THE ROLE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN SPECIAL
OPERATIONS AND MISSIONS

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ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN SPECAIL OPERATIONS AND MISSIONS, by MAJ Edward T. Nye, 123 pages.

This thesis sets out to answer the primary question, How do special operations public affairs officers achieve the required balance between the clear and dominant need for operational security before, during, and after an operation while maintaining the public affairs (PA) imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay?" In short, can the special mission community move beyond the "no comment" or "I can neither confirm nor deny" approach and adopt a more sophisticated and effective PA plan.

Along the way the thesis explored concepts, like "Just War," and brought to light the unique societal questions posed by the government's need for secret military units and capabilities and the problems these units pose for a free and open society. Four allied nations--Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada--have all experienced public debate about their country's secret military units and have struggled to reevaluate their respective secrecy policies. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the American public has not yet joined this debate. When it does, will the Department of Defense's PA policy of not discussing special operations missions withstand public and political scrutiny?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACRONYMS

CM   Consequence Management

CP   Counterproliferation

CR   Crisis Response

CT   Counterterrorism

DOD   Department of Defense

DOS   Department of State

DOS/CT   Department of State Counter Terrorism

DEST   Domestic Emergency Support Team

FEST   Foreign Emergency Support Team

FM   Field Manual

FRP   Federal Response Plan

IO   Information Operations

IPI   International Public Information

JFCOM   Joint Forces Command

JP   Joint Publication

JTF-2   Joint Task Force-2 (Canadian Commandos)

JTF-CS   Joint Task Force for Civil Support

JSOC   Joint Special Operations Command

JSOTF   Joint Special Operations Task Force

LFA   Lead Federal Agency

PA   Public Affairs

PAO   Public Affairs Officer

PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PMIO	Post-Mission Information Operations
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
OPSEC	Operational Security
OCLL	Office of Congressional Legislative Liaison
OASD-PA	Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs
OSI	Office of Strategic Influence
SF	Special Forces
SMU	Special Mission Unit (American Commandos)
SOC	Special Operations Command
SOF	Special Operations Force
TF	Task Force
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American military is really only good at keeping secrets from itself.

Mark Bowden, *Blackhawk Down*

Background

The Department of Defense (DOD) is in a period of transition. Strategic plans, operational goals, and tactical capabilities are changing rapidly to meet the new and future military challenges. The world has changed, the wall has fallen, and the Soviet Union is no longer the centerpiece of US national security strategy. Today's military leaders, planners, and soldiers must be prepared for an assortment of military operations other than war. The six-year-long peacekeeping operation in the former Republic's of Yugoslavia and the recently declared war on terrorism are just two examples of the varied and diverse nature of these emerging missions. The DOD has broadened its supporting national military strategy to encompass the new global-threat environment. The military can no longer focus its planning effort in one geographic area or on one peer competitor and ensure the continued safety and freedom of the nation. Today's military faces many varied and complex internal and external challenges. Some of these challenges are obvious like: force transformation, modernization, recruiting and retaining qualified personnel, homeland defense, and combating terrorism. However, significant challenges lay hidden, either too distant in terms of time or too compartmentalized in terms of security clearances, to gain institutional attention. To ensure continued military success

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these challenges must be identified, targeted, and overcome. What US military strategist

could have foreseen the proposed sweeping changes being discussed by President Bush,

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfield, and others in the aftermath of the 11 September

2001 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, DC?

> President Bush now has a direct line of command to the head of the Special
> Operations Command, enabling him to bypass other generals when launching
> covert actions in Afghanistan. In a sign of the key role for special operations
> forces in Operation Enduring Freedom, Gen. Charles Holland has been designated
> the top operational commander for parts of the action inside Afghanistan. The
> unusual arrangement means that instead of answering to Gen. Tommy Franks--the
> commander of Central Command, who is running the overall campaign--Holland
> will report directly to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and President Bush.
> (Bedard 2001)

This thesis will examine one such challenge, the role of public affairs (PA) within Special

Operations Forces (SOF) and special mission snits (SMUs).

The military PA community faces similar challenges and must internally examine

ways to keep pace with the rapidly changing global informational environment and the

transitioning military. Technology has not only increased the speed of information flow

but it also has fundamentally changed how that information flows. Satellite imagery, of

one-meter resolution, once the sole purview of only a handful of governments is now

commercially available to any individual, group, or state that has the financial resources.

Remotely piloted vehicles and unmanned aerial vehicles, once only found in Dick Tracy

copyrighted comics are becoming commonplace in US military and Central Intelligence

Agency (CIA) operations. These platforms can and will be used by news agencies in the

near future to gather information not currently available because of operational,

logistical, or legal constraints. Estimates put the number of on-line Americans at 160

million, with 63 percent of American adults asked in one survey stating that

communication technology make it easier to see the truth (Arkin 1999). Humans face the challenge of processing more information at an exponentially faster pace than ever before. To meet this rising challenge, the PA community must first understand the impact this new environment places on them. Some of these changes will necessitate upgrades in technology and equipment while other changes, with even greater impact, must occur in PA collective planning methodology. Field Manual 3-61.1, *Public Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures,* states: "PA requires PA staffs to be fundamentally proactive rather than reactive. . . . This is more than merely reacting to events with a press release or conference" (2000, 27).

The special operations warrior has an apprehension of the media and by extension the public affairs officer (PAO). The US Army Special Operations Command (SOC) PAO facilitated a trip to Colombia in 1998 by *Washington Post* columnist Ms. Dana Priest to gather information on an article about SOF conducting training with the Columbians. Ms. Priest reported discrepancies between congressional policy and DOD practice. The article led directly to tighter controls and more congressional oversight of SOF. Ms. Priest wrote: "US Special Forces troops have been conducting extensive training exercises with Colombian soldiers fighting drug traffickers and guerrillas under a program that avoids restrictions imposed on military aid by the Clinton administration in response to Colombia's abysmal human rights record and drug-related corruption." She added: "It was under the same program, known as JCET for Joint Combined Exchange Training, that US troops conducted 41 training exercises with Indonesia in the past seven years even though many members of Congress believed they had curtailed military ties with that country because of human rights abuses" (1998).

Because of this article and others like it Congress modified the 1997 Leahy Amendment and tightened the existing regulation. The regulation, fundamentally a vetting process, now reads: "None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to support any training program involving a unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of Defense has received credible information from the Department of State that a member of such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights, unless all necessary corrective steps have been taken" (Martin 2001).

The US is not the only country whose policies and practices concerning SOFs are questioned by members of the media, its politicians, or public. In response to President Bush's call for all civilized nations to join in the war on terrorism many countries have had to reexamine their internal Department of Defense or Ministry of Defense policies concerning the use of SOFs. The US, which shares a common British ancestry with Australia, Canada, and New Zealand all have SMUs patterned after the British Special Air Service (SAS) and have similar policies concerning the announcement or confirmation of the employment of those special units. Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public *Affairs Guidance (PAG) for SMUs*, dated 1999, is intentionally vague, "Special Mission Units are groups that are specifically configured and trained to deal with a wide variety of threats" 1999). The PAG continues, "Examples of threats the SMUs train to counter include terrorism and events associated with weapons of mass destruction" (1999). As a matter of policy DOD never publicly acknowledges a SMU mission and will not discuss any ongoing, previous or potential future mission. In reference to the events of 11 September 2001 and at the time of this writing no US debate or dialogue on this policy has occurred. With their silence politicians from all major

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parties, private citizens, and official or unofficial governmental watchdog committees seem to support the secrecy policy. However, the same cannot be said for the other four allied countries, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In these countries, less impacted by the events of 11 September 2001 and therefore possibly more inclined for dialogue prior to engaging in a war, there have been numerous articles and some public backlash to conducting a secret war with secret soldiers. Could or should this public debate be raised in the US and is the current DOD policy as written strong enough to withstand public scrutiny? Do these public debates foreshadow a potential perception management crisis for the DOD and the SMU community?

This commentary appeared in *The New Zealand Herald* concerning Prime Minister Helen Clark's refusal to confirm where, if anywhere, New Zealand Special Air Service (SAS) troops have been deployed: "When New Zealand troops are sent into a foreign country, it is bizarre for the prime minister to refuse point-blank to say so, or to give a broad indication of their task. She might reflect that besides her obligations to the Security Council, the Defense Force and the SAS itself, she owes some residual duty to the New Zealand public, on behalf of whom both she and the SAS hold their briefs." The article concluded with: "Ms. Clark's approach is as ridiculous as it is futile" (Clark 2002). On 15 March 2002 Prime Minister Clark was forced to publicly acknowledge the deployment of New Zealand SAS to Afghanistan because the information was posted on the US White House web site. She stated: "The Government will continue to observe a policy of refusing comment on the specific location or mission of SAS members." Opposition Party leader Richard Prebble said that Ms. Clark's silence was absurd when the public was learning about the deployment from the White House website, German

tabloid newspapers, and statements in the Australian media (Clark 2002). This example is significant for DOD policy makers because it emphasizes the global reach and interconnectivity of the various forms of media and the political backlash that can accompany a potentially unpopular DOD policy.

Canadian's deployment of its SMU in support of the war on terrorism has generated much public debate and the potential removal of its Defense Minister, Art Eggleton. The unit which formed in 1993 has rarely been acknowledged by the government and has been characterized as a unit that "rarely deploys oversees" and "normally only to conduct benign observer missions" (Pugliese 2002). Scott Taylor writes: "Canadians can be forgiven for their ignorance as the TF has been kept a secret since its formation in 1993" and "Even the national media were surprised to hear Canada even possessed an elite counter-terrorism unit" (Taylo, 2001). At the center of the controversy is a secret memorandum written November 2001 that named the Canadian Defense Minister as the only civilian eligible for briefings on Canada's secret commando unit, JTF-2. The memo gives the Defense Minister the discretion on whether or not to brief the Prime Minister on the unit's actions in Afghanistan (Leblanc 2002). Opposition party members claim the Defense Minister only releases information when it suits the governments' purposes and hides all damaging information. Alliance Minister of Parliament Brian Pallister said, "Sometimes, secrecy becomes deceit" (Leblanc 2002). The Defense Minister is scheduled to appear before a parliamentary inquiry to face questions on why he did not inform the House and the Canadian people on the role and missions assigned to JTF-2 (Leblanc 2002). Although the US military operates under far different rules and regulations, this example is still important because it once again

demonstrates what can happen if the Congress and or the US public feels they are being mislead by a policy of secrecy.

In Britain, a country engaged in a war on terrorism against the Irish Republican Army for decades, the debate takes a different turn. Here, the Ministry of Defense and the English citizens live with the need for secrecy but have adopted a more proactive policy of openly acknowledging the SAS and its mission but never acknowledging any personalities, tactics, techniques, or special procedures. The current situation has caused the Defense Secretary Mr. Hoon to order a review of this policy. Details of SAS missions have emerged in the press from official releases by other governments with different policies. These releases undercut the current British Ministry of Defense policy of a blanket 'no comment.' Mr. Hoon stated: "The review is intended to ensure that any change to the blanket 'no comment' policy would not in anyway undermine the operational effectiveness of the SAS: (Evans, 2002). The lessons are, in coalition warfare one country's policies may affect another's and given a global media there are very few secrets.

Both the media and the PAO are viewed as potential security violations and a possible compromise of any past, on-going or future missions. Enlisted soldiers and officers alike equally share this view. The following electronic message was sent from HKRSBANE@aol.com to the Special Forces Association Homepage.

