* the need for missile defense, because they demonstrated the willingness of hostile groups to inflict catastrophic damage on the United States. This, however, does not address why opponents would choose the technologically challenging route of intercontinental ballistic missiles over other alternatives. Scenarios mentioned include those in which a country threatens to use missiles against the United States if U.S. forces intervened in a crisis in or near the hostile country. The fear then is that the United States might not risk an intervention if it had no defense against intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) – it would be blackmailed into inaction. The scenario depends on foreign leaders choosing to risk retaliation and death by attacking with missiles versus other covert means; development of a sufficient level of technology and missile reliability by hostile parties, giving a credible level of missile threat against the United States; and lack of intelligence for U.S. forces to pre-emptively find and destroy ICBMs. The uncertainty of these prerequisites raises doubts about the level of resources planned for national missile defense compared to the many other demands on funding for homeland security, national security, and military programs.

Recommendations

Having seen the relative ease with which the United States was damaged, if foreign groups or nations wish to conduct equally devastating attacks, they are likely to prioritize more effective programs than ballistic missiles. Further, the ability of the United States to take the offensive and remove the rulers of Afghanistan and destroy the terrorist infrastructure there should make opponents think twice about launching readily-traceable attacks against the United States. Nevertheless, a U.S. president might not want to risk an ICBM attack, even if unlikely, when considering military action abroad, so a certain level of research and development, bearing in mind the opportunity cost of

not using the funds for other high priorities, is appropriate.

- **Fund some missile defense research and development, but prioritize funding on programs that address more-likely and less-manageable threats than ballistic missile attacks, including other homeland security measures and offensive counterattack capabilities in the military.**

Intelligence

Long before Sept. 11, intelligence failures, such as inadequate assessment of the state of decay in the Soviet Union toward the end of the Cold War and lack of warning of India's nuclear tests in 1998, provoked numerous calls for reform of the U.S. intelligence community.⁸¹ The new threats of small and amorphous terrorist groups pursuing mass destruction pose even greater challenges to intelligence efforts than assessing superpower military balances. Although it would be difficult for any intelligence effort to penetrate an al Qaeda-type terrorist network, further reforms to the intelligence community may improve its odds for success. Analyst Frank Hoffman has summarized some of the continuing problem areas in intelligence:⁸²

- Lack of clear priorities for intelligence products.
- Lack of centralized management over many competing programs and organizations.
- Overreliance on very high cost, technical collection systems.
- Significant gaps in analytical capabilities, especially foreign cultures and languages.

⁸¹ Some examples include *Preparing for the 21st Century: An Appraisal of U.S. Intelligence*, Report of the Commission on the Roles and Missions of the United States Intelligence Community, Government Printing Office, 1996; *Making Intelligence Smarter, The Future of U.S. Intelligence*, Richard Haass, Report of a Council on Foreign Relations Task Force, 1996; IC 21: *The Intelligence Community in the 21st Century*, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, March 1996; the U.S. Commission for National Security/21st Century, better known as the Hart-Rudman Commission after its chairmen, former Senators Gary Hart and Warren Rudman, also looked at intelligence.

⁸² See Frank G. Hoffman, *Pearl Harbor Redux*, Center for Defense Information, Dec. 3, 2001. The report recommends a concise list of structural and organizational reforms for the intelligence community that are not explored here.

- Massive imbalance between collection and analysis capabilities.
- Weak human intelligence capabilities.
- Growing imbalance and competition between strategic intelligence, and support for military operations.

If there is a thrust among some of the proposed reforms relevant to reorienting the intelligence community to this threat, it is the need to boost *analysis* capabilities compared to intelligence *collection*, particularly for “strategic intelligence” – assessing intentions and why foreign leaders and entities make the choices they do. The case of Pearl Harbor indicates that the problem has been around for a long time. In both cases, the intelligence process proved insufficient:

“The process relied upon new technologies like radar and intercepts with little insights into the social and cultural roots of the adversary’s cause and support network. ... Both then and now, there was little human intelligence. Both times, American analysts refused to think in terms of the adversary’s viewpoint.”⁸³

Recommendations

The former chief of the Strategic Assessments Group at the Central Intelligence Agency, James Harris, has suggested that, as in the military, the intelligence apparatus needs to become more “agile”:

“In the war ahead, the adaptable nature of the adversary will demand an equally agile U.S. intelligence effort. More resources and better human intelligence will help. But an agile intelligence community will require something else: that the intelligence community at last dispense with the internal barriers that stifle communications and collaboration.”⁸⁴

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Harris, James. *Building Leverage in the Long War: Ensuring Intelligence Community Creativity in the Fight against Terrorism*, Policy Analysis No. 439, Cato Institute, May 16, 2002, p. 1.

Harris suggests – again, as some have suggested for the military – increased initiative at lower levels of the hierarchy: “The successful intelligence enterprise can be sufficiently agile if, like its adversary, the terrorist network, it is driven largely by individual initiative rather than commanded entirely from the top.”⁸⁵ He also proposes to:

- **share information across intelligence agencies in the terrorism area (compartmentalization is primarily a defense against states, who can afford counterintelligence operations, rather than terrorist groups);**
- **increase links with nongovernmental expertise;**
- **set up innovative centers including “skunk works,” “red teams,” and gaming centers to simulate and explore terrorist strategies.**

Many observers have agreed in the past with the concept that one thing intelligence agencies should *not* do is have a direct policy-making role, because taking policy positions or serving an active role in diplomatic initiatives and negotiations might skew their purportedly objective intelligence assessments. Yet no less a figure than the director of central intelligence, George Tenet, has become a player deeply involved in policy-making on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, even having a cease-fire plan associated with him, and the CIA has played a substantial role mediating between Israelis and Palestinians.⁸⁶ Hypothetically, how could an agency serving under the director of central intelligence, such as the Central Intelligence Agency, possibly issue a report that contained critical assessments of an initiative personally undertaken by him?

- **End intelligence agency involvement in development and execution of policies, and restore at least the spirit of the separation of intelligence assessment and policy advocacy. Instead, refocus intelligence activities on supporting the policy-making of other agencies and administration officials with disinterested assessments and forecasts.**

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁸⁶ “Palestinian Realities,” *Washington Post*, April 3, 2002. Keith Richburg, “Israeli Forces Expand Battle In West Bank,” *Washington Post*, April 3, 2002.

To improve intelligence on new threats:

- **close gaps in analytical capabilities, and revitalize human resources at the CIA;**
- **refocus some effort on strategic intelligence rather than tactical military intelligence;**
- **expand human intelligence capabilities.**

AFGHANISTAN

Although future operations will by no means duplicate those in Afghanistan, that experience can be taken as one exemplar of likely 21st century challenges. The primary limitation of drawing too sharp conclusions from the Operation Enduring Freedom experience is clear, however: the Taliban were a weak opponent in military terms, having little functional heavy equipment, particularly air defenses, a relatively small core of skilled troops defending a large territory, and a civil war on their hands. In addition, their political hold was shaky since they had alienated many in the population, which denied them the ability to initiate a guerrilla war and made them vulnerable to traditional Afghan factional allegiance-shifting.

The success of the U.S. counterattack in Afghanistan, at least in eliminating the overt infrastructure of al Qaeda, may convince some that U.S. forces do not need urgent transformation. But if anything, rather than validating the size and composition of the military, the operation illustrates some of the changes that are needed.

The operation was conducted not by massed, heavy, armored divisions but by a handful of Special Operations troops in combination with air power and, most important, local ground troops. Innovative use of existing forces, weapons, and emerging communications equipment, proved more important than expensive new weapon platforms begun during the Cold War. Stealthy fighter aircraft were not needed against the nearly nonexistent Afghanistan Air Force, and nuclear attack submarines were not needed against the nonexistent Afghanistan Navy.

Special Operations Forces

Special Operations Forces fit well in a future force tailored to the new threats of fourth-generation warfare. They are trained to exercise initiative and re-

spond quickly to changing circumstances. They focus on understanding foreign cultures and peoples and working with foreign forces. In part by definition of their relatively small unit size, they are the most agile, light, fast, and flexible ground units in the military. They were perhaps tailor-made for operations in Afghanistan, and their fourth-generation warfare characteristics could make them useful in numerous other scenarios.

The more successful of the two main Operation Enduring Freedom missions, removing the Taliban government, was achieved using the formula of a few U.S. advisors, coordinators and spotters on the ground with allied troops, plus air strikes. The method was built around Special Operations Forces. The potential effectiveness of the approach was illustrated by the morale-breaking rout of Taliban forces in the battle near Tarin Kot.⁸⁷ A strong Taliban convoy advancing against opposition forces was targeted by U.S. Special Operations Forces working with Afghan allies. Bombing called in by the Special Operations Forces mauled the column and the Taliban never again mounted such an offensive. The value of the approach for winning over local allies was illustrated in accounts of the battle for Bagram air base, where air strikes called in by Special Operations Forces impressively destroyed dug-in Taliban forces.⁸⁸

The formula is not universal solution however. The combination of Special Operations Forces and air power has had less success in the other Operation Enduring Freedom mission of finding and striking al Qaeda operatives. Following the overthrow of the Taliban, a series of attacks on the wrong targets, heavy civilian casualty tolls, and friendly fire deaths has shown the limits of the approach, particularly in what really should be a postconflict environment. Some of the highest profile incidents include:

- In a **Dec. 5, 2001**, “friendly fire” case, a data entry error led to a Global Positioning System-guided bomb from a B-52 killing three Special Operations Forces personnel, allied Afghan soldiers, and nearly killing current Afghan President Hamid Karzai.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Karl Vick, “Rout in Desert Marked Turning Point of War; U.S. Firepower Decimated Taliban at Tarin Kot,” *Washington Post*, Dec. 31, 2001.

⁸⁸ See the lengthy description of Special Operations Forces activities in John Hendren and Richard Cooper, “Fragile Alliances in A Hostile Land,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 5, 2002.

⁸⁹ John Diamond, “Friendly Fire Kills 3 GIs, Injures 20,” *Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 6, 2001.

