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Realization of importance of cultural understanding in Military Operations

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Abstract

There are comparisons and contrast of the United States Army's Military Operation during the Indian Wars and the present war of today that focus terrorism as in Iraq and Afghanistan. In this essay I will exam constructive and unconstructive elements that have been the cause of failures and success of the U.S. Military. Lastly, lessons learned will be combined to enhance understanding obtained to our Nation's wars.

Realization of importance of cultural understanding in Military Operations

In today's contemporary operating environment cultural understanding is a necessity in order for the U.S. Military to achieve mission success. This idea of cultural awareness has always been recognized but not always executed during combat by U.S. military Leaders throughout history. It is obvious to me that during the Indian wars officers and NCOs have exercised their limitations by relying on information provided by others. They did not use their own knowledge to instill in Soldiers about the culture of the people in countries they occupied and didn't protect their Soldiers by training them on cultural awareness prior to deployment. Knowledge acquired prior to conducting operations in areas outside the U.S. is instrumental in defending a nation to conduct military operations. Knowledge should also be reiterated throughout military operations. The military must learn and adjust to any situation in any location throughout the world. The difficulties and understanding of military leaders and planners during the Indian war were due to their being way off the mark on cultural awareness.

The leaders did not study the varied tribes and cultures that ranged from region to region. They failed to consider culture in their operations would have significantly improved effectiveness. The focus of the United States was to force the Indians to learn American culture and acquire the attitudes of Americans. The U.S felt that the Indian children would be the gateway to success in Americanizing the Indians. Children were taken from their homes and required to attend school to learn skills and attitudes essential to become an American citizen (Native Americans in the United States 2008).

In 1887, the government instituted the Dawes Act which claimed to protect the Indians. The Dawes Act impacted the Tribal harmony, government, and the Indian's unique way of life. The Act quickly dissolved the Indian reservations giving land to individual Indians (Wars in the

West, 2008). The Land given to the Indians did not provide sufficient funds for the Indians to grow economically. When the elders died their heirs received the land which was divided among the Indian children which caused even more hardship. Many tribes stood their ground, not wanting to change the way they live and to give up their customary beliefs. The policy required Indians to join the general population; American fundamental of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and new societal attitudes that would change them into "Americans".

The culture of Iraqis and the Native American culture are both composed of distinct qualities. Both cultures are extremely different from the many western cultures in the United States, even during Manifest Destiny. In Iraq Sect differences are an important factor in the fabric of the region. There are three main sects in Iraq the Kurds, Shiites, and Sunnis along with Christian areas in Baghdad. Each sect has its own distinct cultural variation. Although each sect is Iraqi the similarity in religious beliefs are small and their blood lines are not the same which is very similar to the Indians. Both Iraqi and Indian culture consists of languages with very diverse dialects (Iraqi Overview, 2007). Further research would most likely disclose many commonalities between the culture of Iraqis and Native Indians; however the main point in all this is that Cultural awareness is essential and should not be overlooked.

Congress passed President Andrew Jackson's 1830 Indian removal Act which was created because white settlers felt that Indian nations occupying the lower south were obstacles and stood in the way of progress so the Indians moved by force. The Indian Removal Act was said to be voluntary but the Indians were moved from east to west of the Mississippi by force. The Cherokee Nation did not accept the treaty because the United States made agreements with Cherokee Indians that were not the true leaders of the tribe. The unlawful negotiations caused a civil war between the Cherokees. President Jackson initiated another disturbing policy

through the use of his words, “kill as many bison as possible in order to cut the plains Indians main source of food” (Native Americans in the United States).

The United States government was unwilling to become familiar with the native Indian culture and therefore there was an abundance of misunderstanding between the US government and the Native American people. The difficulties the United States experienced with Indian Problems increased military knowledge. Future operations were impacted in a positive manner due to the enlightenment of the Indian culture which was which took place through daily exchanges the Indians. Even The American commanders lightened their loads. Improvements were made in training, procedures do avoid ambushes, organized corps of infantry, and the use of guides as auxiliaries which all improved warfare (Birtle, 1998).

In 1812 draft manual called “A treaties on the Mode and Manner of Indian Warfare” was developed by James Smith, this unofficial manual changed in warfare in the Army and created stability in the way the Army operated. The Army became a cultural successful by implementing Indian tactics and warfare in to its mission (Wars in the West, 2008). Today the situation in Iraq situation is ongoing. US operation were outdated at the beginning of the counterinsurgency operations and forced to integrate new plans of action while in the fight. We have learned lessons from the paste; some things worked and have empowered the US to updated tactics, techniques, and procedures.

It is evident to our current leaders that we must learn from our history and past conflicts in order to be successes in Iraq. Training has been put into place so that Soldiers have the general cultural Understanding in Iraq is are vital to daily operations and the effects actions, equipment, and communication has on the populace. Comparing the lack of cultural understanding of the Indian war to the conflicts in Iraq today makes the importance of our focus on cultural

understanding.

The United States Military and the Bureau of Indian affairs began working together to insure the Indian way of live was understood. They also ensured enforcement of treaties by providing experienced military personnel for treaty agreements. Although The Army was removed from its cultural awareness mission due to negotiation problems the came back to fix the issues by non-military negotiators. Leaders received experience from working day to day with Indians as Commanders of scouts and Soldiers. Knowledge acquired provided cultural insight the proved the government's policies concerning the Indian failed mostly due to political corruptions, coordination a lack of Indian cultural incite within government agencies. The lessons learned during the Indian Wars are assisting the Us Military today as we continue to provide assistance to other nations.

Conclusion

The United States defends freedom throughout the word. In order to gain acquire confidence, receive support, and win the harts and minds of the nations we protect we must have and understanding of their culture. The United States has the most adaptive military in the world; therefore, where every The United States Military may deploy we must adjust to our surroundings and become familiar with the lifestyles of those in the nations we occupy. History proves that cultural awareness is instrumental to protecting the United States of America as well as protecting other nations.

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