> Sir,
> I read with horror the article Special Forces Leave for War Quietly, Without Fanfare in the *New York Times* dated 19 Oct 01. As an SF trooper, the thought of my name/unit/functional capability/wife's name/wife's work location being transmitted to the world frightens the hell out of me. I request that your organization help shake things up a bit. Please help send a message to the press and to our fellow troopers (and families) that the press is not looking out for our

best interest, that our lives depend on OPSEC, and that the country/world does not need to know everything about us, what we do and how we do it. (sfahq, 2001)

The associations' response shares the writer's OPSEC concerns. "The Special

Forces Association concurs completely and has not allowed interviews to any media

outlet from national headquarters. We urge our members to do the same" (sfahq, 2001).

There is also this informative electronic message sent from Major, Mark Grdovic,

Commander, B/3/10 Special Forces Group (Airborne) to Major Gary Kolb, USASOC

PAO.

Gentlemen
My name is Major Grdovic. I am the Commander of B/3/10 SFG(A). Over the last week I have seen numerous 'good news stories' on television. I saw the guidance last week from MG Lambert ref the policy that all personnel conducting interviews will wear full nametapes and US Army. Now I see the policy letter dated 111549z Dec 01 ref PAO guidance and the push to have actual participants conduct interviews. I am appalled and horrified by this policy. You are placing our soldiers and their families in grave danger of retaliatory attacks at home. After the article with Capt. Jason Amerine this week, it took me less than 5 minutes to acquire his address, phone #, and e-mail, via open source on line. We will be lucky if he does not receive an anthrax Christmas card. There can be no doubt that there is a significant terrorist threat and capability within the United States. The degree of naiveness that this policy displays regarding the operational environment we are dealing with is nothing short of an amateur's performance in matters that are deadly serious. It's time to loose the "white side" mentality and take a lesson from the SMUs and or our allies the British Special Forces. Recommendation. I understand the importance of the info campaign. I believe it should be policy that actual participants will have nothing to do with interviews and all efforts should be made to avoid singling out individuals and their actions. All matters should be conveyed through a PAO rep. All uniforms in hostile environments should have nametape and US Army only with pin on rank and branch (law of Land Warfare requirements). Unit patches should be left for home station. Under no circumstances should individuals be wearing skill badges beyond CONUS. "Quiet Professionals." If you feel I've over stepped my bounds or I've offended the PAO office that was not my intent. Just trying to contribute and stand up when I see something I know is wrong. Please feel free to show this email to anyone of any rank who might be interested.
Sincerely Mark Grdovic

These attitudes are not new and have existed prior to the current military operations in Afghanistan. Bob Woodward's book *The Commanders*, gives a behind-the-scene account of the invasion of Panama by US forces in 1989. He reports that the J-5, General Thomas Kelley, the officer responsible for planning the invasion was so concerned about maintaining OPSEC that he, "summoned in (into his office) the public affairs officer for the Joint Staff, Navy Captain, Erwin A. Sharp and told him to go on his scheduled Christmas leave" (Woodward 1991, 173). Ironically, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Powell had addressed the National Defense University students a few days earlier and admonished them: "Once you've got all the forces moving and everything is being taken care of by the commanders turn your attention to the T.V. because you can win or lose the battle if you don't handle the story right" (Woodward 1991, 155). But even Powell's caution demonstrates where PA lays in the planning process, after all the forces are moving. This cultural belief serves to highlight the lack of knowledge, which can be defined as trust or confidence, in PA because PA doctrine expressly forbids any such discussion (JP 3-61 1997, 17).

<center>Scope</center>

While the focus of this work is not on the relationship between different types of military units, it is necessary to discuss that relationship briefly in terms of mission, to help focus the argument on the primary question, How does a Special Operations PAO achieve the required balance between the clear and dominant need for operational security (before, during, and after an operation), while maintaining the PA imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay?" It is important to understand how the different units interact in order to understand the resultant negative consequences if they

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fail to conduct interactions properly. This discussion will focus on three separate but often interwoven special operations missions: combating terrorism, counterproliferation, and operations of weapons of mass destruction. These missions potentially require the support of or the handover of a mission from a special operation unit to a conventional force for consequence management operations.

Today, within the military academic and operational environments abundant discussion exists on the historical necessity and importance of military-media relations. Services now routinely conduct extensive media training at all levels to ensure leaders and service members understand the importance of positive military-media interaction and know how to conduct successful media engagements. Training starts at the top with General Officer media training orchestrated and overseen by Army Vice Chief of Staff, General Jack Keen. This training then trickles down through the Precommand Courses at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, and Fort Leavenworth. It is also incorporated at all the combat training centers as well as division and corps level war-fighting exercise. Even the Special Forces Qualification Course includes a mandatory course of instruction on media on the battlefield training. The conventional military professional is trained to understand the conditions and demands that come with operating in the global-media environment and strives to facilitate the media's request when appropriate and supportable within security constraints and safety considerations (safety refers to the service member's safety. DOD agreement with media prohibits the use of reporter's safety as a reason to deny access to an area or troops). Many commanders now welcome or actively seek out media engagements, especially in military operations other than war,

because they have witnessed the positive effects the media can have on mission

accomplishment, societal acceptance, and congressional support.

Historically, there has been limited dialogue between SOFs or personnel involved

in any combating terrorism (CT), counterproliferation (CP), or weapons of mass

destruction missions and the media. This nonengagement policy has fueled speculation

by the media, especially the relatively unregulated Internet, as to the true mission and

identities of the SMU. Many Internet sites proclaim SMU involvement in Waco, Ruby

Ridge, or black helicopter sightings across America. The policy may actually contribute

to the proliferation of these anti-government conspiracy sites because the Army cannot

correct what it does not acknowledge. SOF special mission units (SMU) involved in any

mission have never directly interacted with the media. Recently released *Public Affairs*

Guidance (PAG) from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs

(OASD-PA) suggests and some recent media coverage of SOF and too a lesser extent

SMU operations in Afghanistan demonstrate the beginning of a shift in fundamental

principles of media relations to one of cautious willingness by DOD leadership to allow

the media to "cover" special operations is slowly emerging.

> 6. EMBEDS FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS: NEWS COVERAGE AND
> IMAGERY OF DEPLOYED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES (SOF)
> GENERALLY ARE NOT AUTHORIZED, BUT WILL BE CONSIDERED ON
> A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS BY OASD(PA) THROUGH USCENTCOM IN
> COORDINATION WITH USSOCOM. COVERAGE IS SUBJECT TO
> GROUND RULES THAT PROTECT THESE TOOLS, TECHNIQUES AND
> METHODS; COVERAGE WILL NOT REVEAL SPECIAL TACTICS,
> TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES. MEDIA COVERAGE OF TRAINING
> AT THE SPECIAL WARFARE SCHOOL, AND ROUTINE AND
> SCHEDULED TRAINING AT OPERATIONAL UNITS IS PERMITTED.
> ACCESS TO COMMANDO SOLO MISSIONS IS APPROVED, AS
> OUTLINED BELOW.

6A. COMMANDO SOLO. MEDIA EMBARK ABOARD COMMANDO SOLO MISSIONS IS AUTHORIZED ONLY WITH PRIOR APPROVAL OF US CENTRAL COMMAND (USCENTCOM) AND UNDER LIMITATIONS TO PROTECT OPERATIONAL SECURITY. (EF PAG, 2001).

But the necessary restrictions and warnings remain firmly in place.

7C. PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTURE IS PASSIVE FOR ALL OPERATIONS INVOLVING THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE PRIOR TO THEIR COMPLETION (I.E., AIRCRAFT RECOVERED SAFELY). *NOTE: SOME SPECIAL OPERATIONS WILL NOT BE DISCUSSED, EVEN AFTER THEIR COMPLETION* [emphasis mine].

The above DOD PAG is the perfect example of the lack of long-range planning by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. The PAG fails to consider an intermediate PA strategy and does not address the PA end state. This end state or Post-Mission Information Operations (PMIO) plan is critical information for a PAO trying to develop a PA strategy.

Most of the limited literature on the subject of SOF--media interaction focuses on the relationship between psychological operations (PSYOP) or civil affairs (CA) units and the media, but omits any discussion of combat arms SMUs and their media interaction. The reason for this omission is clear even to the casual observer: special mission units do not traditionally welcome or seek out media interaction (SMU PAG, 1999).

A smaller but growing body of work has studied the role and relationship PA occupies within the larger information operations (IO) framework. To date, these studies have been theoretical or conceptual in focus and have centered on the merits of PA involvement in IO. What is lacking is a serious doctrinal discussion of how PA supports IO, or a "How to Manual." The study needs to move past debate on whether PA supports

IO as an offensive or defensive element and begin to examine specific PA applications

within IO (JP 3-13 1997, 51). Many PA purists want to disassociate PA from IO because

they fear PA will become tainted or corrupted and lose its most valued asset, credibility.

The recent disclosure of the existence of the Office of Strategic Influence crystallized this

discussion.

> The Pentagon is developing plans to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign media organizations as part of a new effort to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries, military officials said. The plans, which have not received final approval from the Bush administration, have stirred opposition among some Pentagon officials who say they might undermine the credibility of information that is openly distributed by the Defense Department's PA officers. (Dao and Schmidt 2002a)

> The article continued: "Mingling the more surreptitious activities with the work of

traditional PA would undermine the Pentagon's credibility with the media, the public and

governments around the world, critics argue" (Dao and Schmitt 2002a). One week later

The New York Times reported that: "Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld closed the

office because news reports had ruined the office's reputation, making it too difficult for

it to properly function." Secretary Rumsfeld's announcement seemed to support the

concept of the OSI and lament its closing. He said: "What it was to do was an open

question, even today as it ends its very short, prominent life" (Dao and Schmitt 2002b).

The debate is far from over as the article then reported on rumors that the Pentagon was

considering the use of "outside contractors, including public relations firms" to ensure

that its role remained in the shadows. Kathy Cripps, president of the Council of Public

Relations Firms, said in a statement that the idea: "That public relations companies be

retained to mislead the media by serving as the Pentagon's surreptitious messengers of

misinformation was patently offensive." She added: "It is reassuring that common sense

has prevailed and that the credibility and reputation of the United States Government are not being put at risk by a plan that would almost surely backfire" (Dao and Schmitt 2002b).

On 28 February 2002 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Victoria Clarke published a press release that contained no mention of OSI but was clearly meant to police up the damage created by the now defunct organization. The release reinforced the concept that the OASD-PA has been completely open and honest with the press. "On Sept. 11, the US was attacked by enemies that use terror and deception and adhere to no known standards of civilized behavior. Yet despite the greatest need ever to maintain operational security, protect lives and preserve options, the US-led war on terrorism has had the highest degree of transparency, openness and inclusion of any in our nation's history." She also wrote: "In just over four short months of intense and unconventional military action, much of it conducted by Special Operations Forces, the DOD has facilitated pool coverage of the war, set up media operations inside Afghanistan, granted more than 4,000 interviews and responded to more than 7,000 media inquiries" (Clarke 2002).

It is precisely, because this is a valid concern that the doctrine must evolve past PA responsibilities of command information, community relations, and public information. PA as a supporting function or pillar of IO is critical and here to stay. However, PA integration into IO does require strict control and oversight by the PAO. The same level of discussion and planning that goes into fashioning a strategic estimate or the military decision-making process must be applied in PA planning.