- Five U.S. Special Operations Forces soldiers were wounded **Nov. 26, 2001** near Mazar-e Sharif by a 500-pound bomb.⁹⁰
- On **March 2, 2002**, a U.S. investigation found that an AC-130 gunship may have strafed U.S. forces on the ground, killing one.⁹¹
- On **April 18, 2002**, U.S. F-16s, believing they were being fired on, killed four Canadian troops engaged in a live-fire exercise.⁹²
- On **Dec. 20, 2001**, U.S. forces bombed a group of Afghans going to attend the inauguration of Karzai, a friend of the United States, destroying their vehicles and attacking the nearby villages where survivors fled, killing approximately 40 civilians.
- The villages of Niazi Qala, where an unidentified faction had stored ammunition, were wiped out on **Dec. 29, 2001**, and approximately 50 civilians killed, including some attending a wedding celebration.⁹³
- In probably the most egregious incident, an AC-130 operating with troops on the ground attacked four villages around hamlet of Kakrak on **July 1, 2002**, with cannon and machine gun fire, hitting another wedding party and killing approximately 50 civilians.⁹⁴

Raids by ground forces where the legitimacy of the target is questionable have also caused casualties among civilians:

- On the night of **Jan. 23, 2002**, Special Operations Forces attacked Hazar Qadam, killing 16 civilians and detaining others.⁹⁵
- At Bandi Temur on **May 24, 2002**, a Special Operations Forces raid killed a village headman and a young girl who fled and fell into a well, and arrested 50 others.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Esther Schrader, Bob Drogin and Greg Miller, "Response to Terror; Taliban under Siege," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 27, 2001.

⁹¹ Pauline Jelinek, "Did Friendly Fire Kill Soldier?," *Chicago Sun-Times*, Mar. 31, 2002.

⁹² Maria McClintock, "4 Canucks Killed," *The Toronto Sun*, April 18, 2002.

⁹³ Dexter Filkins, "Flaws in U.S. Air War Left Hundreds of Civilians Dead," *The New York Times*, July 21, 2002.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Pamela Constable and Bradley Graham, "Afghan Officials Decry U.S. Airstrike," *Washington Post*, July 3, 2002.

⁹⁶ Carlotta Gall, "A Raid Enrages Afghan Villagers," *The New York Times*, May 27, 2002.

- On **June 21, 2002**, another raid led to arrests of villagers unlikely to be terrorists in the village of Kourmashy near Gardez, but no deaths occurred.⁹⁷

A theme running through quite a few of these incidents is poor intelligence gathering, including possible deliberate disinformation given by friendly Afghans for their own purposes. These intelligence failures have occurred despite precautions taken by U.S. forces, such as using second sources for confirmation of intelligence. The use of devastating air strikes to destroy targets, rather than ground operations to capture individuals, weapons, or intelligence, has magnified the damage caused by poor intelligence.

These mistakes – or for those cases where the U.S. military still denies error, instances of inadequate intelligence work – have begun to have a strategic effect, crippling Afghan support for unfettered U.S. military operations and weakening the welcome that U.S. forces have enjoyed.⁹⁸ In the context of an ongoing military campaign in support of allied forces, the errors that can occur in the Special Operations Forces/air power model are likely to have less visibility and political impact. Once the campaign is over and military operations turn to man-hunting, however, continued mistaken strikes and raids will likely stick out more prominently and questions may be raised about the need for the operations themselves. In sum, the model for Special Operations Forces/air power was powerful for tactical combat purposes, but had serious drawbacks in “strategic” strikes on potential terrorists.

Recommendations

The first implication of the Afghanistan operation itself is the importance of a robust Special Operations Force. Priorities should shift as necessary from maintaining all the existing heavy ground capability in the active and reserve Army to boosting Special Operations Forces as well as medium-weight forces.

- **At a minimum, ensure that Special Operations Forces have all the resources they need for their existing forces, including weapons**

⁹⁷ Alissa Rubin, “U.S. Raid on Village Revives the Specter of An Old Enemy,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 2002.

⁹⁸ See Pamela Constable and Bradley Graham, “Afghan Officials Decry U.S. Airstrike,” *Washington Post*, July 3, 2002.

and training, and expand these forces if it is assessed that greater use of them would stretch them thin.

- **Accelerate the transformation of heavy divisions and use freed resources to increase support for Special Operations Forces.**
- **Explore whether and how to improve conventional transport and attack helicopter support for Special Operations Forces.**
- **To avoid mistaken civilian casualties and friendly fire incidents when conducting bombing strikes and ground raids against suspected terrorists, improve Special Operations Forces intelligence work and increase the attention given in strategy development to the political costs of mistaken Special Operations Forces strikes and raids that kill innocent civilians.**

Air Forces

The experiences of using air power in Afghanistan were relevant for a variety of debates on military force types:

- air power or ground forces;
- air superiority aircraft or ground attack aircraft;
- sea-based air power or land-based air power;
- long-range or short-range aircraft;
- occupied or unoccupied aircraft.

Air Power or Ground Forces

The success of the air operation has been cited in the long-fought debate between air power advocates and “ground pounders” as another case proving that now air power can win wars strategically, reducing the need for troops on the ground.⁹⁹ Operation Enduring Freedom, however, proves no such thing. Afghanistan is one of the better examples in the world of a country without targets of substantial strategic value. After decades of war and destitution, the country did not have much of the usual high-value infrastructure that draws the attention of air targeting officers – electrical grids, power plants,

⁹⁹ The argument has even been picked up in the general press: see op-ed by Fareed Zakaria, “Air Power Works,” *Washington Post*, Nov. 28, 2001.

bridges, communication structures, military and intelligence headquarters, water supply facilities. After initial strikes to ensure air superiority and occasional attacks on camp complexes, air defense assets, depots, and garrisons, the thrust of the bombing campaign became the tactical rather than strategic effort.¹⁰⁰ “Close air support” (CAS) and “interdiction” supplanted “strategic bombing.”

Air forces continued to try to inflict a strategic victory by killing Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants with air strikes, but no evidence has emerged to indicate success regarding bin Laden to date. Even if successful, the lack of knowledge about the event would make it a technical knockout but a strategic loss. If al Qaeda were able to continue operations while concealing bin Laden’s death in a bombing raid that obliterated or buried him, killing him would have proved of little use. (A side benefit of occupying territory with land forces versus merely bombing from a distance is, in the case of a manhunt, ability to conduct more accurate “damage assessment” – confirmation of the death of an individual – with humans on the ground.)

Air units frequently served as little more than flying “artillery” in support of ground troops. Many U.S. ground forces, of course, bring organic artillery with them, so the Army does have a point when it argues that air power is not the only solution. (Moreover, using aircraft to deliver explosives is likely substantially more expensive, including all costs to buy, operate, and support, than using artillery tubes.) Enemies are also becoming more adept at rapid movement when detected, but artillery, when it is within range, is generally able to put explosives on a target faster than aircraft. It is also worth noting that the tactical air strikes were made particularly effective because of the use of spotters on the ground to select and locate targets accurately for the aircraft to strike. Gen. Montgomery Meigs, commander of U.S. Army Europe, has argued: “It takes a ground force to make the precision weapons more effective. ... One of the lessons for me is that – dealing in large areas of territory with complex terrain – [if] you want the precision weapons to be most effective, use your ground forces to force them [the enemy] out of their holes.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Jim Garamone, “U.S. Pounds Taliban Front-Line Positions,” American Force Press Service, Oct. 26, 2001.

¹⁰¹ Ann Roosevelt, “Ground Forces Help Make Precision Weapons Precise: General,” *Defense Week Daily Update*, April 9, 2002.

The answer to the air or ground forces debate is actually *both*: ground forces can enhance the effectiveness of air strikes by providing accurate targeting and identification. As Army transformation director Lt. Gen. John Riggs noted, “The powerful effect of air-delivered munitions ... is impressive but only made effective when guided and controlled by the most advanced sensor in the world, the soldier on the ground.”¹⁰² Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz’s unequivocal endorsement of the importance of both components is worth quoting at length:

“You don’t win wars just from the air. I have to say I was astonished that we accomplished as much as we did in Kosovo without ground forces. And I think that was a fluke. ...

Long-range precision strike is most effective when it’s a combination of air power and ground power, not air by itself. And we just had a dramatic demonstration in Afghanistan of the truth of that – the Air Force wasn’t accomplishing anything until we got some guys on the ground. And then they were able to reinforce other guys on the ground, who ultimately are what brought about the victory. We could have dropped bombs until kingdom come and it would have had no effect.”¹⁰³

Positive target identification from the ground beyond that available from technical reconnaissance means (satellites, aircraft, UAVs, etc.) is likely to become far more important in future unconventional warfare, particularly against clever opponents who will disperse, hide thermal signatures, use complex terrain, build dummy targets, and conduct tactical information warfare and deception. In addition, ground forces can be required to force enemy units to concentrate and/or move, which greatly increases their vulnerability to detection and air strikes. What air power brings is not so much a unique and self-contained ability to hit targets accurately, as the ability to strike from far away, particularly outside of the country altogether.

¹⁰² Ann Roosevelt, “Afghanistan: A Window on Future Army Force,” *Defense Week*, May 6, 2002.

¹⁰³ Peter Boyer, “A Different War: Is the Army Becoming Irrelevant?,” *New Yorker*, July 1, 2002.

Recommendations

Afghanistan did *not* show that air power can win wars alone and that therefore the United States can safely focus on air forces to the detriment of ground forces. On the contrary, the case shows again the importance of “boots on the ground,” whether U.S. or allied.

- **In prioritizing U.S. forces, air power should be seen as a key complement to ground forces.**

Air-to-air or Air-to-ground Forces

The example is not relevant everywhere, of course, but Afghanistan had essentially no Air Force. U.S. aircraft knocked out Afghanistan’s air defenses in just 15 minutes after Operation Enduring Freedom began, according to Air Force Lt. Gen. Charles Wald, deputy chief of staff for air and space operations.¹⁰⁴ Although it was perhaps one of the weaker Air Forces in the world, numerous other countries also have limited air capabilities, especially compared to the overwhelmingly dominant U.S. mix of air-to-air fighters, tankers, electronic warfare platforms, and airborne warning and control aircraft in three services. The forthcoming controversial radar-stealthy but expensive F-22 fighter would have had limited use compared to ground-attack aircraft.¹⁰⁵

In contrast to the largely moot air-to-air capabilities, U.S. air-to-ground attack forces were central to the operations in Afghanistan, serving as tactical artillery in support of allied ground forces. Both short-range fighter-bombers and long-range heavy bombers were used essentially as close air support assets. They provided the tactical and psychological edge that tipped the balance in favor of allied troops, which were generally not high-caliber fighting forces.

¹⁰⁴ Ron Laurenzo, “U.S. Achieved Air Dominance Over Afghanistan In 15 Minutes,” *Defense Week Daily Update*, March 7, 2002.

¹⁰⁵ An interesting side note on upgrading of existing platforms versus buying entirely new ones: older F-14 aircraft (originally designed strictly as air-to-air fighters) with LANTIRN infrared targeting pods were found to be more effective than newer F-18 fighter-bombers with Nitehawk pods in Operation Enduring Freedom according to air wing commanders. “Enduring Freedom’s Not-So-Secret Weapon: Navy F-14 LANTIRN Pods,” *Inside the Navy*, April 29, 2002. The Air Force recently began recasting the F-22, designed originally for air-to-air combat, as a bomber too.