The above discussions are important when considering SMU-media relations because SMUs do not have assigned PA support and only receive limited PA guidance, many times from a nontrained PAO, in the broader framework of IO. The PA guidance can come from a lawyer or a counterintelligence officer assigned the additional duty of PAO. If this PA IO guidance is not consistent with the DOD tenants or principles of PA, the chances for honest error, deceit, or deception, due to lack of knowledge or a misguided loyalty to secrecy, are greatly increased. This is not to suggest that anyone or any organization within the SMU community would intentionally violate the public's trust but merely an acknowledgment that SMU mission planning and execution demand a very high level of secrecy. In a world of competing interests, mission success, which can equate to individual, unit, or national survival, is always going to be the principal consideration. In general terms OPSEC will normally win out over the publics' right to know and the ends justify the means.

Principal Question

The core question of this thesis, then, is: Given the cultural distrust between special mission units and conventional or follow-on forces, the historical lack of PA support within the special missions community, and their cultural background of secrecy, how does a PAO achieve the required balance between the clear and dominant need for operational security, before, during, and after an operation while maintaining the PA imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay?" In short, can the special mission community move beyond the "no comment" or "I can neither confirm nor deny?" approach and adopt a more sophisticated and proactive PA plan. Conversely, is the current approach sufficient? This plan must be a collaborative approach to ensure

total integration and address the reality of a relentless worldwide media. When and under

what conditions is it acceptable to inform media of a special mission operation? How

does one prepare the country for the dangers of a mission not announced ahead of time?

Supporting Questions

Secondary or supporting questions include: Is the current PA force structure

within United States Special Operations Command (SOC) sufficient to support the needs

of the community. What, if any, unique skills or background should the SOF PAO

possess. How does the PAO span the chasm that exists between him and the rest of the

often-closed society he supports? This thesis will also examine the Assistant Secretary of

Defense for Public Affairs standing PA guidance for special mission units. Is it still

relevant and adequate in today's world of global real-time media and intelligence

coverage or does it need modification? Is a new PA annex or planning methodology

required to facilitate SMU-media interaction? What impact does Presidential Decision

Directive (PDD) 68, have on the SOF PAO and how does he use it to his advantage?

Importance

Admittedly, there has been very little discussion on the above topics prior to 11

September 2001 because there may be very little concern within the PA or larger military

profession about SMU media coverage. However, post 11 September 2001 has shown

there is National Command Authority's concern for popular support of the war effort

from the American people. This previous lack of professional concern is commensurate

with the lack of involvement with SOF or SMU units. Meaning, most PAOs have never

and will never interact with a special mission unit. However, as stated above, all SMU

operations are strategically important and come with the appropriate level of military and political interest and oversight. At a minimum, senior-level PAOs should be aware of the special challenges these units create when operating within their area of responsibility. Furthermore, PAOs should have a starting point or reference to call upon if a unit's success or failure becomes public knowledge. Given the high probability of immediate negative military and political consequences of an unprepared PAO or commander in today's real-time global information environment a well-coordinated and thoroughly understood PA plan is critical.

Limitations

The principal problem in researching this topic is the culture itself. Known as the "quiet professionals" special operators are very reluctant to talk about any future, on-going, or past missions. Very little open source information is available on successful special operations missions. There is a reluctance to talk to anyone for academic purposes. Special operations warriors believe any discussion with a student, writer, researcher, or nonspecial operator to be a violation of their essential elements of friendly information. If the warrior inadvertently discloses classified tactics, techniques, or procedures, he could be liable for nonjudicial punishment, or worse, he could endanger the lives of his fellow servicemembers and thereby break the trust his unit is built around. Another problem could be one of availability. Given the special operation community's heavy involvement in operation Enduring Freedom, the US military's response to the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, many of the subject matter experts are presently unavailable or too occupied for comments.

Solutions

To combat these anticipated problems the author will rely heavily on media accounts of the war in Afghanistan as it unfolds and look for possible SOF PA case studies with the intent of illustrating how the presence or absence of SOF PAO effected the PA message or end state. I will mine the captive audience of majors here at the Army's Command and General Staff College for SOF experience and design a questionnaire that will allow the respondents an opportunity to give their honest opinions without the fear of attribution or security violation. I will interview former and current members of these units to ascertain their level of PA planning and concern at the time. I will also solicit comments from national level journalists and senior level PAOs.

Key Terms

Clandestine Operation. An operation sponsored or conducted by government departments or agencies in such a way as to assure secrecy or concealment. A clandestine operation differs from a covert operation in that emphasis is placed on concealment of identity of the sponsor. In special operations an action can be both covert and clandestine and may focus equally on operational considerations and intelligence related activities (Joint Publication (JP) 1-02 1998, 79).

Consequence Management (CM). Those actions taken to manage the consequences of a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosion (CBRNE) (Field Manual 100-5-1 1997, 1-37).

Counterproliferation (CP). Military measures centering on deterring or discouraging, as well as defending against, the possible use of weapons of mass destruction (Field Manual 101-5-1 1997, 1-40).

Counterterrorism (CT). Offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism (JP 1-02 1998, 113).

Covert Operation. An operation so planned and executed as to conceal the identity of or permit plausible deniability by the sponsor (JP 1-02, 1998, 115).

Domestic Emergency Support Team (DEST). Same concept and function as the FEST but comprised of different organizations. In DEST situations the DOJ, FEMA, or DOE may be designated as the lead federal agency. DOD has representation on the team. At the time of this writing, it is unclear if the newly established Office of Homeland Defense will bring about any changes to this system (Federal Response Plan Basic Plan 1998, 23).

Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST). An interagency support team that deploys within four hours of notification to crisis situations anywhere there is a US Embassy. The team's mission is to provide an ambassador with single-source expertise and provide command and control. The team tailors its force to the type of crisis, that is, earthquake, terrorist attack, and others. But the lead federal agency is always the Department of State (DOS). The team is unclassified but the exact composition and capabilities of the team are classified. The DOD has representation on the team. The team's most recent public deployment was to Yemen after the terrorist attack on the USS *Cole* (State Department 2001).

Global Informational Environment (GIE). The GIE is defined as including "all individuals, organizations or systems, most of which are outside the control of the military or National Command Authorities, that collect, process and disseminate information to national and international audiences" (Field Manual 100-6 1996, 58).

Information Operations (IO). Those actions taken to affect an adversaries' information or information systems while protecting one's own. IO is made up of six pillars with two related pillars of CA and PA (JP 3-13 1998, vii).

International Public Information (IPI). A policy established in 1999 by President Clinton for the purpose of enhancing the ability of the US government to communicate to foreign audiences to mitigate crises around the world (PDD 68 1999, 1).

Lead Federal Agency (LFA). The LFA refers to what agency has primary responsibility of command during a crisis situation. In all foreign situations, the LFA will be the Department of State (DOS) working through the affected embassy or embassies. In a domestic situation, either the Department of Justice (DOJ), sometimes delegated to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), will be the LFA (JP 1-02 1998, 258).

Post-Mission Information Operations (PMIO). Nondoctrinal phrase first termed by Lieutenant Colonel (retired) James Kelliher in 1994. As defined here PMIO is the systematic, proactive planning for the post-mission information campaign.

Presidential Directive Decision 68 (PDD 68). The document that lays out international public information (see IPI) (PDD 68 1999, 1).

Special Mission Unit (SMU). A generic term to represent a group of operations and support personnel from designated organizations that is task organized to perform highly classified activities (JP 1-02, 1998, 416).

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In arms control usage, weapons that are capable of a high order of destruction and or of being used in such a manner as to destroy large numbers of people. Can be nuclear, biological, and radiological weapons, but

excludes the means of transporting or propelling the weapon where such means is a separable and divisible part of the weapon (JP 1-02. 1998, 487). (Note: this definition does not include conventional high-yield explosion.)

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

> Public affairs must be integrated with other battlefield functions to achieve the desired effect of an accurate, balanced, credible presentation of information that leads to confidence in the force and the operation.
>
> FM 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations*

As alluded to earlier in this study there is a dearth of in-depth discussion on the specific and narrow topic of special mission units and their relationship with media. Military-to-media relations, in general, have been written about in military and media journals, paper, and books, like *America's Team the Odd Couple,* and openly debated in forums, such as the *Contingency Conference,* for decades. The study and the conflict go as far back as American history itself. The tension is easy to understand but difficult to relieve. The media have always been driven by a need to report current events as fast as possible, limited only by the technology of the time. This requirement becomes especially true in today's real-time, global competition environment. Headlines and sound bites translate to ratings, ratings to advertising dollars, and advertising dollars to power. The media will always be intensely interested in US military conflicts because of its obvious national interest but also because conflicts fit the CNN maxim "If it Bleeds it Leads." Conversely, the DOD, unconcerned with ratings, money, or power (power as defined by market place economics) is prone to hold information until it has been evaluated for both its operational and potential intelligence purposes. This process can take days, weeks, or in the case of special operations units, years. Both sides acknowledge that the professional low point of their tenuous relationship was during the

Vietnam War. As a direct result of this adversarial relationship, the US government and the military was forced to realize that successful conduct of war depends upon the public's support that can be shaped in large measure by media reporting. In recognition of that fact the military, over time, has worked hard to forge a working, if not friendly, relationship with the media.

This chapter will explore four distinct areas of study that have direct or indirect impact on the primary and secondary questions of this thesis. The first segment will be a historical review of the doctrinal literature concerning the evolution of PA doctrine as it applies to media facilitation, security review, and censorship. This literature review is essential because it illustrates the conceptual progression the US military has made towards acceptance of the media on the battlefield. It unmistakably illustrates the importance military planners have always placed on protecting information and shows the limited discussion, direction, guidance, or doctrine on special operations' interaction with the media. However, this literature is essential in determining the primary question of: How does a PAO achieve the required balance between the clear and dominant need for operational security, before, during, and after an operation while maintaining the PA imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay?"

The second section will consist of a current force structure and manning levels of PA within SOF and will provide the proper knowledge base to discuss some of the supporting questions like: Is the current PA force structure within US SOC sufficient to support the needs of the community? What, if any, unique skills or background should the SOF PAO possess. How does the PAO span the chasm that exists between him and the rest of the often-closed society he supports? The examination will compare and

contrast those force levels against PSYOP force levels and skill sets. This is an important

comparison because as stated previously some SOF units only receive PA guidance

through an IO cell which has a higher chance of PSYOP representation than PA.

The third segment will examine the concept of "Just War." This quick study is an

important component of the overall thesis because it goes to the heart of secrecy verses

openness. The public can only determine if the cause is just if it is fully informed. That

is the primary role and responsibility of the PAO. However, within the SOF community

the PAO must be extremely cautious when releasing information.

The fourth segment will consider the current status of PA crisis planning. Crisis

Planning may be useful in determining the supporting question of: Is a new PA annex or

planning methodology required to facilitate SMU-media interaction?

The fifth and final section will look at the Federal Emergency Response Plan as it

stood prior to 11 September 2001. This review will show where the link is between the

special operations and the conventional or consequence management forces. The review

will also show the relationship of the DOD with the LFA and the numerous other

governmental safety and security organizations. This review may also be helpful in

determining the question: What is the relationship between SMU and consequence

management units? And how does the PAO span the chasm that exists between him and

the rest of the often-closed society he supports?

<u>Section I: Historical Review</u>

The Section I review is organized into four broad subsections. The first and

largest section is a review of PA and IO doctrinal manuals and research papers beginning

with the 1928 *Staff Officers' Field Manual* and concludes with the current FM 46-1, *PA Operations,* as well as Army and joint IO manuals.

Section II will review Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs standing guidance for special mission units and DOD Directive 5122.5, *DOD PA Policy.*

Section III will discuss special operations tasks and missions.