Recommendations

The campaign showed the importance of close air support and interdiction capabilities – air power in support of operations on the ground. Although the case cannot be extrapolated everywhere, U.S. air-to-air capabilities were irrelevant in Afghanistan.

- **Resources devoted to air-superiority fighters, such as the F-22, should not crowd out funding for strike capabilities.** The current order of around 300 F-22s could be reduced substantially while preserving some stealthy capability without canceling the program entirely. (The Air Force recently began promoting the F-22 as capable of ground attack.) The Defense Department may wish to re-examine whether a new dedicated close air support aircraft should be developed, to replace and improve upon the venerable A-10, particularly as UAVs begin to impinge on the manned close air support arena.

Short-range or Long-range Air Power

Some air power observers have argued that the success of long bombing flights from bases in the United States and Diego Garcia to Afghanistan suggest shifting resources from short-range fighter-bombers to long-range heavy bombers.¹⁰⁶ They note that B-52s and B-1s dropped two thirds of the total weapons used in the bombing campaign.¹⁰⁷ In the Afghanistan operations, however, land-based short-range aircraft were able to strike, primarily using bases in Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, and Oman. AC-130s gunships flying from Oman conducted operations at least as early as Oct. 15, a mere eight days after the initial air strikes by naval aircraft and long-range bombers.¹⁰⁸ And as early as Oct. 17, F-15E fighter-bombers flying from Persian Gulf bases were bombing Afghanistan. In contrast, the expensive, stealthy, long-range B-2 was not needed against Afghanistan's pitiful air defenses: B-2s only flew six strike missions.¹⁰⁹ Notably, nearby land bases were not needed *immediately* after 9/11 – the bomb-

¹⁰⁶ Nathan Hodge, "Afghanistan Campaign Rekindles Debate Over Carriers," *Defense Week*, Jan. 2, 2002.

¹⁰⁷ William Arkin, "Old-Timers Prove Invaluable In Afghanistan Air Campaign," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 10, 2002.

¹⁰⁸ Emily Clark, *Action Update*, Center for Defense Information, Feb. 25, 2002.

ing campaign did not begin until three weeks after the attacks against the United States, suggesting that in some cases there can be substantial time to arrange local base access where it does not exist already.

An almost philosophical preference for short-range air power comes from a strategy that emphasizes engagement – engagement prior to hostilities, with troops on the ground during conflicts, and in security maintenance after combat, and helps explain why it might be preferable not to slight short-range air power in favor of heavy global-range bombers. Short-range air power encourages working with local partners before and during hostilities for the purpose of gaining access to bases, and it provides closer and quicker support for deployed forces. The engaged approach values the strength gained from working with partners, viewing the benefits as greater than the hindrances. In contrast, long-range air power can facilitate an excessively disengaged approach – the United States striking anywhere around the globe from Fortress America – and can encourage the view that pinprick attacks or air strike assassinations can achieve lasting results.

Engagement and on-the-ground deployments convey the message that the United States cares enough to get seriously involved in a conflict, whereas sending long-distance bombers or cruise missiles alone can generate resentment at the U.S. ability to strike omnipotently in complete safety. Long-range air power can provide support for deployed ground troops, as B-52s did in Afghanistan, but short-range air power is both more supportive of multilateral action and more attuned to the close air support mission. (It should be noted that large heavy bombers are, in general, more vulnerable to capable air defenses and fighter interceptors – their prominent role in Operation Enduring Freedom was partly thanks to the absence of strong air- and ground-based defenses in Afghanistan.)

Recommendations

Long-range heavy bombers can provide a useful backup to short-range air power when the latter is not available because of basing restrictions. Other

¹⁰⁹ William Arkin, “Old-Timers Prove Invaluable In Afghanistan Air Campaign,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 10, 2002. The B-2s reportedly needed eight to nine refueling tanker sorties to make the round trip from the United States to Afghanistan and back. John Hendren, “War On Terrorism Puts a Load on Air Force’s Cargo Fleet,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 5, 2002.

things being equal, short-range air power has the advantage over long-range with its quicker response time, lower cost for aircraft and fuel, and less grueling flight times for pilots. In addition, its encouragement for working with local allies meshes well with a strategy of close engagement in conflicts.

- **Preserve a long-range bomber capability. With B-52s able and scheduled to fly through 2040, there is currently no need to expand the fleet.**
- **Do not slight short-range air power in favor of moving to a largely United States-based air fleet. Ensure that foreign and national security policy give adequate priority to increasing base access.**

Sea-based or Land-based Air Power

This issue is somewhat related to the short- versus long-range debate in that all sea-based forces are currently short-range compared to the global reach of the heavy bombers – B-52s, B-1s, and B-2s. The Navy has emphasized the utility of its carriers to serve as “floating air bases” when the Air Force does not have access to local airfields, and cites Afghanistan as an example. However, the picture is more complicated, since both short- and long-range land-based aircraft did get involved in Operation Enduring Freedom: the Navy flew 75 percent of the 6,500 total strike sorties, but the Air Force dropped over 70 percent of the 17,500 weapons.¹¹⁰ In addition, naval aircraft relied heavily on land-based tanker aircraft for operations over Afghanistan.

Aircraft carriers and amphibious aircraft carriers can serve as useful mobile bases, but more needs to be done to decrease their vulnerability close to shore, particularly to missile strikes, diesel submarines, and mines.

Base access is a powerful argument in favor of sea-based air, but to some degree sea power advocates may look at it as too much of a fixed variable – and it often is, *once* a crisis has broken out. To take a long-term view, a new foreign policy and national security strategy that focused more on cultivating and utilizing allies could at least loosen the constraints of limited *a priori* base access. The availability of local bases should be a dependent variable subject to the

¹¹⁰ William Arkin, “Old-Timers Prove Invaluable In Afghanistan Air Campaign,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 10, 2002. Numbers were compiled by the Combined Air Operations Center in Saudi Arabia.

independent variable of U.S. strategies and long-term actions. Access can be influenced by factors such as the state of overall relations, prior cultivation of military engagement, prior implicit transmission of the sense that the United States views the country as a serious partner, perceptions of the United States as either collaborative or unilateralist, and perceptions of U.S. deployments of forces in a region as either constructive and nonthreatening, or potentially imperialistic and dangerous.

Recommendations

Sea-based air power clearly can provide air strike capabilities when access for land-based aircraft is difficult. Broad foreign and national security policies can, however, strive in advance to improve access for U.S. forces in a contingency.

- **Decrease vulnerability of aircraft carriers and aircraft-carrying amphibious assault ships close to shore by developing equipment and tactics for escort vessels to better provide protection against missiles, submarines, mines, and other threats in littoral areas. Encourage development of increased allied naval air capabilities.**
- **Increase focus on and resourcing of military engagement with potential allies before crises break out.**

Unoccupied or Occupied Aircraft

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) garnered much press coverage in Afghanistan. The media used them as a poster-child for the new high-tech U.S. way of war.¹¹¹ The first combat use of weapons on a UAV (therefore, aUCAV, unmanned combat aerial vehicle), in particular inspired much ink. The administration frequently cited them as key tools of “transformation.”¹¹²

UAVs are deservedly a growth industry in the military. They have three principal advantages over occupied aircraft: (1) if they are lost, no pilot is killed or falls into enemy hands, (2) they can have long “loiter” times – ability to fly for long periods without in-flight refueling, over 24 hours for the Predator,

¹¹¹ For example, Dan Nowicki, “Spy Planes Excel In War On Terror: Unpiloted aircraft shine in Afghanistan,” *Colorado Springs Gazette*, April 8, 2002.

¹¹² “Details of Fiscal 2003 Department of Defense (DoD) Budget Request,” Feb. 4, 2002.

36 hours for the Global Hawk,¹¹³ and (3) they can be cheaper to buy. For the foreseeable future, however, they will have two principal disadvantages – they require air supremacy, without which they would be vulnerable to hostile aircraft and ground-based air defenses; and lacking internal piloting capability, they are more prone to crash.

Apart from underfunding, the biggest danger in the UAV program may be that the cost advantage of UAVs could evaporate as more powerful, larger, more capable – and more expensive – models are developed.¹¹⁴ Currently, cheaper UAVs like the \$3 million Predator possess a key attribute: they can be used in higher-risk situations with less concern about losing a valuable asset. Once UAVs approach the cost of occupied aircraft – Global Hawk costs have ballooned to \$48 million each including the ground equipment, whereas F-16s have averaged \$19 million¹¹⁵ – their expendability diminishes.

Certainly there are problems with the current UAV designs that urgently need fixing. According to DoD testers, for example, despite the Predator's reputation in the media, it performs well only under certain conditions – “if uncontested by weather, threats or other tactical uncertainty” – hardly a robust performance. The testing office notes “poor target location accuracy, ineffective on-aircraft radio communications and limits imposed by relatively benign weather, including rain, negatively impact missions such as strike support, combat search and rescue, area search and continuous coverage.”¹¹⁶ Also, the Predator's existing data links were focused on sending information to headquarters rather than to troops on the ground nearby, so Special Operations

¹¹³ The Predator Aircraft, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, March 2002. William M. Arkin, “Unmanned Planes Face Threats From Near, Far,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 3, 2002.

¹¹⁴ The Predator “B,” for example is planned to have 50 percent more payload, nearly twice the altitude, and more than twice the speed of the earlier RQ-1 Predator. The Predator Aircraft, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, March 2002. <<http://www.generalatomics.com/asi/aero.html>> and Unmanned Aerial Reconnaissance System, *Airman* magazine, January 2001. <<http://www.af.mil/news/airman/0101/2weafram.htm>>.

¹¹⁵ Sharon Weinberger, “Air Force Tasks Northrop Grumman To Cut Cost Of Global Hawk UAVs,” *Aerospace Daily*, April 25, 2002. *Military Almanac 2001-2002*, Center for Defense Information, 2001. Ten late-model F-16C/Ds were bought in FY2002 for \$238.9 million (*Procurement Programs* (P-1), Fiscal Year 2001, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), February 2000, p. F-2.) The latest Block 60 F-16 is put at \$30 million in Korb, Lawrence, *Reshaping America's Military*, Council on Foreign Relations, forthcoming. William M. Arkin, “Unmanned Planes Face Threats From Near, Far,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 3, 2002.

Forces often preferred the reconnaissance capabilities of the venerable manned P-3 aircraft.¹¹⁷

In Afghanistan, one of the UAV's key advantages – the absence of a capturable pilot – was essentially moot, as Taliban air defenses and air force were negligible or easily surmounted. And they had a bad crash record, with three Predators being lost in Operation Enduring Freedom in as many months. In its overall operational record, including outside of Afghanistan, the Predator has a crippling loss rate – almost one-third of the fleet has been lost from malfunction, weather, or being shot down or crashing while on operations.¹¹⁸ Such loss rates can substantially change the life-cycle total program cost calculus and reduce the cost advantage of UAVs.

Recommendations

In a permissive environment – U.S. air supremacy – UAVs provide useful potentially cost-effective reconnaissance, and even strike, capabilities.

- **Increase development and procurement of UAVs while working to sharply decrease the attrition rate and current operational problems.**
- **Preserve the cost advantage over occupied aircraft of some UAVs by avoiding “gold-plating” future UAV designs with too many requirements and desired capabilities.**

Airlift

Operation Enduring Freedom was surprisingly taxing on U.S. airlift capabilities – although relatively few troops were on the ground, the bulk of supplies came in by air given Afghanistan's landlocked inaccessibility. The airlift was the third largest U.S. operation after the Berlin airlift of 1948 and the 1990-91 war against Iraq. The overall picture painted by Operation Enduring Free-

¹¹⁶ Ron Laurenzo and John M. Donnelly, “Jumper Bullish On Predator, But Testers Still In Doubt,” *Defense Week*, Feb. 25, 2002.

¹¹⁷ Rowan Scarborough, “Navy's P-3 Orion Aircraft Played Prominent Role In Afghanistan,” *Washington Times*, April 2, 2002.

¹¹⁸ Sharon Weinberger, “Third Predator lost in Afghan operations; 50 remaining air vehicles,” *Aerospace Daily*, Jan. 29, 2002.

dom is not dire, however, given three factors: the Air Force's primary carrying capacity in 126 C-5 aircraft was not used in Afghanistan; aircraft in the civilian reserve fleet were not activated; and less than half of the intended buy of 180 C-17s have been delivered.¹¹⁹ Clearly, however, U.S. flexibility to deploy and sustain forces quickly could be made more robust by increasing airlift capability and the associated in-flight refueling capability.

Recommendations

Ensure that U.S. airlift capabilities are robust, and encourage close allies to increase their own strategic airlift capabilities.

- **Prioritize airlift and tanker aircraft replacement over lower priority aircraft.**

Intelligence

In Afghanistan, at least for the manhunt part of the operation, intelligence was crucial. To locate Osama bin Laden and other leaders of al Qaeda and the Taliban would require excellent intelligence unless he happened to stumble into hostile forces. The most decisive form of intelligence in such a manhunt would be "human" intelligence – someone betraying the targets, for whatever reason, since it is hard with current "technical means" – satellites, UAVs, aircraft reconnaissance, etc. – to positively identify particular humans. This was illustrated by the faulty U.S. air strike on a group of Afghans in part based on the paltry information (observed with technical means) that one of the group was "tall," like bin Laden. In contrast, the Taliban ambushed, captured, and executed Abdul Haq, a key opposition leader, while he was covertly traveling in Afghanistan, possibly through betrayal – human intelligence.¹²⁰

In addition to the manhunt for bin Laden and his lieutenants, intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance played a role in tracking and identifying hos-

¹¹⁹ John Hendren, "War On Terrorism Puts a Load on Air Force's Cargo Fleet," *Los Angeles Times*, May 5, 2002.

¹²⁰ The possibility that he was betrayed is made particularly plausible by the fact that Haq was taken in his own clan area in southern Afghanistan. Barry Bearak, "Rebel leader 's betrayal spurs rumors," *Chicago Tribune*, October 28, 2001. Tyler Marshall, "Last-Minute Attempts Failed to Save Anti-Taliban Leader," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 28, 2001.

tile forces and facilities. High-tech measurement and signals intelligence systems were reportedly quite effective in detecting activity, if not identifying individuals.¹²¹ The new stars of reconnaissance, as mentioned above, were UAVs which, with their long loiter times, could monitor an area for a substantial period of time. In Afghanistan, the military noted that it had reached a point where its intelligence-gathering was frequently “real time”: a “shooter,” usually an attacking aircraft, could receive data or images directly or indirectly from a separate “sensor” immediately, thus eliminating the problem of targets having moved by the time the targeting information reached a shooter and the shooter could get within range of the target.

Human intelligence has a greater role to play tactically, too: U.S. officers involved with the March 2002 major battle against al Qaeda or Taliban fighters in the Shah-i-Kot mountains emphasized the value of human intelligence, while noting the importance of getting both human and technical intelligence. According to the intelligence chief for the Operation Enduring Freedom joint task force, “Basically, HUMINT [human intelligence] is always your most reliable source. ... [Y]our human intelligence more than likely is going to give you a better, more reliable source of information. And we found that to be true in the course of this operation, as in previous [operations].”¹²²

Enemies are becoming more knowledgeable about U.S. technical capabilities – for example figuring out that U.S. satellites follow predictable flight paths and times – and are developing more effective camouflage, concealment, and deception (CCD) techniques as a result.¹²³ In fourth-generation warfare, state and group opponents are likely to counter and adapt to growing U.S. technical capabilities by:

- increasingly dispersing or “distributing” their forces and facilities;

¹²¹ Robert Wall, “Military Assesses War Strengths, Shortfalls,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, April 15, 2002.

¹²² Nathan Hodge, “Anaconda Commanders: Sensors No Substitute for ‘HUMINT,’” *Defense Week*, April 1, 2002. The article also quotes the U.S. chief of operations for the battle, known as Operation Anaconda. Another officer involved in the operation said, “If there is any lesson from strategic intelligence’s role, it’s that a satellite hasn’t been invented that can replace the man on the ground” – quoted in Rowan Scarborough, “Navy’s P-3 Orion Aircraft Played Prominent Role In Afghanistan,” *Washington Times*, April 2, 2002.

¹²³ Andrew Koch, “USA Appraises Lessons Learned In Afghanistan,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, April 24, 2002.

- expanding use of civilians and civilian houses, buildings, and infrastructure as “shields”;
- continually relocating equipment and units; and
- increasing use of forces that present less of a target, such as terrorist cells.

Such responses do, of course, have drawbacks and costs for the adversary, but it is important to recognize that countermeasures to U.S. strengths do exist. In increasingly messy wars – and particularly fourth-generation war – sorting out friend from foe (and even from neutral civilian) can be exceedingly difficult in combat situations, and unfortunately neither technical nor human intelligence alone is likely to be able to provide a complete answer. As defense analyst Anthony Cordesman has put it,

“In balance, Special Forces teams like Team 555 demonstrated that groups on the ground can sometimes get much better information on the kind of unconventional combatants that fought in the Afghan War than any form of sensor or airborne platform, but no amount of ‘fusion’ of data from combat aircraft, satellites, UAVs, Sigint aircraft, Humint and on the ground presence could fully characterize many targets or distinguish combatants from civilians.”¹²⁴

The problem is that U.S. intelligence capabilities are much better at locating potential targets than at being able to “characterize them, judge their importance, or assess the level of damage” inflicted on them.¹²⁵

Strategic level analysis of what it takes to compel desired behavior by an adversary nation or leadership has proven particularly difficult for U.S. intelligence, as demonstrated most glaringly by the misassessment of the Serb rulers’ response to the Spring 1999 bombing campaign over the Kosovo conflict.

¹²⁴ Cordesman, Anthony, *The Lessons of Afghanistan: War Fighting, Intelligence, Force Transformation, Counterproliferation, and Arms Control*, draft, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Feb. 21, 2002, p. 15.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Recommendations

- **Strategic analysis, including assessments of which U.S. political, economic, social, and informational policies can best pre-empt the growth of nonstate threats, needs to be greatly strengthened in an intelligence system that is still heavily focused on tactical intelligence about the armed forces of states.**¹²⁶

Improved intelligence and reconnaissance hardware is already a central focus of the acquisition establishment. Progress in human intelligence is more difficult to gauge, but more capability within the military will clearly be useful for waging counterterrorist, as opposed to more conventional, warfare. Organizationally, an experimental model to watch and develop lessons from is the Army's substantial boosting of tactical intelligence units within its new Brigade Combat Teams.¹²⁷

- **Match improvements in technical intelligence gathering with human intelligence gathering and reconnaissance team capabilities.**

Other intelligence needs include:¹²⁸

- **Although sharing of raw data among intelligence agencies has improved, more needs to be done to eliminate “stovepipes.”**
- **Greater linguistic skills and technology are needed, including automated language translations and interpretation.**
- **More effort is needed to develop means of fusing data from different sources, and developing presentations systems that do not overload commanders with data.**

¹²⁷ AUSA Army Transformation Panel Briefing, Oct. 17, 2000.
<<http://www.army.mil/vision/Transformationinfo.htm>>.

¹²⁸ Andrew Koch, “USA Appraises Lessons Learned In Afghanistan,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, April 24, 2002; Robert Wall, “Military Assesses War Strengths, Shortfalls,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, April 15, 2002.

Other Areas for Improvement

Department of Defense

In his 2002 annual report, Rumsfeld stated the primary operational lesson learned by the Defense Department in Operation Enduring Freedom:

“[T]he ability of forces to communicate and operate seamlessly on the battlefield will be critical to our success in future wars. The victories in Afghanistan were won by ‘composite’ teams of U.S. Special Forces on the ground, working with Navy, Air Force and Marine pilots in the sky. Special Forces identified targets, communicated targeting information, and coordinated timing of air strikes through interoperable data links – with devastating consequences for the enemy.”¹²⁹

The benefits of joint operating ability and the need to continue improvements in that area were confirmed by Operation Enduring Freedom.

The annual report also provides a snapshot of the Bush administration’s vision of the next step in the ongoing process of military transformation:

“Ground forces will be lighter, more lethal, and highly mobile. They will be capable of insertion far from traditional ports and air bases and will be networked with long-range precision-strike systems. Naval and amphibious forces will be able to overcome anti-access and area-denial threats, operate close to an enemy’s shores, and project power deep inland. Aerospace forces will be able to locate and track mobile enemy targets over vast areas, and in combination with land and sea forces, strike them rapidly at long ranges without warning. The joint force will be networked in order to conduct highly complex and distributed operations over vast distances and in space.”¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress, 2002*, p. 30.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Transformation themes highlighted by the Defense Department after Operation Enduring Freedom include:¹³¹

- A new focus on nontraditional opponents and conflicts such as in Afghanistan, rather than conventional combat with a future superpower such as China.
- Countering weapons of mass destruction.
- Continued increases in ability to hit targets accurately and quickly, including in unwarned pre-emptive strikes.
- Continued improvements in the ability of U.S. forces to operate jointly and with other nations, particularly in the areas of command and communications.

If Operation Enduring Freedom has created a shift within the administration's overall transformation thrust, it is that the primary enemy envisioned is no longer a future "peer" superpower with large, technically advanced forces. Less traditional enemies, including terrorist groups and the weak states that often support them, now have gained equal or greater status as notional opponents. Fortunately for the transformation thrust prior to the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, which was mostly focused on future superpowers, Operation Enduring Freedom showed that many of the technologies needed to fight a superpower threat can also be used in certain useful ways against far smaller military challenges.