Section IV, final section, will review associated books and articles on the history and current status of military--media relations.

Doctrinal Manuals

Major Carl E. Fisher's 1997 monograph, "Public Affairs in the 21st Century: A Force XXI Multiplier" gives a succinct overview of the doctrinal changes and steps taken by the DOD to accommodate the media. He writes, "In the 25 June 1928 edition of Field Manual 101-5, *Staff Officers' Field Manual: Chapter 1, Staff Principals and Functions*, the G-2 (G-2 is the intelligence section of a staff) was given the staff responsibility for media access and censorship." He continues, "The G-2 was to prepare, 'rules for the regulation of the activities of . . . press correspondence . . . who may be attached to the unit,' as well as to, 'prepare the rules and controls' of the 'censorship program'" (Fisher 1997, 43).

Although foreign to current media engagement philosophy, it is easy to understand the importance of field censorship when seen in historical perspective. During World War I the penalty for publishing any news story in America that could be broadly defined as assisting the enemy or interfering with the military was twenty years in federal prison (Neuman 1996, 82). The maximum penalty for publishing pictures from the front was death (Neuman 1996, 82). In recognition of the necessity to keep the public

informed, FM 101-5 was updated in 1940 to include a "public information function" to "generate and provide information to the public about the Army" (Fisher 1997, 43). In 1943, President Roosevelt, reacting to a protest from *Life* magazine, authorized the publication of war photographs. He issued the order instructing army photographers "that the public be shown the grimness and hardness of war." The order was given because Roosevelt thought photographs of wounded soldiers might help the War Bond and blood drive efforts (Neuman 1995, 84). *Life* magazine knew the pictures would increase circulation.

Revised again in 1950, a new staff position of "chief of information" was added to division level and above (Fisher 1997, 43). Stated duties included providing advice to the commander on all public information issues and public opinion along with coordinating all internal information (Fisher 1997, 44). Subsequent revisions were published in 1954 and 1970. The 1954 revision renamed the chief of information the "public information officer" and expanded his duties to include "security review, public relations, and earning public support and understanding" (Fisher 1997, 44). The 1970 edition of FM 100-5*, Operations,* renames the position, this time to "information officer." This edition expanded the officers' duties in the areas of community relations and media escort but it still included "field press censors and conducting security reviews" (Fisher 1997, 43). Censorship was still being employed by the PAO primarily because of the common belief that photographs, such as the 1968 picture of Nguyen Ngoc Loan, Chief of South Viet Nam's National Police, executing a captured Viet Cong soldier, were having a negative effect on the war effort. In a 1984 manual modification, the current identification of the PAO is used for the first time. In this edition, the PAO seems to

receive conflicting guidance on the subject of censorship. His duties are described as

follows:

- Ensuring information for public dissemination is reviewed for compliance with security and policy requirements
- Serving in an advisory capacity to the media and the field press censors for their mutual benefit if field press censorship is imposed (FM 101-5 1996, 3-30)

The last bullet serves as a "just in case" clause because the DOD had eliminated field press censorship units in 1976 (Fisher 1997, 45).

The emergence of the national media pool also took place in 1984. The pool was

a formal compromise between the national media and the military after Operation Urgent

Fury, the 1983 invasion of Grenada. During and after Operation Urgent Fury the media

complained they were denied access to the tiny island and were, therefore, unable to

accurately report the war. The exclusion of the media in the initial stages of the conflict

may have had more to do with the military mind-set and planning priorities than an overt

decision to ban media from the island. It is interesting to note that the invasion was

largely a joint special operations task force mission, which included the deployment of

rangers, SEALS, and Air Force and Army special aviation units. After Grenada, the pool

was designed to allow for the introduction of media into the initial stages of a conflict. In

terms of censorship and security, it was a bold move on the part of DOD because as part

of the agreement selected national level journalists were informed of impending

operations prior to their execution. The reporters, who comprise the pool, are sworn to

secrecy, and in return for their access to the battle, they were and still are prohibited from

filing a report prior to an agreed upon time.

The 1997 version of FM 101-5, *Staff Organization and Operations,* continues to

redefine the PAO role and responsibilities. Now, instead of stressing censorship, the

PAO is expected to facilitate media requests for information and access. He also is

tasked with training the command on how not to release negative or detrimental

information. Stated duties include:

- Facilitate media efforts to cover operations by expediting the flow of complete, accurate, and timely information.
- Develops, disseminates, educates, and trains the command on policies and procedures for protecting against the release of information detrimental to the mission, national security, and personal privacy. (FM 101-5, *Staff Organization and Operations* 1997, 4-31)

Both of these tasks are conceptually different from previous tasks because they are

proactive tasks rather than reactive tasks. Before the PAO could censor a product after

the fact, but these tasks imply the PAO must recognize the informational dangers and act

before they occur.

The PA evolution continued as written in the 1997 version of FM 46-1, *Public*

Affairs Operations. The manual delineates the army's constitutional obligation to keep

the public informed of its operations.

> The requirement for the Army to conduct Public Affairs derives from Title 10, US Code that states that the Secretary of the Army is responsible for public affairs and will establish the Office of Public Affairs. Implicit in a government of the people, by the people and for the people are the concepts that the people have a right to know about the activities of the government, and the government has an obligation to inform the people about its activities. These principles also apply to information about the activities of the military, which is established in the Constitution of the United States to "provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States." (FM 46-1 1997, 7)

However, doctrine writers still recognize the need for some level of security when

informing the public and direct the PAO as follows:

> The process of informing (the public) requires a clear-cut understanding of how information must be protected. Information as a resource is inexhaustible. Both sides can benefit from information and use information simultaneously against each other. Pieces of the right information can have a dramatic impact on the

outcome of an operation. PAO's will continue to protect vital information by practicing "security at the source" and following established operational security measures. In addition to protecting "raw" and completed information products, PAO's must also take the necessary steps to protect information networks. (FM 46-1 1997, 24)

It is the last sentence of the above paragraph that the PAO gets his first glimpse into the evolving doctrine of IO.

In Annex B of FM 46-1, The Guidelines for Coverage of DOD Combat Operations, one of the only references to special operations can be found. "Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special operations restriction may limit access in some cases" (FM 46-1 1997, 63).

FM 46-1 took another step forward and informs commanders at every level of their PA duties and responsibilities but again reminded them of security concerns.

Commanders must provide media access to the force, keeping in mind the impact their technology will have on operational security. They must identify and provide support and resources to assist the media in their mission. Commanders must protect vital information by practicing "security at the source" and following established security guidelines. (FM 46-1 1997, 12)

The doctrine also introduces two new PA concepts, global informational environment (GIE) and military information environment (MIE). GIE is defined as, including "all individuals, organizations or systems, most of which are outside the control of the military or National Command Authorities, that collect, process and disseminate information to national and international audiences" (FM 100-6 1998, Chapter 1). MIE is defined as the "environment contained within the GIE, consisting of information systems and organizations, friendly and adversary, military and non-military, that support, enable significantly influence a specific military operation" (FM 100-6 1998, 17). These new concepts seem to be an acknowledgement by the Army that regardless of its best past

efforts in "censorship" or "security review" or "security at the source" valuable information is at risk of unintended compromise and dissemination.

Because of this new environment and the potential for positive and negative outcomes of emerging information technology, the Army, along with the entire DOD, has developed a new doctrine called IO. IO is defined as "those actions taken to affect an adversaries' information or information systems while protecting your own" (JP 3-13 1998, vii).

JP 3-13, *Joint Doctrine for Information Operations*, was published in 1998 and while not placing PA as a capability of IO it does include PA activities as a "related activity." IO in JP 3-13 is defined in two categories: offensive and defensive. Offensive IO is comprised of military deception, (MILDEC) PSYOP, electronic warfare (EW), physical attack, and computer network attack (CNA). Defensive IO includes operational security (OPSEC), physical force protection (FP), counterdeception, counterpropaganda, counterintelligence (CI), and EW (JP 3-13 1998, I-10). Along with PA, CA, and the Judge Advocate General play supporting roles. What causes concern and conflict for the PA practitioner is the relationship of PA to MILDEC and PSYOP. Traditional practice has always kept these disciplines separated by mission. The PAO's traditional role has been to inform the US and international audiences of important factual information in a balanced and timely manner while PSYOP target the adversarial audience, and MILDEC deceives all audiences. JP 3-13 blurred these traditional roles and assigned PA the following task. "Through the public media, allow a Joint Force Commander to inform an adversary or potential adversary about the friendly force's intent and capability" (JP 3-13 1998, II-6). IO doctrine expounds on the concept of "perception management," a rather

ominous sounding term that once again seems to conflict with the PA principals of

facilitating "open and independent reporting" along with "Maximum Disclosure,

Minimum Delay." Generals David Grange and Thomas Kelley in *Military Review,*

"Information Operations for the Ground Commander," 1997, wrote: "The combined

offensive and defensive elements of an information campaign, in conjunction with

advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, gives the commander tools for

genuine perception management" (Grange and Kelley 1997, 5-12). When their article is

combined with FM 46-1 guidance "Commanders need to understand that the perception

of America's Army and how it conducts its operations can be as important to the Army's

success as actual combat" (FM 46-1 1997, 12). The guidance provided in the *Vision*

2000, Public Affairs into the 21st Century states, "All leaders must understand that the

perception of an operation can be as important to success as the execution of the

operation." FM 100-6, *Information Operations,* defines perception management as

having specific designs to "influence the emotions, motives, and objective reasoning . . .

ultimately resulting in foreign behaviors and official actions favorable to the originators

objective" (FM 100-6 1996**,** 8).

Two themes have advanced through the changing doctrine. First, in an

evolutionary process, the military is now directed at the highest levels to accommodate

the media's request for information and access, within operational security and force

protection concerns. In 1996, US Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis J. Reimer, wrote:

"Every senior leader must personally set the example by taking a proactive rather than

reactive approach to dealing with the media" (FM 46-1 1997, 6).

Second, the military, now more than ever, clearly sees the linkage between a

successful military campaign and the public support. FM 100-5, *Operations,* cautions

commanders and planners, "Dramatic visual presentations can rapidly influence public

and political opinion, so that the political underpinnings of war and operations other than

war suddenly change with no prior indication to the commander in the field" (FM 46-1

1997, 21). FM 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations,* amplifies this theme.

> A commander needs to know how the American people and their civilian leaders perceive the situation and the use of military power. He needs to understand the perceptions held by international audiences, both those traditionally allied with the US and those traditionally considered adversaries. Assessment of public opinion must not only evaluate the perceptions held, but also the relative solidity or strength of those attitudes. (FM 46-1 1997, 21)

FM 46-1 also states: "Public affairs personnel must use their professional knowledge,

skills and judgment in adapting the principles in this manual to their specific situations"

(FM 46-1 1997, 22).

AOSD-PA

DOD Directive 5122.5 OASD-PA Policy directs, "to make available timely and

accurate information so that the public, Congress, and the news media may assess and

understand the facts about national security and defense strategy." This policy has is

divided into five principals, one of which reads: "Information should be withheld only

when disclosure would endanger national security or threaten the security or privacy of

DOD personnel."

In 1998 OASD-PA published *Special Mission Unit Public Affairs Guidance*

(*SMU PAG*). The guidance became necessary when Mr. Walter Slocombe,

Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, told *Jane's Defense* journalist, Barbara Starr in a

published interview: "We have designated Special Mission Units (SMU) that are specifically manned, equipped and trained to deal with a wide variety of transnational threats" (Starr 1998). *SMU PAG* is the seminal document for special operations PA planners. It establishes for the PAO very clear boundaries on what can and cannot be released concerning SMU. These boundaries in essence become the essential elements of friendly information. During the interview Mr. Slocombe went on to say that each of the services has a special mission unit that is tasked with conducting counterterrorism and counterproliferation missions and identified those units as being assigned to the United States Special Operations Command, headquartered in MacDill, Air Force Base, Florida. The undersecretary informed the journalist it was DOD policy not to discuss these units. That general guidance was expanded and formalized by OASD-PA to include no release of information concerning past, present, or planned operations. It further forbids the release of any photographs, videos, or audiotapes of any SMU personality or mission (*SMU PAG*, 1999). This guidance has gone unchanged since its original release. Presidential Directive 68, *International Public Information*, was a consequence of a lack of coordination, in terms of perception management and message control, by the US government during the bombing campaign in Kosovo. The Serbian regime, headed by President Slobodan Milosevic, proved to be more adept at rallying international public support for his cause than the United States. Milosevic, unfettered by constitutional constraints or moral obligation of truth telling was able to control and manipulate his message to the international media. The Clinton administration recognized the sometimes seemingly disjointed, or worse, counterproductive messages emanating from the various governmental departments and established the International Public

Information Working Group (IPI WG) with the mission of "coordinating an interagency message targeted for foreign audience" (PDD 68 1998, 2). The DOD was included in the IPI WG and a PAO from the OASD-PA was designated as the representatives to ensure DOD messages reflected or were supportive of the larger IPI message. The inclusion of DOD in the IPI WG, seemingly an inconsequential tasking, may prove more significant as this thesis becomes more developed.

In addition to the IPI WG, the Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST) was another initiative established during the Clinton administration. The team was created in 1994 to provide an expert-led, fully coordinated response to international terrorist incidents. The FEST is a tailored interagency response group headed by DOS Counter-Terrorism (DOS/CT) section who deploy on short notice anywhere in the world in response to or in anticipation of a terrorist incident (Powell 2001). This small group of interagency experts includes a DOD element whose mission is to coordinate any aspect of a DOD response through the US ambassador and the regional commander-in-chief.

Report of the Accountability Review Boards, bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzani, on 7 August 1998 reads: "Post Public Affairs Officer (PAO), Dudley Sims, quickly established contact with the Department of State's Operations Center to coordinate public affairs strategy" (1999). However, the finding continued: "So heavy were the demands from the press that the post suggested including a PA specialist on future FEST teams to help with this important element of crisis management (Report 1999).

SOF Tasks and Missions

A review of Special Operations doctrine reveals that no dialogue is given to the interaction of media and special operations units. The role of the PAO is neither identified nor is media discussed as an environmental feature or condition of any aspect of special operations. However, much is written on the employment and missions of a Joint Psychological Operations Task Force (JPOTF). Again, this is interesting in that it exposes the culture of SOF. Organizationally, they are not accustomed to working in the open and public arena with PA and are more comfortable with the quasi-secretive nature and function of PSYOP.

As their name boldly declares, Special Operation Forces (SOF) are special. They have special missions and are comprised of special individuals, all of whom possess special talents and capabilities. As stated in United States Special Operations *Command SOF Reference Manual*, characteristics of the SOF are: "Special Operational Forces are unique because they provide the National Command Authority (NCA) a broad range of capabilities" (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 14).

The demands of SOF require forces with attributes that distinguish them from conventional forces: One such capability that directly impacts on the SOF PAO is: "SOF operations are frequently clandestine in nature to ensure mission success" (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 14).

USSOCOM has nine missions and seven collateral functions (*SOF Reference Manual 1998,* 15). A quick study of some selected missions and it becomes intuitively obvious to the casual observer why SOF does not routinely associate with the media and by extension PA.

Selected SOF Missions

1. Combating Terrorism (CBT). CBT is a highly specialized, resource-intensive mission. Certain SOF units maintain a high state of readiness to conduct CBT operations and possess full range of CBT capabilities. CBT activities include: anti-terrorism (AT), counterterrorism (CT), recovery of hostages or sensitive material from terrorist organizations, attack of terrorist infrastructure, and reduction of vulnerability to terrorism (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 15).

2. Unconventional Warfare (UW). UW includes guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, evasion and escape, and other activities of a low visibility, covert, or clandestine nature. When UW is conducted independently during conflict or war, its primary focus is on political and psychological objectives. When UW operations support conventional military operations, the focus shifts to primarily military objectives (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 15).

3. Information Operations (IO). IO refers to actions taken to affect adversary information and information systems while defending one's own information and information systems. The following activities support the IO mission: direct action (DA), special reconnaissance (SR), PSYOP, and CA. Notice that SOF doctrine differs from JP in that it makes no reference of PA as a contributor of IO (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 17).

4. Counterproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (CP). CP refers to the actions taken to seize, destroy, render safe, capture, or recover weapons of mass destruction (WMD). SOF provide unique capabilities to monitor and support compliance with arms control treaties. If directed, SOF can conduct or support SR and DA missions

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to locate and interdict sea, land, and air shipments of dangerous materials or weapons.

SOF are tasked with organizing, training, equipping, and otherwise preparing to conduct

operations in support of US Government counterproliferation objectives (*SOF Reference*

Manual 1998, 17).

SOF Collateral Activity

Special Activities: Special activities consist of the planning and execution of

actions abroad in support of national foreign policy objectives so that the role of the US

government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly. These activities are subject to

limitations imposed by executive order and in conjunction with a presidential finding and

congressional oversight (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 18).

SOF force structure is important to study because it is designed to provide special

operations forces to the National Command Authorities (NCA), regional combatant

commanders (CINC), and American ambassadors and their country teams for successful

conduct of special operations during both peace and war. Special Operations Commands

(SOC) were established as subunified commands to provide the NCA, CINCs, and

ambassadors sources of expertise in all areas of special operations, with a separate

element to plan and control the employment of joint SOF in military operations. SOCs

provide the nucleus for the establishment of a joint special operations task force (JSOTF),

when a joint task force is formed. There are six SOCs supporting the geographic

commanders (see below). The referenced expertise does not extend to PA as none of

SOCs have permanently assigned PAOs.

> Special Operations Command Joint Forces Command (SOCJFCOM)
> Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT)
> Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR)

Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC)
Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR)
Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH)
(*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 20)

Civilian Viewpoints of Military Media Relations

The Sidle Commission named for its chairman US Army Major General (R) Winnat Sidle was formed as a response to the complaints lodged by the news media about being denied access to the island of Grenada during the first two days of the invasion. The commission recommended the establishments of 'media pools' formed from the 26 major news organizations that had offices in the Pentagon (Aukofer and Lawrence 1995, 18). The original concept of the pool was that the press would travel together and then as soon as it was safe DOD would grant them freedom of movement. The arrangement was meant to be temporary (Aukofer and Lawrence 1995, 19).

In 1985, the trustees of the twentieth century task force sanctioned the establishment of an independent body to study the military to media relationship. They viewed relations as "becoming so strained as to restrict the flow of information to the American public during military engagements" (Braestrup 1985, v). The panel was comprised of retired flag officers and heads of major media companies. The panel felt the Sidle Panel had dealt exclusively with the logistics of the military to media relationship, and the task force sought solutions on the root causes of the professional friction. Though now somewhat dated and commonplace, the panel's findings are relevant because they continue the now familiar themes: security is essential and public opinion is paramount.

1. The security of tactical operations is a legitimate concern, and one that must not be dismissed by journalist. To preserve the security of the US military operations, the Task Force favors the use of clearly stated guidelines or "ground rules" (Braestrup 1985, 8).

2. A PA Annex must be considered a routine feature in all US military operations and plans (Braestrup 1985, 7).

3. Public support for a "secret" US military operation or inadequately reported ones will not long endure (Braestrup 1985, 7).

The Task Force's findings were also significant because they legitimized many of the military's concerns about open reporting during military engagements.

In her 1995 book, *Lights, Camera, War,* Johanna Neuman reports many US journalists feared that the DOD was taking lessons from the British government who openly censored the media's reporting of the 1982 Falkland Island campaign. When the British warship *HMS Sheffield* was struck by an Argentine Exocet missile a British radio broadcaster who called it a "setback," noting, "other survivors came off unhurt but badly shaken after hearing the cries of the men trapped below" was blocked from broadcasting by the British government. Another report filed by the BBC describing the same battle, this one broadcasted, called it "a day of extraordinary heroism" (Nueman 1995, 204). Defense chief of staff Terence Lewin defended his actions, "as the price of victory" (Nueman 1995, 204). He went on: "I don't see it as deceiving the press or the public, I see it as deceiving the enemy." He continued: "What I am trying to do is to win. I should have thought that was what the government and the public and the media wanted too" (Neuman 1995, 205).

As incongruent as it seems there does appear to be some small amount of evidence that some of the most experienced US journalists, while not endorsing outright censorship understand the need for operational security and even expect it.

Barrie Dunsmore, a reporter for more than 30 years, explored this very subject while a fellow at the Shorenstien Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. He interviewed many-respected journalists and military leaders about their views on reporting live and its potential impact on military security for his article "The Next War: Live?" Surprisingly, most of the journalists expressed the same concerns about the reporting as would be expected of the military professionals. National Broadcasting Company's (NBC) longtime anchor Tom Brokaw said, "God, the last thing I want on my personal conscious or professional resume is that he caused the death of one, say nothing of 100, 1,000 or 2,000 American lives because in his zeal to get on air, he spilled secrets" (Dunsmore 1996, 2). American Broadcast Company's (ABC) Nightline host, Ted Koppel, echoed those sentiments: "When you have a declared war, . . . you simply cannot have that coexisting with an unedited rendition of what is going on in the battlefield. There just has to be some application of common sense" (Dunsmore 1996, 3). Pete Williams, from NBC argued, "I just think it is hard to articulate a sound national reason that will get applause outside the National Press Club for live coverage of the battlefield" (Dunsmore 1996, 13). Bernard Shaw, one of the few reporters to report live from Baghdad during the Gulf War actually cautions against live reporting. He viewed it as a fear factor, he says a reporter's senses are too consumed to report objectively because he only knows what is going on around him and does not have a sense of the larger picture (Dunsmore 1996, 13).

Even the venerable Walter Cronkite, known as "the most trusted voice in America," had this exchange with Larry King on the Cable News Network on 4 November 2001.

> KING: Walter, you have been a strong opponent all your broadcast life of censorship. Is some censorship necessary now?
> CRONKITE: Yes. Very definitely, Larry. The censorship is necessary in covering the military. We should definitely be permitted to cover the military, with even the smallest of units. They can still take care of a reporter and a cameraman, maybe more depending on the size of the unit. But of course, anything that they report, anything they write, anything they put in their cameras in the way of tape, has got to be held for military censorship.
> The importance of their being there is that American people have the right to know--they have the duty to know--what their boys and girls are doing in their name, and it must be recorded. It can't be put out immediately without military surveillance, military censorship. But if they are there, they could get that story out eventually. A day later, two days later, a week later, a month later. Even if it's a year later, history will be preserved and we will know how we conducted the war, and with what efficiency we did it. We will know who our heroes were, as well as perhaps those who did not do so well. (King 2001)

With his answer Mr. Cronkite not only endorses military censorship, but may be making a reference to media coverage of SOFs.