The drive for more high-tech equipment is focused on improved sensors for detecting targets, and communications for transmitting that and other information. These played a central role in the Afghanistan combat model of air strikes, guided by ground spotters and air reconnaissance, in support of local allies. Particular areas of emphasis in the administration's transformation plans include:

- UAVs, including ones that will be armed;

¹³¹ Hunter Keeter, "Rumsfeld: War Against Terror Provides 'Impetus' for Transformation," *Defense Daily*, Aug. 21, 2002. John Hendren, "High-Tech Strategy Guides Pentagon Plan," *Los Angeles Times*, July 13, 2002.

- weapons to conduct reconnaissance and air strikes at very long range, including intercontinental range;
- space equipment;
- stealthy weapons;
- equipment in high demand but low availability, usually aircraft involved in reconnaissance, control, electronic warfare and intelligence gathering, suppression of enemy air defenses, special operations, search and rescue, and aerial refueling;
- ballistic and cruise missile defenses;
- rapid deployability and smaller supply needs for combat units;
- “interoperability” of equipment among services;
- enabling essentially all “shooters,” weapon systems, and commanders to be connected to all battlefield “sensors,” intelligence, and data.

The trick to pursuing the very large program of developing and fielding new generations of equipment to “connect everything” digitally will be to make sure that the emphasis on this area does not completely crowd out either the thinking or the funding needed to take care of other important priorities: good strategy, basic readiness and training, the human element of war, and the political dimensions of conflict.

Army

The Army has seen its decades of investment in Special Operations Forces validated in Afghanistan by their effective collaboration with local forces to defeat the Taliban regime. Appropriately, the Army did *not* learn the wrong lesson from Operation Enduring Freedom: that local allies in cooperation with U.S. Special Operations Forces can do everything needed militarily in other scenarios, and hence that the Army does not need conventional forces. If there was a danger that the Defense Department might learn the wrong lesson, it was quickly averted by the operations in Tora Bora and Shah-i-Kot, where smaller numbers of U.S. troops combined with allied forces failed to capture significant al Qaeda members. Certain types of military operations can require large numbers of troops. Other deployment situations in the future may require different forces than Operation Enduring Freedom – most obviously an invasion of Iraq, which could require a far larger and more conventional U.S. force than was used in Afghanistan.

Areas the Army should focus on improving further include:¹³²

- Special Forces and working with indigenous forces;
- mobility – most forces and supplies had to be moved by air into and within Afghanistan;
- medium-weight, agile forces – the first large units deployed into Afghanistan were not Army but Marine Corps forces, because of their greater suitability for the mission and deployability – despite the distance from the sea;
- infantry gear and tactics – improvements and wider availability of the latest basic equipment are still needed, for example body armor, radios, boots, flashlights, water carriers, gloves, binoculars, and backpacks.¹³³

Navy

The Navy relearned the value of flexibility in military operations, and of having forces and weapons that can be given new or unplanned roles and missions.¹³⁴ For example, some of its re-equipped P-3 aircraft – originally designed for anti-submarine warfare but now reconfigured with other visual and electronic sensor and communication equipment – were reportedly effective in reconnaissance and control of air strikes working with Navy SEAL Special Operations Forces and other ground spotters. In another case, the Navy took an aircraft carrier, the *Kitty Hawk*, out of its normal role of launching air strikes against land or sea targets, and used it as an offshore base for Special Operations Forces.

Similarly, a high proportion of bomber sorties launched from aircraft carriers did not have a target already set when they launched, a novel way of operating. Improvements in sensors and communications allowed them to be given targets after takeoff when they were near the combat area.

Major thrusts for Navy transformation coming out of Operation Enduring Freedom include:¹³⁵

¹³² Sean Naylor, “Hard-Won Knowledge: What We Learned in Afghanistan,” *Army Times*, June 3, 2002.

¹³³ Nathan Hodge, “Afghanistan Exposed Flaws in Army Field Gear: Report,” *Defense Week*, Aug. 12, 2002.

¹³⁴ Hunter Keeter, “Key Navy Lessons from Afghanistan: Invest in SOF, PGMs, Sea Basing,” *Defense Daily*, July 9, 2002.

- Special Operations Forces – Navy SEALs were very active and their skills were useful even in landlocked Afghanistan; interoperability with Special Operations Forces needs further improvement;
- enhancing “sea-basing,” including launching, planning, supporting, and supplying a variety of missions from the sea, beyond the traditional focus on air strikes and amphibious assaults;
- establishing maritime interdiction operations as a core competency;
- increasing the quantity and capabilities of precision-guided munitions and of UAVs;
- improving intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities;
- improving interoperability with allies.

Marine Corps

The Marine Corps earned plaudits for deploying troops far inland to Afghanistan but it found some areas that were stressed by Operation Enduring Freedom.¹³⁶ The Corps can continue to improve in these areas for such distant deployments:

- logistics – getting the specific supplies needed to the right place, rather than transporting more things than are required;
- close air support – particularly reducing the possibility of fratricide when bombing in support of friendly troops, reducing civilian casualties further;
- intelligence – rapidly disseminating the important information to those who need to use it.

Air Force

The Air Force played a major role in the air strikes along with the Navy. Its “lessons learned” task force notes the usefulness of having ground-based reconnaissance and targeting rather than solely operating from aircraft (Air Force

¹³⁵ Randy Woods, “‘Deep Blue’ Critiques Shortage Of GPS Munitions, UAVs In Afghanistan,” *Inside The Navy*, July 8, 2002.

¹³⁶ Randy Woods, “Gen. Jones: Logistics, Air Support Top Lessons-Learned List from War,” *Inside the Navy*, April 29, 2002.

personnel were on the ground as well as Special Operations Forces from other services).¹³⁷ Like the Navy, the Air Force has appreciated the value of invigorating older weapons and giving them alternative missions by adding new technology. The heavy bombers – the B-52, B-1, and B-2 – were all designed to drop nuclear weapons on the Soviet Union but have found new roles bombing with conventional precision-guided munitions.

The Air Force should re-emphasize the following areas in its transformation efforts following its experiences in Operation Enduring Freedom:

- UAVs (while recognizing that costs to duplicate human capabilities can rise too high in some cases);¹³⁸
- “sensor fusion” – improving the ability to communicate data from a variety of sensors to a network of pilots, other weapon system operators, and commanders;
- aircraft that can perform multiple types of missions – for example, putting communications equipment aboard in-flight refueling tanker aircraft so they can do more than just refuel other aircraft.

¹³⁷ Frank Wolfe, “Air Force Official: Ground Forces Aided Recon, Targeting, Damage Assessment,” *Defense Daily*, Aug. 13, 2002.

¹³⁸ Ron Laurenzo, “Air Force Secretary Teaches Lessons Of Afghanistan,” *Defense Week*, July 8, 2002.

How to Manage the Fight – Organization

9/11

Divided Responsibility for Homeland Security

Sept. 11 revealed how fractured homeland defense and security organization was. A multiplicity of federal agencies had responsibilities for the widely varying elements of homeland security. Even in the military, the paragon of clear command structures, it was not immediately clear which organizations were responsible for what. Part of the problem is that homeland security includes so many diverse tasks, including:

- land, sea, and air defense of the United States;
- “consequence management” – dealing with the effects of attacks by weapons of mass destruction, including military support to civilian authority;
- national missile defense;
- computer network defense;
- counterterrorism operations;
- counterdrug operations;
- immigration control and border security.

More than two dozen federal agencies and a myriad of state and local offices were involved in homeland security activities. Some of the civilian federal agencies most prominently involved have included:¹³⁹

¹³⁹ For a clear layout of organizations, see briefing on Hart-Rudman Commission at National Defense University, Frank Hoffman, Nov. 7, 2001.

- Office of Homeland Security and Homeland Security Council – oversight and coordination;
- Department of Justice, including FBI and Border Patrol – law enforcement, domestic intelligence, border security;
- Department of Transportation, Coast Guard – border and maritime security;
- Department of the Treasury, Customs Service – border security;
- Department of Commerce – computer security;
- Federal Emergency Management Agency – response to attacks;
- Department of Health and Human Services – medical preparedness and response to attacks;
- intelligence agencies, including CIA – intelligence gathering and covert operations;
- Department of State – prevention abroad.

The principal concern over the previous structure was that the new forms of attack the nation faces may be so unexpected, complex, devastating, multi-dimensional, and simultaneous that a well-coordinated response and strategy will be necessary both to deal with attacks immediately and to defeat the broad threat over time. The new security challenges involve responses from so many different bureaucracies and military specialties that a natural conclusion was to draw the organizations together. Former DoD official Ashton Carter has suggested that the way to most effectively manage the diverse roles of these civilian and military agencies is not to have an oversight office that runs the agencies on a daily basis, but one that “designs the capabilities that these agencies need to address the problem.”¹⁴⁰ In other words, an architect of “*program* coordination, not policy coordination or command and control.” After initially resisting the idea, the Bush administration ultimately decided to go farther and establish a new cabinet department, the Department of Homeland Security incorporating many other agencies and offices. Perhaps the main concern is whether the nonterrorism related functions of the repositioned agencies will be slighted (for example nautical safety functions of the Coast Guard).

¹⁴⁰ Ashton Carter, “The Architecture of Government in the Face of Terrorism,” *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 3, Winter 2001/02, p. 13.

Several general principles of organizational theory and military command are relevant to decisions about command structure. A clear chain of command is usually an essential element of successful military operations. Also known as “unity of command,” this principle means making sure that “who is responsible for what” is clear, so that different people or organizations are not issuing contradictory or competing orders.

A principle of military strategy is to try to exploit the “seams” and “gaps” of an enemy’s forces and organizations. In previous centuries, the concept primarily meant the gaps between different units on the battlefield, but now it includes much broader and figurative exploitation of gaps, barriers, and communication or coordination discontinuities between agencies, branches of government, networks, or sectors of a national economy or population. National security organizational design should try to minimize the vulnerabilities created by organizational seams.

Another organizational principle is that responsibility and authority should go together – in other words, an official responsible for a function or mission should be given sufficient authority (for example, authority to set budgets) to accomplish it.

An issue of organizational design is where to land along the continuum of centralization and decentralization. Centralization helps focus on and achieve central goals, while decentralization enhances initiative, flexibility, knowledge, and quick response time.

Military Command Structure

As with the government-wide response to new threats, the problem within the military is that numerous headquarters and commands perform missions relevant to preventing and responding to attacks on the homeland. Clever adversaries can try to exploit the seams between different agencies or commands. Homeland defense efforts had been split primarily among:¹⁴¹

- Secretary of the Army – coordination of Defense Department efforts with the White House’s Office of Homeland Security;

¹⁴¹ “SecDef Designates Commanders for Homeland Defense,” DoD News Release, Oct. 26, 2001.