Since the 11 September 2001, terrorist attacks there have been other cases of the media conducting self imposed censorship. In an article dated 11October 2001 entitled *Reporters Without Borders*? Columnist Brent Bozell reports:

> The war on the terrorists in Afghanistan has begun, and so have the first examples of a journalistic neutrality fetish. But those occasional outbursts are easy to find. Less obvious, almost to the point of obscurity, are the examples of the media going out of their way to do things right. Seventeen news organizations knew of Sunday's first Afghanistan air attacks on Friday, when their staffers were called to join the military media pool, but none divulged the secret. When pressed, bureau chiefs naturally said they'd like greater access to the troops, but still the silence held. With lives on the line, everyone clammed up. If that is good, then the gold medal for putting country above competition has to go to the Knight-Ridder news organization. More than a week before *USA Today* ran a front-page story about how the US had Green Beret and Navy SEAL commandos inside Afghanistan, Knight-Ridder had the story, but out of concern for endangering the servicemen

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and the operation, Knight-Ridder Washington Bureau Chief Clark Hoyt withheld the story at the Pentagon's request. "Based on what we knew," he says, "we believed that making it public could have substantially increased the risk to the Americans involved and could even have been seen as contributing to a loss of life. (Bozell 2001)

As written in the first sentence of this chapter hardly any mention has been given to special operation forces and media interaction by either the military or the media. There are, however, as shown, many books, manuals, and articles that discuss the larger military to media relationship. While not ideal, this body of work is helpful in answering the primary question. The historical significance the US military has placed on OPSEC as the paramount concern when interacting with the media. Because of SOF's unique roles and missions it is effortless to understand why they have been permitted to interpret the DOD policy of media engagement as non-applicable to them.

The literature review also found areas such as the SOCs and the FEST where the DOD in general and SOF specifically could further PA efforts to ensure greater representation, coordination and a protection of equities.

The review suggests that where secrecy is concerned and US lives are at stake the US media may be more trustworthy than many in the military had previously thought. However, does this trustworthiness ascend to the same level of trust special operators place in each other everyday?

Indeed, the primary question still holds. In the face of the ever-present media and advanced technology in terms of speed and viewing can SOF establish a more sophisticated media engagement policy? Or because of the media's apparent understanding of the need for OPSEC does SOF need a new strategy. The succeeding chapters will explore the question in greater depth and propose an answer.

SECTION II: Just War

The examination of "Just War" is an important component of this study because it goes straight to the heart of the OPSEC verses openness issue. Historically, Americans have shown they will support the government's war effort if they believe the cause of the war to be just. No clearer example of this can be found than the overwhelming public support for both the president and the military post 11 September 2001. Gallop Polls show public support for President Bush and his war on terrorism continuing to run in the mid-1980s a full six months after 11 September 2001 (Gallup 2001). Efforts have been made in the past to seek public support for military campaigns.

The code name for 1989 invasion of Panama was changed from Blue Spoon to Just Cause in part to garner more public support. General Lindsey, Commander-in-Chief, Special Operations Command, thought the name Blue Spoon was meaningless. He did not want his men associated with it so he asked the J-5, General Thomas Kelly, for a change. General Kelly and his deputy for current operations Joe Lopez thought up the more suitable name and promptly made the change (Woodward 1991, 173).

The difficulty with SOF CT and CP missions is that they will most likely be carried out in secret without any public notice or possibility of public discussion for or against the action prior to and often after mission completion. The highest probability of a clandestine-SOF mission becoming public is a failed mission. This unexpected failure carries with it the potential loss of the public's confidence, trust, and will. The discussion can be summed up with the question: Did the US military leave Somalia in 1993 because eighteen soldiers were killed, or did it leave because no one had told the American public there was a potential for eighteen soldiers to die in battle?

Throughout history, the law focused on two primary issues related to war. The first is under what circumstances are the uses of military power morally justified or the concept of 'going to war.' This is known as Jus ad Bellum. The second concept is, what moral restraints apply to the conduct of war or "fighting in war." This concept is known as Jus in Bello (*Case Studies in the Law of War* 2001, L1-A-3). Both of these concepts can impact planning efforts by the SOF PAO.

Jus ad Bellum, the principle of under what circumstances the US can use its military power during war is important because the US, a democratic nation, embraces many diverse and often polarized constituencies, voters, organizations, and special interest groups. These factions, facilitated by the media, will normally hold public debate aimed at influencing the opposing side to change their views. Elected representatives and unofficial leaders use this debate as a measure of interest or support for a cause. The president will usually, but not always, only deploy troops after he builds a consensus of support or there is little political or public opposition. The president by virtue of position posses the power and responsibility of legitimate authority. Only a head-of-state or constitutionally designated authority can declare a just war (*Case Studies in the Law of War* 2001, L1-A-7). The State has a responsibility to its citizens to clearly articulate the reasons for war and the requirements necessary for the restoration of peace. The military by Constitutional design answers to Congress. Congress ultimately answers to the American people. If the people are denied their voice, even though there are valid security or secrecy concerns, they may become agitated and disenfranchised if the mission becomes public. A failed mission (Desert One) or the perception of a failed mission (Mogadishu 1993) will become public, if for no other reason then the adversary

will ensure that it does. As the current war on terrorism takes on a domestic front this concept will only become more amplified.

Jus in Bello, the concept of what moral restraints apply to the conduct of waging war is an equally important concept for the SOF PAO to understand. Americans as a society love victory, they cherish triumph and success. Nowhere is this more clearly amplified then on the battlefield. World Wars I and II and more recently Desert Storm, all clear US victories, gave the nation a celebratory cause. Victorious soldiers returned to hometown parades given in their honor. The Korean and Vietnam vets were not as fortunate as their wars were not perceived as overwhelming successes. Those wars were tainted with public doubt and debate fueled in some cases by graphic pictures, video or written accounts of war atrocities, such as the Mai Lai massacre. Americans have a right to demand its warriors wage wars in accordance with morally sound principles and legal regulations. American soldiers have a moral and legal obligation to follow those customs and laws. In essence this means to fight fair. The friction point is, given the secretive nature of many SOF missions, the public rarely is afforded the opportunity to hear or read official details of classified missions or debate them prior to deployment. This secrecy can lead to public distrust of SOF because the public may view them as unaccountable. Lecturing about the Iran-Contra scandal Eric Engberg, a CBS commentator said, "Secrecy leads to deception. . . . Deception leads to lies. Lies tear apart the rule of law" (Bozwell 2001b).

This lack of official openness may present a window of opportunity for any adversary conducting an anti-US smear or propaganda campaign. The public will listen to whoever is talking.

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The government (DOD is an arm of Federal Government) may lend credence to this mind-set when it declares lying to be officially sanctioned. In an argument before the Supreme Court, on 19 March 2002 the nation's Solicitor-General, Theodore Olson said: "Officials have the right to lie to American citizens" and "misleading statements are sometimes needed to protect foreign policy interests." He continued, "It's easy to imagine an infinite number of situations where the government might legitimately give out false information" (Hoagland 2002). With his closing remarks the Solicitor-General does seem to recognize that there may be negative consequences for the deceit but places security first. He concluded: "It's an unfortunate reality that the issuance of incomplete information and even misinformation by government may sometimes be perceived as necessary to protect vital interests" (Hoagland 2002). This logic and situational ethics could easily transfer to SOF and become abused if not properly guarded against by the professional SOF soldier. Although a subculture of American society, the military is tied to the larger community through a variety of informational "ropes" or linkages that include letters to mom and dad from service members and community debate about use of force. SOF is a subculture within a subculture with little linkage to the larger civilian community. Without those linkages acting as moral check, military necessity may assume primary importance (mission first) (Walker 2002).

The SOF PAO must understand these issues and educate his command to the potential of public backlash and work to find avenues where appropriate levels and amounts of information can be given to the American people. Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Jim Kelliher, a former PSYOP Battalion Commander and TF Ranger veteran along with Bob Jenks from 4th Psychological Operational Group began the thought

process based on the perception that US forces lost the battle of Mogadishu on 3 October

1993 and that neither SOF nor DOD was ready to take the necessary measures to counter

that perception. Kelliher wrote:

> What we did in 1994 (during a SOF exercise) was use the PSYOP Annex to give
> tasks/request actions as appropriate from PSYOP, PA and Public Diplomacy
> based on the possibilities we saw--mission success (maybe no response except for
> warning to other bad guys), mission success with large losses and mission failure
> with or with out catastrophic losses. We sat around working out what we should
> do if. . . . Together the two men coined the phrase Post Mission Information
> Operations and began a planning process or methodology that concerned possible
> negative scenarios with related consequences. Although Kelliher and Jenks are
> PSYOP trained officers their efforts were focused on an informational end state
> that included PA and tried to proactively determine what could be said when to
> whom. (2002)

Section III: Crisis Management

The study of PA planning methodology for special operations must also include

Crisis Management. A large percentage of any PAOs planning is reactive, more so the

SOF PA planner. Despite the best efforts of the most involved SOF PA plans officer to

stay engaged in mission planning, geographic separation over multiple time zones,

compartmentalized planning, and a limited number of SOF PAOs ensures that a crisis

requiring reactive planning can occur at anytime. The SOF PAO who has prepared for

the worst-case scenario prior to mission execution will save valuable time in the battle of

perception management. Additionally, the SOF PAO who can provide an off the shelf

PA plan to a CINC, Joint Special Operations Task Force Commander (JSOTF) or Joint

Task Force Commander (JTF) during a crisis will prove to be a valuable asset.

The first step in crisis management is defining what a crisis is and how it differs

from an issue. A crisis is an event that creates or threatens to create a firestorm of

harshly negative media coverage that could damage the reputation or future viability of

an organization. Desert One, the failed SOF American hostage rescue attempt in Iran, is a classic SOF example. An issue is an external or internal factor--usually lasting over a mid- to-long-range time frame--that can represent a serious obstacle to achieving an organization's objectives and cause damage to its reputation if not managed well. The Chief of Staff of the Army's decision for the Army to adopt the Rangers distinctive black beret is an example. Conversely, if managed well, many issues represent an opportunity to further an organization's mission and enhance its reputation. For the purposes of this study the focus will be crisis verses issue, specifically as it relates to SOF CT and CP missions. By virtue of these and other high-risk missions SOF potentially places itself at the epicenter of a crisis everyday.

Sam Donaldson, an American Broadcast Company commentator, once said, "In times of trouble, the media is a hungry bear. If you don't feed the bear, the bear will eat you" (Winslow 1998, 2). Major James E. Hutton, a military analyst at the Army Center for Lessons Learned (CALL), countered with: "PAOs must begin the planning process by understanding the possible situations that may be faced. . . . Fashion crises plans based on a list of possible crisis scenarios" (Hutton 2001, 2). For a SOF PAO that means trying to envision every possible event that could conceivably go wrong before, during, and after the execution of a mission. The PAO must prepare messages, themes, and statements for every contingency, such as a plane or helicopter crash, a large number of causalities, or a friendly fire incident. Major Hutton urges PAOs to: "Identify the possible internal and external agencies involved. The external list could include other governmental organizations, such as Federal agencies such as FEMA, FBI, EPA, or local or regional contacts from the police, hospitals, county officials, etc." For the SOF PAO

this list would also include any conventional forces operating in the area, like a consequence management unit, as well as foreign militaries or a host nation government.