- Joint Forces Command – land and maritime defense of the continental United States, plus assistance to civil authorities through the command's Joint Task Force – Civil Support;
- North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)¹⁴² – aerospace defense;
- Space Command – computer network defense;
- Pacific Command – defense of Alaska and Hawaii;
- Southern Command – defense of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Altogether, seven of the nine combatant commands, plus NORAD, were identified in one recent report as having some function relating to homeland defense.¹⁴³

To try to address this, a new Unified Combatant Command, Northern Command, has been established to cover military operations against terrorists or others within North America and to help manage the consequences of a successful attack.¹⁴⁴ This will modify the command structure of the military laid out in the Unified Command Plan. Perhaps in part to avoid appearing bureaucratic because of the addition of a new command, the administration is also merging Space Command and Strategic Command, keeping the total at nine.

The new Northern Command will consolidate operational control of forces involved in homeland defense, but some bureaucratic boundaries remain to be drawn because of the difficulties of centralizing functions without crippling the organizations that used to perform them. Most tricky is Space Command with its specialized aerospace monitoring functions (and cyber-war responsibilities). A February 2001 Hicks & Associates report commissioned by the Joint Staff assessed the pros and cons of a new command for homeland

¹⁴² The commander in chief of NORAD was “dual-hatted” as commander in chief of Space Command. <<http://www.peterson.af.mil/norad>>. NORAD is technically a binational command, shared with Canada.

¹⁴³ Donley, Michael with Maj. Gen. Donald E. Edwards, Thomas K. Candon, and Neal A. Polard, *Developing the Unified Command Plan for “Homeland Security,”* Hicks & Associates, February 2001.

¹⁴⁴ “Unified Command Plan,” Department of Defense News Release 188-02, April 17, 2002.

¹⁴⁵ Donley, Michael with Maj. Gen. Donald E. Edwards, Thomas K. Candon, and Neal A. Polard, *Developing the Unified Command Plan for “Homeland Security,”* Hicks & Associates, February 2001.

defense and recommended against establishing one at the time.¹⁴⁵ The report emphasized that the differences between narrow military homeland defense functions and postattack support to civil authorities, and the operational difficulties of taking aerospace warning, control, and defense away from Space Command, argued against a new command.

Some officials also fear that a homeland defense command might subtract funding from the military's real mission, to deter and defeat adversaries away from U.S. shores.¹⁴⁶ The sharp expansion of military participation in counterdrug activities that began in the 1980s has long been criticized inside and outside of the armed forces as a distraction from the primary mission.

Finally, if establishing a homeland defense command would inherently increase the role of active component forces inside the United States, legal problems could be encountered since the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 and related legislation may somewhat constrain the actions of federal military forces within U.S. borders.¹⁴⁷ Internal discussions on the role of a new command have reportedly considered substantially increased roles for the military in responding to nuclear, chemical, or biological attacks.¹⁴⁸

Recommendations

- **Focus on improving intercommand communication and coordination.** Since all homeland defense functions cannot easily be centralized, it is as important to reduce barriers across continuing organizational seams as to try to eliminate them entirely.
- **The creation of Northern Command should help Joint Forces Command focus on its vital doctrinal and joint concept development duties (along with transferring its regional operational responsibilities elsewhere).** Comparably, some observers feel the Army

¹⁴⁶ For an unofficial view, Andrew Bacevich and Richard Kohn "On This Front, Not the Way to Go," *Washington Post*, Feb. 17, 2002.

¹⁴⁷ 18 US Code 1385. The Posse Comitatus legislation may not be as restrictive as generally thought. It includes broad exceptions, it may conflict with other laws, and federal troops have been used in a domestic role since it was passed, anyway. (Interestingly, the Posse Comitatus legislation itself does not cover the Navy or Marine Corps, although other regulations do.)

¹⁴⁸ Yochi Dreazen and David Cloud, "Pentagon and White House Consider New Command Against U.S. Attacks," *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 21, 2001.

strengthened its doctrinal development after the Vietnam War by separating its doctrine and unit management commands into a Training and Doctrine Command on the one hand, and a Forces Command on the other.

- Use the new Northern Command to rationalize command of military forces in homeland defense, **not to expand the role of active duty ground forces in law enforcement and other semimilitary roles.** Rather than expand troubling military operations in the United States, if necessary establish new federal civilian law enforcement units that could be appropriately trained for domestic missions and could be deployed nationwide if necessary to assist local law enforcement agencies and National Guard units after an emergency.

Who to Lead the Fight – Personnel

Although Operation Enduring Freedom has given a boost to high-tech new weaponry, the human-in-the-loop still remains important. As Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James Jones noted, “The biggest transformation is that the utility of smart weapons means that you have to have smart people on the ground to know what’s going to happen.”¹⁴⁹ Do these events shed any illumination on personnel issues, particularly whether the military personnel system is producing and promoting the right officers?

9/11

On the one hand, the military leadership did not anticipate and prepare well for the attacks of 9/11. As Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has said, “It was initially pretty confusing. ... You hate to admit it, but we hadn’t thought about this.”¹⁵⁰ On the other hand, the rest of the government did not anticipate much either. It is hard to criticize the military leadership for failing to foresee “unpredictable” attacks, particularly ones that did not target U.S. forces abroad. Enemies focus exactly on those attacks that are hardest to anticipate. But there is a broader context in which to view the lack of readiness for these attacks: for a decade, the military has been urged

¹⁴⁹ Randy Woods, “Gen. Jones: Logistics, Air Support Top Lessons-Learned List from War,” *Inside the Navy*, April 29, 2002.

¹⁵⁰ Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen Rhem, “Myers and Sept. 11: ‘We Hadn’t Thought About This,’” *American Forces Press Service*, Oct. 23, 2001.

to “transform” for new post-Cold War threats, and it has been slow to do so. In particular, analysts even within the military have long described the shape of new threats and offered proposals on what to do about them.

Of course, the military’s leadership is not sole master of its destiny. Many other actors influence what is politically feasible, including Congress and executive branch administrations. Nevertheless, overall, military leadership does not get an outstanding grade on preparation for new challenges of the 21st century. Top leadership, such as the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *could* have pushed harder in Congress and within the administrations for accelerated transformation and for making tougher choices.

AFGHANISTAN

The operations in Afghanistan validated in particular the personnel and training of one component of the armed forces – the Special Operations Forces, who exhibited initiative, flexibility, resourcefulness, and collaborative skills in working closely with newfound allies in an unplanned environment. Especially noteworthy was the fact that initiative was exhibited by relatively low-ranking personnel. In other military contexts as well, including heavy “force-on-force” combat, the changing shape of warfare suggests a devolvement of initiative downwards. Army reformer Col. Douglas Macgregor notes:

“Increasingly lethal weapons lead to greater dispersion of combat forces and to increases in individual unit mobility. The necessity for command, control, and sustainment of dispersed formations increases reliance on subordinate officers’ and soldiers’ judgment, intelligence, and character.”¹⁵¹

Unknown enemies and unanticipated situations in 21st century conflicts will challenge noncommissioned officers too. Sgt. Maj. Danny Hubbard of the Army’s Training and Doctrine Command argues that “A soldier learning in the enlisted side is going to have to add more emphasis on tasks at the analy-

¹⁵¹ Macgregor, Douglas, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997, pp. 4-5.

sis, synthesis and evaluation level, to get at building those cognitive skills that we want these flexible, self-aware, adaptive soldiers to be able to do.”¹⁵²

The importance of empowering increasingly low-ranking personnel has been emphasized recently in the Marine Corps. When he was commandant of the Corps, for example, Gen. Charles Krulak popularized the concept that he called “the strategic corporal,” noting that in the complex intervention situations likely to be more frequent in the 21st century than straightforward combat, a lowly corporal could be making difficult but crucial tactical and political decisions that could determine the success or failure of an intervention.¹⁵³

Recommendations

Suggestions to reform the personnel management system to support and promote more initiative-taking and innovative officers abound. Maj. Donald Vandergriff has made compelling recommendations coming out of his historical studies of effective militaries, including:¹⁵⁴

- **end the policies that create a risk-averse and “zero-defect” environment for leaders, such as the “all or nothing” retirement system in which officers do not receive retirement pensions unless they make it all the way to retirement (minimum of 20 years service), and the “up or out” system in which officers are automatically forced out if they do not advance up the rank ladder.**

Krulak suggested the key elements for managing and training personnel are building character, developing it throughout a career, and empowering leadership. He noted that for the Marine Corps, “The common thread uniting all training activities is an emphasis on the growth of integrity, courage,

¹⁵² Kim Burger, “U.S. Army Seeks to Improve Leader Training,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, May 15, 2002.

¹⁵³ Gen. Charles C. Krulak, “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War,” *Marines Magazine*, January 1999.

¹⁵⁴ See particularly *The Path to Victory: America’s Army and the Revolution in Human Affairs*, Presidio, 2002, and *Spirit, Blood and Treasure: The American Cost of Battle in the 21st Century*, Ed. Donald Vandergriff, Presidio, 2001.

initiative, decisiveness, mental agility, and personal accountability,” and he suggested that:

“The clear lesson of our past is that success in combat, and in the barracks for that matter, rests with our most junior leaders. ... The remaining vestiges of the ‘zero defects mentality’ must be exchanged for an environment in which all Marines are afforded the ‘freedom to fail’ and with it, the opportunity to succeed. Micro-management must become a thing of the past and supervision – that double-edged sword – must be complemented by proactive mentoring. Most importantly, we must aggressively empower our NCO’s, hold them strictly accountable for their actions, and allow the leadership potential within each of them to flourish.”¹⁵⁵

- **Expand the emphasis on developing initiative and leadership at low ranks.**

¹⁵⁵ Gen. Charles Krulak, “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War,” *Marines Magazine*, January 1999.

Beyond the Last War

NEW MISSIONS IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM

As was noted at the outset, the lessons of Operation Enduring Freedom are the lessons of “the last war.” The next counterterrorism mission or war may not resemble Afghanistan. Indeed, the Bush administration quickly moved to open new military fronts in its war on terrorism in quite different places.

- **The Philippines:** About 160 U.S. Special Operations Forces personnel were deployed to the Philippines in February 2002 in support of a long-running anti-insurgency and anti-banditry campaign.¹⁵⁶
- **Georgia:** Troops went to Georgia in April 2002 for a two-year anti-terrorism and security-building training effort.¹⁵⁷
- **Yemen:** U.S. forces were sent in May 2002 to train government forces trying to establish control of remote regions.
- **Colombia:** No immediate plans to deploy U.S. forces into Colombia’s guerrilla and drug war have been announced, but the administration intends to ask Congress to end the restrictions on U.S. military assistance, weapons, and training provided to Colombia that limited their use to “anti-narcotic” operations.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Steve Vogel, “Special Forces Join Effort in Philippines: Trainers to Aid Anti-Guerrilla Patrols,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 16, 2002.

¹⁵⁷ “Special Operations Trainers Sent to Republic of Georgia,” *Washington Post*, April 30, 2002. “Green Berets Land In Georgia For 2-Year Training Program,” *The New York Times*, May 20, 2002.

- **Iraq:** The Bush administration is planning for a conventional invasion of Iraq to remove the government of Saddam Hussein.

The operations in the Philippines, Georgia, and Yemen involve insurgencies or regions where the government does not hold much sway. The mission of U.S. troops in these cases is helping friendly governments try to establish control of rebellious or lawless areas, not overthrow governments hosting terrorists, as in Afghanistan. The conflicts are complex and will be highly challenging for the governments and the United States. Although U.S. troops have not been dedicated to a direct role in Colombia, it is worth noting that most “terrorist incidents” are occurring in Latin America. In the year 2000, the State Department reports that 172 of 200 terrorist attacks affecting U.S. citizens and facilities abroad were in Latin America and only two in the Middle East.¹⁵⁹

Although some have suggested that Saddam Hussein could be overthrown by applying the Operation Enduring Freedom model of support for local opposition forces, unlike in Afghanistan Saddam controls a strong government and a larger, better-armed military. With his weapons of mass destruction, weaker internal opposition, and greater opposition to an invasion on the part of Arab nations, he would likely be a far tougher adversary than the Taliban.

Part of a successful strategy in a wide counterterrorist campaign will be recognizing the differences between cases. All conflict and disorder is not anti-American terrorism. As former CIA counterterrorism chief Vincent Cannistraro has written,

“American officials have noted that the Pankisi Gorge, on Georgia’s border with Chechnya, may shelter terrorists tied to al Qaeda. But stretching terms like ‘terrorist’ and ‘linked to al Qaeda’ to apply to the various pro-Chechen and anti-Georgian fighting groups in the Pankisi Gorge is unconvincing. It is simply a lawless area. The Pankisi Gorge is exactly the sort of place where the administration’s war on terror is likely to falter. There is a differ-

¹⁵⁸ Paul De La Garza, “Terror Fight Redefines U.S. Role in Colombia,” *St. Petersburg Times*, March 15, 2002.

¹⁵⁹ Cordesman, Anthony, *The Broader War on Terrorism: After the “Victory” in Afghanistan*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Dec. 27, 2001.

ence between retaliating against al Qaeda and its sponsors or affiliates, which can be understood as self-defense, and confronting a somewhat random series of armed groups. The difference may be that between finding enemies and making them.”¹⁶⁰

COUNTERTERRORISM MISSIONS

A broad counterterrorism war implies a wide range of missions for the military, from very small noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs) to full-scale invasions. A list of such missions would include:

- noncombatant evacuation or protection operations;
- long-range Special Operations Forces raids on terrorists;
- long-range air strikes on terrorists;
- security-building interventions, including peacekeeping, stabilization missions and anti-insurgency operations;
- bombing campaigns to coerce governments;
- government overthrow, including invasions or support for indigenous opposition forces;
- intelligence operations to detect terrorist targets for strikes;
- humanitarian operations to help win hearts and minds around the world and combat some of the resentment held toward the United States;
- exercises and training with foreign militaries to facilitate access to bases and establish cooperation with governments that might be partners or hosts for counterterrorist operations;
- homeland defense;
- emergency response to attacks on the homeland.

Some of these missions were part of Operation Enduring Freedom and have been discussed above. The “next war” might take the form of missions quite different from those of Operation Enduring Freedom, however. These other missions could require different or improved U.S. military capabilities than those of Operation Enduring Freedom. The shape of possible future wars or missions and their needs are briefly touched on below.

¹⁶⁰ Vincent Cannistraro, “The War on Terror Enters Phase 2,” op-ed, *The New York Times*, May 2, 2002.

Noncombatant Evacuation or Protection Operations

The military has long prepared for extracting U.S. embassy personnel, U.S. citizens, and other expatriates who are not intended targets of the fighting in civil wars or other breakdowns in security. The mission may take on added importance if U.S. citizens increasingly become targets themselves and sudden extraction is necessary, or if military forces can provide short-term assistance in protecting them or U.S. diplomatic facilities.

The Marine Corps has this mission well covered for littoral areas with its ability to launch helicopter transports, air cover, and ground units from amphibious ready groups. However, **a potentially useful addition to this capability would be the ability to fly in from very distant bases when a Navy/Marine amphibious group was not in the area or the conflict zone was not close to the sea.** The forces for such a long-distance capability would be similar to those for the next mission: raids.

Long-Range Raids on Terrorists

This mission is probably the most novel raised by a counterterrorist war – and in need of the most work. The capability needed would be to put small forces on the ground to raid terrorists and their cells, weapons, or facilities when a host nation is uncooperative. Cases where it would be useful to insert a ground force – rather than merely conducting an easier air strike – are readily imaginable: to capture individuals and collect intelligence or to destroy equipment inaccessible to air munitions (for example, if the targets are deep underground or behind civilian shields). A related mission would be to rapidly board ships (or even aircraft) detected as delivering weapons of mass destruction.

Special Operations Forces such as the Delta Force and Marine Corps units exist to perform long-range raids, but distance to the target can be a problem, particularly in an environment where intelligence on the location of terrorist individuals or assets may come up suddenly and is highly perishable. The ambitious additional capability would be to transport the units over very long ranges quickly. **Aircraft should be developed to stealthily deliver, provide fire support for, and retrieve raiding forces at very long ranges.**¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ MV-22 Osprey “pre-assault raid” range is only 200 nautical miles. U.S. Marine Corps Aircraft, Vehicles and Equipment. <<http://www.hqmc.usmc.mil/factfile.nsf/AVE>>.

This is certainly a technological challenge, but should not be an insurmountable one if the program is given appropriate priority.

Long-Range Air Strikes on Terrorists

This capability is already fairly robust, with the Air Force having demonstrated the “global reach” of its bombers using in-flight refueling and delivering precision guided bombs. In addition to B-2, B-1, and B-52 bombers, cruise missile attacks can be launched from ships and submarines at less-than-global ranges, and aircraft attacks at short ranges when vessels are in position.¹⁶² **Development of a stealthy global-range UAV could be useful for reconnaissance and guiding long-range air strikes, particularly with the long flight-times required for global-range strikes.**

Security-Building Interventions, Including Peacekeeping, Stabilization Missions and Counterinsurgency Operations

These larger, risky and expensive missions would be called for should conflict within a state provide a breeding ground or haven for terrorists. They include a wide range of effort, from a relatively small contribution of units in a peacekeeping or stabilization operation or advisers in a counterinsurgency campaign to a large unilateral peacekeeping operation or dominant role in a guerilla war. They are probably the most difficult of the missions listed here: peacekeeping and stabilization are often lengthy, draining on the force, and complex, involving many nonmilitary elements; guerrilla war also requires a challenging focus on political, economic, and social factors as well as on military operations.

Much of the burden of peacekeeping felt by the military since the end of the Cold War was attributable to the use of a force designed for Cold War conflict in very different situations. **If unit types, number, and equipment, plus training, doctrine, organization, personnel management policies, and logistic capabilities for part of the force are more fully redesigned with peacekeeping, stabilization and related operations in mind, the unit readiness and personnel cost of these numerous operations could be reduced,**

¹⁶² Navy Tomahawk cruise missile range is 870 nautical miles. U.S. Navy Factfile. F/A-18D notional bombing mission range is given as 575 nautical miles. U.S. Marine Corps Aircraft, Vehicles and Equipment. <<http://www.hqmc.usmc.mil/factfile.nsf/AVE>>.

and the difficulties of performing widely varying operations with the same units minimized.

In addition to reorienting some U.S. forces more fully to the peacekeeping and stabilization missions, the government could **explore with close allies a more coordinated approach to burdensharing.** Currently U.S. allies are sensitive to a division of labor with the United States stereotyped as bombing a country from high altitude and sustaining close to zero casualties and the allies going in to do the arduous peacekeeping on the ground with a substantial risk of casualties. This artificial division can be (and probably already has been in Afghanistan) ameliorated with early U.S. operations on the ground and increased allied participation in the early combat phase.

A notional division of labor can be made more palatable to allies if it is described as the United States taking the lead in the early heavy combat phase of an intervention (at which it unquestionably has comparative advantage) and allies taking the lead in the later peacekeeping phase (at which they, with their greater capabilities and focus on the paramilitary and nonmilitary elements of “nation-building,” also have a comparative advantage). This would also assuage the problems inherent in U.S. reluctance to undertake long-term nation-building, as evidenced in Afghanistan where the Bush administration has studiously refused to participate in the peacekeeping force, despite U.S. responsibility for the overthrow of the government.

As for increased capabilities needed for counterinsurgency operations, there is little recent track record to assess whether or not the U.S. military has successfully internalized the true lessons of Vietnam and other insurgencies or not, but some cases indicate there is still a lot of room for improvement. For example, the raids and counterterrorist operations in Afghanistan after the overthrow of the Taliban have led the United States to become increasingly identified as a dangerous Soviet-type presence by some Afghans.¹⁶³ Certainly, improving ability to win guerilla wars ties in closely with increased military attention to the nonmilitary elements of modern war. **Further developing the military’s ability to interact successfully with the nonmilitary (e.g.**

¹⁶³ Alissa Rubin, “U.S. Raid on Village Revives the Specter of An Old Enemy: Afghanistan: American Troops Rounded up Men and Munitions in the Middle of the Night, Reminding Some of Soviet Occupiers,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 2002.

political, cultural, economic) elements of conflict will enhance its insurgency-winning capabilities.

Government Overthrow, Including Invasions or Support for Indigenous Opposition Forces

This is what was undertaken in Afghanistan and is envisaged in Iraq. The conditions that permitted the overthrow of the Taliban without extensive use of U.S. ground forces are unlikely to be found widely, so a substantial conventional force would be required for this mission. Although the military already has large and powerful forces trained specifically for such major theater wars, astute opponents will conduct asymmetric warfare against them to try to inflict enough casualties or political costs to halt a U.S. offensive.¹⁶⁴ Tactics might include:

- forcing the United States to engage in bloody urban combat;
- using civilian people and infrastructure as shields;
- conducting chemical and biological attacks;
- disrupting port and airfield access for U.S. forces;
- using force dispersal, dummies, and rapid evasion to escape detection or attacks;
- striking the U.S. homeland or friends in the region;
- undertaking an information war for global public opinion.