Major Hutton's CALL article also correctly identifies the spokesperson issue. Who should it be? He asks if the spokesperson or commander is not available what are the organization options? Will the alternate be credible and convincing? Will they be well trained? Will they know the issues? Will they have the same investment in presenting the organizations themes and messages in a positive light? These questions are particularly germane for the SOF PAO because the SMU always relies on an alternate. They have no primary. As stated in the introduction, if an Army SMU conducts a mission in a CINC's theater and it becomes public it may be the CINC's PAO or OASD-PA that releases information or answers queries. It will not be a spokesperson or representative from the SMU. The unit will not put forward any subject matter expert to help explain or expand on any issue. Therefore, it becomes incumbent upon the designated SMU PA planner to prepare the crisis management plan and prepare the chosen spokesperson. Careful consideration must be given to who the spokesperson may be and the timing of any release. Host nation sensitivities and wishes must be taken into consideration. For reasons sometimes known only to the host nation they may not want to acknowledge an American presence in a particular action.

The next step in developing a crisis action plan is identifying the target audiences and stakeholders. This step is no different for the SOF PAO. He must consider the various audiences, allied and hostile, who may receive his message if the decision is made to make a public acknowledgment. This message will take careful crafting and

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should be done in concert with the CINC staff using the CINC's Theater Engagement plan as a starting point.

Another aspect of crisis management, as it relates to SOF, is the impact a failed mission can have on the nation's collective psyche. According to Dr. Frances Winslow terrorism impacts society differently from a disaster because it is man made and causes greater psychological damage than a natural act or an act of God (Winslow 1998, 7). To ease this collective psychological trauma the public's demand and expectation for information from responsible agencies in terms of, how did this happen and who is responsible far exceeds that of a natural disaster (Winslow 1998, 8). The SOF PA planner must be prepared to advise and assist the commander in answering the demand.

Section IV: *Federal Response Plan*

The final area of literature review is the *Federal Response Plan* (*FRP*) as it was written prior to 11 September 2001 and before the establishment of the Office of Homeland Security. The review focuses on those areas that impact SOF and by extension the SOF PAO. It is intended to highlight the interagency and intra-DOD coordination procedures for requesting SOF crisis response. The review points out the different procedures and command relationships for domestic and foreign CM and CR missions. The review is not intended as a historical review of the Constitution, Posses Comitatus, Presidential Directives, or all the laws, amendments, acts, or regulations governing DOD or SOF support to a lead federal agency (LFA).

The *FRP* establishes a process and structure for the systematic, coordinated, and effective delivery of Federal assistance to address the consequences of any major disaster

or emergency declared by the President of The United States (*FRP* 1999, 1). The FRP

has many functions but the two that can directly affect the SOF PA planner are:

1. The linkages to other Federal emergency operations plans developed for

specific incidents (*FRP* 1999, 1).

2. A focus for interagency and intergovernmental emergency preparedness,

planning, training, exercises, coordination, and information exchange (*FRP* 1999, 1).

The *FRP* addresses both natural and man-made disasters occurring on US soil or

overseas. It also addresses two distinct response options: consequence management and

crisis response. These options can be sequential or concurrent. In a domestic CM

scenario a State Governor must make a formal request of assistance to the President.

Simultaneously, the state's emergency management representative will make a formal

request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Once FEMA has

received and validated the request the request passes to the DOD Director of Military
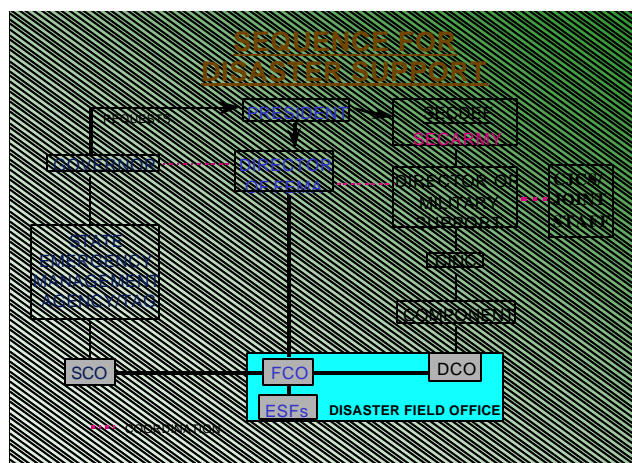
Support (DOMS) (*FRP* 1999, 15). See figure 1.

Figure 1. *Source:* FEMA Briefing.

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DOD duties and responsibilities under the *FRP* are relatively easy to understand and manage. The *FRP* is a concise but thorough document that clearly delineates the primary and supporting responsibilities for all government agencies in a crisis situation. The plan identifies twelve emergency support functions (ESF) ranging from transportation and firefighting, to Urban Search and Rescue to be conducted by twenty-nine government agencies. The only time that DOD is designated as the Lead Federal Agency is for ESF 3, Public Works and Engineering (*FRP* 1999, 14). DOD has then subidentified the Army Corps of Engineers as the responsible unit. In all other eleven ESF, the DOD has a supporting role.

Within DOD the responsibility for conducting domestic CM support falls to the US Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) and its standing Joint Task Force for Civil Support (JTF-CS). Once operationalized the JTF-CS commander will take operational control of all DOD assets in his area of responsibility and become the supported commander. This control does not extend to USSOCOM, its task organized JSOTF, or the Army Corps of Engineers. USSOCOM may be involved in a CR situation simultaneously with JTF-CS CM efforts. In that case USSOCOM is still in a supporting role to the LFA, the Department of Justice. See figure 2.
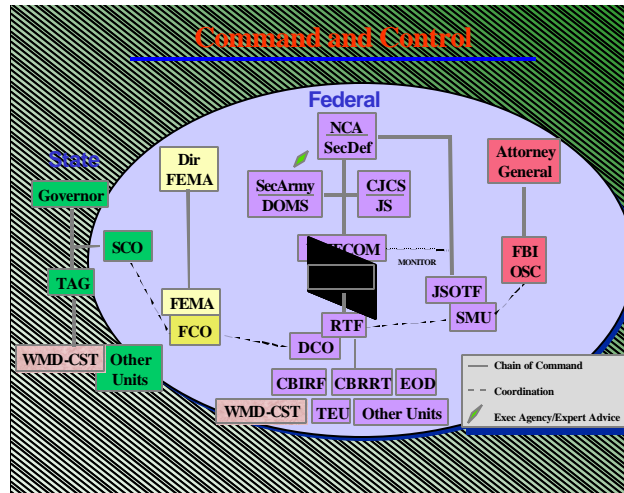
Figure 2. Note: USJFCOM does not exercise command and control over the JSOTF. *Source:* FEMA Briefing

In a domestic crisis response scenario the request pattern is similar but is routed through different controlling agencies. The request for assistance flows from the impacted State's Attorney General to the US Attorney General. Once the US Attorney General has conducted a legal review and determined the crisis overwhelms the state's resources and management abilities the request is sent to the DOD for review by the Joint Chief's of Staff. The request is then directed to the Assistant Secretary for Defense for Special Operations Low Intensity Conflict (ASD-SOLIC) for review. Finally, if all the criteria have been meet, the request will be given to USSOCOM for action. This seemingly cumbersome process can be initiated telephonically and can be accomplished in under one hour (*FRP* 1999, 18).

To speed this process along and ensure smooth integration of CR and CM planning, the interagencies operate a Domestic Emergency Support Team (DEST) (*FRP* 1999, 21). The DOD maintains a six-person element on the DEST to advise and assist

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civilian planners with DOD capabilities. The expert advice may extent to providing

WMD, terrorist or threat advisories, and planning for follow-on assets and capabilities,

(*FRP* 1999, 22). The FRP Base Plan has a detailed PA Annex that names FEMA as the

responsible agent for interagency PA. "FEMA is responsible for implementing Federal

PA activities after a major disaster or emergency. FEMA will develop strategic plans and

policies, provide liaison with the directors of PA for other Federal agencies and the White

House press office, and determine the need for a Joint Information Center (JIC) (FRP

1999, 31).

As written on pages 34 and 35 of this document of a similar interagency

organization called the Foreign Emergency Support Team is headed by the Department of

State. The FEST is also supported by a DOD element. On both the FEST and DEST the

existence of the DOD element is unclassified but the exact makeup is classified.

<div align="center">Section V: SOF PA Force Structure</div>

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader an understanding of the size

and limitations of the SOF PA force structure. Secondly, for the purposes of scope this

section will only outline SOF PA force within Joint and Army specific units.

USSOCOM is the congressionally mandated, unified command responsible for all DOD

special operations forces--Army, Navy, and Air Force totaling over 46,000 personnel

(USASOC, 2002). USSOCOM has only two Army PA officers assigned. An Army

colonel as the senior PAO an Army lieutenant colonel planner and an Army sergeant

major. It has two major Army and Joint components, the US Army Special Operations

Command, with 25,900 soldiers assigned (Darby 2002) and the Joint Special Operations

Command with a much smaller number of personnel assigned. Both of these units' headquarters are located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

As the Army's component of USSOCOM, USASOC provides Special Forces, Ranger, Special Operations Aviation, Special Operations Support, PSYOP, and CA forces to USSOCOM for deployment as required to other combatant, unified commands around the world. They also provide logistics and signal support to those operations through the Special Operations Support Command (Airborne) (Darby 2002). USASOC comprises 13,500 active duty soldiers and another 11,500 soldiers in the guard and reserve components.

USASOC's major subordinate commands include the US Army Special Forces Command (Airborne), US Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), and the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. Major subordinate units include the 75th Ranger Regiment, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), and the US Army Special Operations Support Command (Airborne), which oversees the operations of the 528th Special Operations Support Battalion (Airborne) and the 112th Special Operations Signal Battalion (Airborne) (USASOC 2002).

To provide PA support to all of these highly skilled and geographically dispersed soldiers USASOC has assigned a total of four military PAOs. The senior USASOC PAO by modified table of organization (MTOE) is a lieutenant colonel. A major has instead for the last two years directed USASOC PA efforts. Supporting the chief are three other majors. One serves as the Special Forces Command desk officer, the second has responsibility for the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, and the third

and final PAO is the USASOC commander's speechwriter. The office also has ten civilians and five enlisted personnel serving in desk officer positions (Darby 2002). The command has no assigned PA detachment. None of the subordinate commands has a school trained MTOE assigned PAO. The 75th Ranger Regiment and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment have both recognized the need for PAO support and have assigned individuals to fill the role. However, none of these well-intentioned soldiers are school trained. The US Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a unit whose mission involves interacting with civilians in foreign countries, has no assigned military spokesperson. The unit receives PA support from a deployable civilian.

The Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), with approximately 350 personnel assigned, is a training and doctrine command responsible for studies concerning the interoperability of special operations tactics, techniques, and equipment. It conducts much of its study through an aggressive exercise program. Its exercises and most of its findings are classified so JSOC has no assigned PAO. The command receives its PAO support from USSOCOM.

As discussed earlier in addition to USASOC and JSOC each regional CINC has an assigned Special Operations Command (SOC). These SOCs are manned by approximately 300 personnel, but have no assigned permanent PA personnel and receive their PA support from the CINC's PA office.

In total the Army has at any given time only six active duty, uniformed PA officers: a colonel, a lieutenant colonel, and four majors, to manage SOF PA support.

Even this small number is deceiving as the colonel and lieutenant colonel are joint assets and must also oversee Navy and Air Force special operations PA support as well.