The problem of opponents forcing urban fights is a particularly tough nut to crack that might be eased by the emerging technology of unmanned *ground* vehicles (UGVs). The press attention devoted to UAVs in Afghanistan, however, has overshadowed similar UGV technology development that may well be far more “transformational” in the near term.

¹⁶⁴ For example, Syria has reportedly spent considerable effort to develop asymmetric tactics to defeat (including through international politics) Israel’s more powerful forces. Approaches include using dispersed infantry anti-tank teams rather than armor to counter Israel’s tank force; “hugging the enemy” to create fear of friendly fire casualties; giving Special Operations Forces a prominent role; using landmines to channel attacking armor; conducting guerrilla operations; and using weapons of mass destruction. Many of these tactics could be effective against U.S. conventional superiority too. “Syria Prepares an Asymmetric Warfare Doctrine to Cope with Israeli Military Advantages,” Global Information System Staff, *Defense and Foreign Affairs Daily*, May 10, 2002.

Under a definition of transformation as “qualitative change in the way forces fight, rather than mere quantitative improvement,” a new artillery piece that fires somewhat farther and faster than the old one, and drives faster, is unlikely to be transformational. But one that uses computers to integrate a network of sensors on separate platforms for targeting might well be transformational.

When the threat to pilots is very low or has been destroyed in the opening phases of an operation as in Operation Enduring Freedom, manned reconnaissance aircraft can be used with low risk, which limits the immediate transformational impact of UAVs. UGVs, in contrast, offer a huge qualitative change in the way smaller-scale contingencies, which are likely to occur in urban settings, are fought: they may make U.S. urban combat more acceptable and thus more feasible.¹⁶⁵

Intense urban combat has inevitably involved extremely high casualties for the attacker and defender – if it is not “fought” in the recent Russian case of simply leveling built-up areas with artillery, as was done against Grozny in the second war with Chechnya. Annihilation of cities is unlikely to be a viable option politically for the United States.

Even during the Cold War, the U.S. military approach was to avoid offensive ground combat in urban areas wherever possible. The perception that a U.S. military operation cannot absorb substantial casualties without losing public support has sustained this approach into the post-Cold War era. Although that perception may have eased somewhat in the post-9/11 context of strong public backing for U.S. military operations, the very high casualty rates of urban combat still support urban-averse doctrines. The Marine Corps, however, sensing a niche role, has taken an early lead in experimenting with urban combat. Among other initiatives, the Marine Corps conducted a series of high-level experiments on Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) called Urban Warrior starting in 1997.

The high casualty counts of urban warfare are caused by the concealment and protection that city blocks offer defenders – every window, door, room, stairway, and building can contain enemy soldiers and must be painstakingly cleared at close range. UGVs, such as remote controlled devices with video

¹⁶⁵ It must be noted that small UAVs, unlike Predator and Global Hawk but like the Marine Corps man-portable Dragon Eye or future hovering UAVs, could also be extremely useful in urban combat.

and other sensors, offer the possibility of checking rooms and corners without having to peer around each door, throw a grenade into each room, and so on. The addition of weaponry to the UGVs further reduces hazards for the infantry. UGVs could also be extremely useful in certain nonurban settings, such as the caves and tunnels that were prominent in Afghanistan.

The Services have already begun work on the new technologies. The Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory has appropriately focused its unmanned vehicle work on the tactical level in urban combat. Rather than build a heavy 30-40 pound UGV able to climb stairs but too heavy for an individual Marine to handle well, it has developed a simple 12 pound UGV called Dragon Runner with video and infrared sensors. It can be thrown up stairs.¹⁶⁶ The Army is scheduled to field a tracked robot called Matilda with sensors and a payload and weapon capability.¹⁶⁷

UGV technology is still in its infancy – and UGVs can be more difficult to design than UAVs, given the variety of terrain they have to cross.¹⁶⁸ Nonetheless **UGVs offer the possibility of bringing fundamental transformation to U.S. strategies and ways of fighting – making possible the crucial operations in urban areas that the nation would otherwise be loathe to conduct.**

To deal with the many challenges posed by opponents using asymmetric approaches, **the military should accelerate development of doctrine, organization, and equipment to fight third-generation warfare (roughly, against other conventional forces) and fourth-generation warfare (against unconventional forces or in nonmilitary arenas).** U.S. countermeasures to asymmetric threats are wide-ranging and could include:

- **developing UGVs to reduce casualties in urban combat;**
- **improving equipment and training to defend against and maintain effectiveness while under chemical or biological attack;**

¹⁶⁶ Marty Kauchak, “The Marine Corps in 2025: Evolving Doctrine and New Weapons Platforms Will Position Corps to Meet Diverse, Future Threats,” *Armed Forces Journal International*, April 2002.

¹⁶⁷ Erin Winograd, “Army to Field Specialized Unmanned Ground Vehicles This Summer,” Erin Winograd, *Inside The Army*, April 22, 2002.

¹⁶⁸ James Dao and Andrew Revkin, “A Revolution in Warfare,” *The New York Times*, April 16, 2002.

- **making forces lighter and less dependent on large supply facilities;**
- **using ground troops to force enemy units to concentrate or move and become vulnerable;**
- **bolstering homeland security, including defense of military transportation networks within the United States;**
- **increasing capability to wage political and informational war.**

Conclusion:

Balancing on the Threat Spectrum

This review has made recommendations in a wide variety of areas in response to events and military operations on and since Sept. 11, 2001. The numerous recommendations raise the question of priorities: it is easy to say more should be done here, here, and here – the harder part is what should be *cut back* in order to make space in budgets and policy-making attention for the new priorities. A few central and broad recommendations from this review are summarized below to help pull together a framework for the disparate new directions and to illuminate the priority choices being suggested here.

Key recommendations of *Honing the Sword*

1. Recognize and minimize the negative second-order effects in global political and social arenas of military operations, actions, and deployments.
2. To reduce the threat of WMD proliferation, greatly increase the funding for weapon dismantlement, control and security.
3. Allocate overall national security resources so as to better fund measures that pre-empt the growth of terrorism, limit sympathy and support for it, and mobilize nonmilitary tools to stop it, including measures in political, social, religious, informational, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement areas.

4. Boost resources for intelligence gathering and reform the intelligence community structure.
5. Take advantage of the possible contributions of local, regional and global allies by developing new doctrine, command structures, equipment and training for combined operations with allies, and by engaging in peacetime military cooperation with potential allies (while keeping in mind the potentially negative political, social, and economic effects of that cooperation with nondemocracies).
6. Build up U.S. military effectiveness in, and capabilities for, peace-keeping and stabilization operations, including establishing better collaboration and coordination with civilian agencies and private organizations.
7. Reorient portions of the National Guard to deal with new homeland security missions, and create new civilian capabilities and units where appropriate, to preserve the active duty military's focus on, and capabilities for, offensive operations abroad.
8. Continue to push development of the doctrine, command structures, unit organization, and personnel policies that enhance U.S. military capabilities in asymmetric or fourth-generation warfare, including further increasing capability for joint operations.
9. Boost Special Operations Forces capabilities.
10. Prioritize air programs that act in concert with and support ground operations, including particularly close air support, interdiction, UAV and airlift capabilities.

These central thrusts fit into a framework of shifting priorities *along a spectrum* of threats and responses. A spectrum of government national security activities and military operations can be constructed that starts with noncoercive international programs and ranges up through increasing levels of force and combat intensity. At the low end are social and cultural outreach programs, and at the high end is global nuclear war. During the Cold War, policy-makers focused programs and capabilities on the extreme high end of the spectrum, although most of the rest of the spectrum was not ignored.

Following the end of the Cold War, primary emphasis shifted somewhat down the spectrum, away from global nuclear war and superpower conflict towards conflict with regional powers in “major regional contingencies.” After Sept. 11, 2001, the focus has again shifted farther down the spectrum, but as before, this does not mean that other threats and activities to respond to them have disappeared. Most obviously, despite the administration’s ongoing “global war on terrorism,” the scenario of a war with Iraq was a central focus of the national security apparatus in 2002. (The administration argues that the war on Iraq is actually an important part of the war on terrorism, but the evidence provided publicly supporting a strong link between the Iraqi government and al Qaeda is weak.)

The key recommendations of this review generally involve programs and operations in the middle and lower portions of the spectrum, illustrating courses of action that can be taken in response to the shift of the threat down the spectrum. This shift in emphasis also illustrates the areas that should become *lower* priorities and can have some of their resources transferred to the new higher priority areas. Again this does not mean *eliminating* capabilities to conduct operations at the high end, now or in the future, but it does mean an adjustment of emphasis and resources.

Forces and equipment that were focused on the high end of the spectrum include nuclear forces, high-tech weapons of the superpower arms race, heavy armored ground forces, naval forces for open-ocean combat, air-to-air fighter platforms, and a missile shield capable of defending against the Soviet nuclear arsenal. This is not to imply that these and other categories cannot play niche roles at different and newly-emphasized spots along the spectrum of operations. They can – for example, heavy tanks can be useful in peacekeeping operations, and national missile defense can be useful in defeating a limited missile attack from a rogue state or terrorists. But this review argues that

A SPECTRUM OF NATIONAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES

higher force and intensity

Global nuclear war

Superpower war

Overthrow of regimes, or repelling invasion

Military support of indigenous forces

Raids on terrorists involving ground forces

Punitive or coercive air strikes

Homeland defense operations

Peacekeeping operations

Noncombatant evacuation operations

Infrastructure-building operations (peacekeeping environments)

Foreign or domestic humanitarian/disaster relief operations (nonhostile environments)

Engagement/training/exercises with foreign militaries

Military information operations, and affecting views and events through presence, absence, military policies, etc.

lower force and intensity

Intelligence programs

Economic programs

Law enforcement programs

Diplomatic programs

Social/informational programs

these areas need less emphasis overall, even if they have not disappeared entirely, and can be a source of resources for other, now higher priority, areas.

In sum, this report suggests that the course of conflict on Sept. 11, 2001 and afterwards broadly confirms that the refocus of strategy and forces begun after the Cold War and addressed in the preceding report, *Reforging the Sword* – not wholesale elimination of capabilities, but reprioritization in new areas – needs to be continued, and in certain areas, accelerated.

ACRONYMS

CAS	Close Air Support
CCD	Camouflage, Concealment and Deception
DoD	Department of Defense
EBO	Effects-based Operations
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
<i>JV2020</i>	<i>Joint Vision 2020</i>
MOUT	Military Operations in Urban Terrain
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
RDO	Rapid Decisive Operations
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UCAV	Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle
UGV	Unmanned Ground Vehicle
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



CENTER FOR DEFENSE INFORMATION
1779 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036-2109
Ph: 202.332.0600 Fax: 202.462.4559 www.cdi.org