The purpose of this section was to explore the secondary or supporting question of: Is the current PA force structure within United States Special Operations Command sufficient to support the needs of the community.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

> Tomorrow night on NBC a very special episode of West Wing, it makes a direct reference to what happened in New York City. The exact plot is being kept top secret. We are the only country in the world where we put our battle plans on CNN, but the plots to our TV shows are top secret.
>
> Jay Leno, *The Tonight Show*

<u>Plan</u>

This study employed the causal-comparative research model and used three separate research tools: three recent SOF and SMU PA case studies; interviews with SOF operators, SOF PAOs, and military correspondents; and a questionnaire electronically mailed to CGSC SOF students. The purpose of these three separate research tools was identical: to gain data on attitudes, beliefs, practices, and applications of SOF PA doctrine and regulations in order to answer the study's primary question, How does a SOF PAO achieve the required balance between the clear and dominant need for operational security, before, during, and after an operation while maintaining the PA imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay?"

By employing the three separate tools, cases studies, interviews, and questionnaire a multiple perspective was achieved that allowed for a greater depth of data. The three tools were mutually supportive and provided the researcher an "honesty check." The three tools were designed to identify potential discrepancies between current written SOF PA doctrine, SMU PAG, and current SOF PA practices and applications by focusing on answering the studies supporting questions. By answering these supporting

questions, such as: Is the current PA force structure within United States Special

Operations Command sufficient to support the needs of the community, or Is the

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs standing public affairs guidance for

special mission units still relevant and adequate in today's world of global real-time

media and intelligence coverage, or does it need modification the researcher gained

significant knowledge and insight into answering the study's primary question?

<u>Data Collection Plan</u>

In order to collect data with three separate research tools, three separate data

collection plans were employed. Using case studies, the data was collected from

researching current news articles about SOF and SMU operations in Afghanistan. These

articles were from leading news magazines, national and international papers, and

television news programs all located primarily on the Internet. Supporting or

contributing data was gathered for the case studies by conducting interviews with

individuals who were either present during a studied SOF or SMU operation or had

participated in the planning of the operation.

The second tool, subject-matter-expert interviews, collected data by conducting a

series of interviews or discussions with current SOF PA professionals, both military and

civilian; military correspondents; and SOF operators. Some of the data was collected via

electronic mail, some via telephone, and some by face-to-face interview. Each of the

military correspondents were electronically mailed the identical questions, but most

responded to the questions by telephonically contacting the researcher preferring to

answer the questions in a discussion format. Additionally, some of the correspondents

forwarded the questions to their associates who also initiated contact with the researcher.

The third tool, the CGSC SOF questionnaire, was electronically mailed to identified SOF students and then tabulated from the respondents by electronic mail. Twenty-seven of electronically mailed SOF practitioners responded to the questionnaire**.**

Data Analysis Plan

The data collected from the cases studies was analyzed against current SOF PA doctrine and regulations in order to identify areas of compliance or noncompliance. By analyzing current SOF PA practice against existing PA doctrine, schisms were identified that assisted in answering the supporting questions of is the SMU PAG still relevant, and is the current SOF PA force structure adequate to support the force? The data collected from the supporting interviews was also analyzed against the existing doctrine and regulations. Additionally data from the SOF questionnaire and the media interviews were compared for attitudinal commonality and differences.

Data collected from SOF PAOs was analyzed against the existing doctrine and regulations in an effort to identify patterns and trends of current SOF PA practice. The purpose of this analysis was to ascertain if SOF PAOs are following existing doctrine and regulations or are they being selective in its application. This analysis helped to answer the question of SMU PAG relevance and possibly the question of the adequacy of the current SOF PA force structure. The data collected from the military correspondents was analyzed against current doctrine and historical literature review to discover the correspondent's degree of acceptance and tolerance of operational security requirements. The correspondents are not bound by Army doctrine; however, the policies and regulations established by OASD-PA have a direct impact on their access to information and resources and ultimately their careers. This data was helpful in determining the

adequacy of the SOF PA force structure and the SMU PAG relevance questions. As an example, if it could be determined that the correspondents believed that OPSEC was paramount over publishing or broadcasting a story then possibly current SOF PA force structure is adequate.

The data collected from the SOF questionnaire was analyzed against the current PA doctrine and regulations in order to gain an understanding of the attitudes and beliefs of the SOF soldier. Although, the SOF operators were not expected to posses the same in-depth knowledge of SOF PA doctrine as the SOF PAO, the doctrine and regulations are in place for their protection. Their attitudes and beliefs toward those safety restrictions proved valuable in answering many of study's supporting questions. If the regulations are not meeting the SOF operators' expectations perhaps the regulations should be modified.

<u>Internal Validity</u>

Internal validity is the approximate truth about inferences regarding cause-effect relationships and is only relevant in studies that try to establish a casual relationship. This study posed the cause-effect questions: Does operational security and the need for security in special operations override the PA imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay," and Does SOF's historical lack of PA support lead to a distrust of the media and by extension the PAO?

All three of the research tools were designed to support internal validity. However, some threats to that validity were later recognized. Two internal threats to the SOF questionnaire were recognized. The first threat is the size of the sample. The sample may not be significant enough to provide any statistical relevance and may only

represent an analytical snapshot. Because of the sample's small size, the analysis data may not provide an accurate representation of SOF operators' attitudes and beliefs concerning SOF PA doctrine. The second internal validity threat to the SOF questionnaire is the unclear wording of some of the questions. Those questions may represent the researcher's internal bias or simply lack the necessary clarity to be interpreted uniformly by all respondents. As an example question 12 reads: Should SOF grow their own PAOs? The researcher was trying to discover the perceived need for and support of a SOF PA career track. However, many responses questioned the need for SOF operators to become PAOs. Clearly, this was a poorly worded question.

A threat to the military correspondents interviews was also identified. Although all correspondents were sent the same questions, when they chose to answer those questions in a discussion format they expanded the researchers original design and forced the researcher to take notes of the interview. Those notes, taken by an untrained journalist, are subject to far more interpretation than a questionnaire.

None of these cited internal validity threats were recognized during the formatting or implementation of the data collection plan and only became obvious during the data analysis stage. Therefore, no direct mitigation of these threats was planned. Future research on this topic may account for these threats and plan their mitigation accordingly. The SOF questionnaire could be expanded to include SOF soldiers stationed throughout the Army. The questionnaire could be subdivided by rank, time in service, time in SOF, and by particular unit. The questions could be phrased more clearly to reduce uncertainty. Respondents who reply by phone should be read the question verbatim until

the question is answered. Any extra data collected from the discussion could be regarded as unessential or not relevant.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

> As the ground war develops, we're going to need independent sources of information to be confident our military is behaving appropriately. (2002)

<div align="right">Dalglish</div>

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research that was discussed in the previous chapter. As outlined in chapter III the research for this chapter is divided into three categories: case studies, interviews, and questionnaires. The first category is case study. The three cases selected are drawn from current operations in Afghanistan and point to the difficulties DOD faces when conducting clandestine operations. In all cases it appears DOD is struggling to satisfy the need to inform the American public about its operations while at the same time protecting identities, tactics, techniques, and procedures of the special operations warrior.

<u>Case Study 1</u>

The first case study is the unnamed operation that took place 20 October 2001. This operation is an important SOF PA study because it was the first publicized ground offensive of the war in Afghanistan. It may serve as a model system or method SOF units will utilize to keep the American public informed while keeping reporters from operations. It may also indicate what role if any is being played by the PAO. The airborne raid, which was conducted primarily by special operations soldiers of the 75th Ranger Regiment, was leaked to members of the DOD Press Pool by as much as forty-eight hours prior to the actual raid. However, the reports were not broadcast or published

until moments before the scheduled time of execution. This leak is in stark contrast of the last two airborne assaults conducted by the 75th Ranger Regiment, Just Cause, 1989 and Operation Urgent Fury, 1983. As was discussed in chapter II the J-5, Generally Kelly excused the PAO prior to the 1989 assault to ensure there was no media leak and in 1983 the security was so tight that it lead to the establishment of the trusted DOD Press Pool. On 20 October 2001 PSYOP soldiers, using organic video equipment, filmed this assault, for immediate media release. One of the film's intent was "to allow the American public to view as much of the raid as possible, considering OPSEC, while controlling material release" said a ranger officer who chose not to be attributed. He said: PSYOP assets were used as opposed to PA assets simply, "Because we didn't have any PA personnel attached. They don't own any night vision cameras anyway and most of them are not jump qualified." The vast majority of press coverage, both print and broadcast, was very favorable. However, Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Donald Rumsfeld voiced his displeasure that a leak had taken place and denounced the unknown individual saying: "I just think that the idea of someone in this building providing information to the public and to the al-Qaida and to the Taliban when US special forces are engaged in an operation is not a good idea, besides being a violation of federal criminal law" (Kelly 2001). He continued: "It is a disregard for the lives of the people involved in that operation" (Kelly 2001). At the Pentagon news conference 22 October 2001, Rumsfeld went on to say that he doubts that reporters ever will be brought along during commando raids and repeated his assertion that some missions in the anti-terror campaign may remain secret forever (Kelly 2001).

In contrast to remaining "secret forever" Rangers who had participated in the raid were made available to the national media and appeared on numerous news talk shows including three separate Larry King Live broadcasts (Darby 2002). The decision to conduct an active PA campaign and permit these Rangers to broadcast some details of their mission is again in stark contrast to DOD's "respond to query" philosophy in 1993 when Rangers were returning from Somalia and demonstrates an understanding of the importance of a sustained, post-mission PA campaign.

Seymour Hersh a reporter for *New Yorker* magazine, put that post-mission PA campaign to test when he wrote an article entitled "Escape and Evasion," in which he claimed that the Ranger mission had not gone as smoothly as DOD had reported. Hersh claimed the mission was a near disaster and that the Pentagon has been rethinking future Special Forces operations inside Afghanistan. He also claimed that the Rangers mission had only been a sideshow and that the real operation that night of 20 October 2001 was a Delta Force raid conducted miles away at another enemy compound. Hersh wrote: "Twelve Delta members were wounded, three of them seriously," and "It was like an ambush. The Taliban were fighting with light arms and either [rocket-propelled grenades] or mortars. The team immediately began taking casualties and was evacuated." The article suggested a disconnect between SOF and conventional leadership. Hersh claimed that, a senior SOF officer said: "I don't know where the adult supervision for these operations is. Franks--the general in charge of the US Central Command-- is clueless" (Drudge 2001). DOD responded quickly with Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers appearing on NBC's *Meet The Press,* 4 November 2001. General Myers refuted Hersh's claim but seemed to struggle with answering a direct question.

RUSSERT: On October 20 there was a commando raid by US forces into Afghanistan. You showed pictures of people being parachuted in and some infrared pictures and things like that. A *New Yorker* magazine today reports that during that exercise, that operation, 12 US soldiers were wounded, three seriously.

RUSSERT: Is that accurate?

MYERS: Let me just tell you exactly what happened and then--I don't think that report is accurate in the context that it was written. As you know, we lost two individuals to a helicopter accident before they even went into Afghanistan. They were the reserve force, sitting back, waiting to respond in case. . . . But it went, from my view, it went flawlessly. (Russert, 2001)

General Myer's struggle to answer Tim Russert's question directly may be a classic case of blocking and bridging or it might be attributed to the constrains imposed by the SMU PAG, "no acknowledgment of or responding to articles or questions concerning SMU" (SMU PAG, 1999).

This SMU policy almost turned a small article into an issue, which could have become a crisis, and threaten a successful post-mission PA campaign. It is very hard to answer questions about units that are not officially recognized.

This case study suggests that OASD-PA policy was modified to highlight some aspects of a SOF mission, to give the American public as much information as possible in accordance with security concerns while heeding the SECDEF's admonishment, that certain aspects will remain classified and not open to public inspection. It also shows the importance of a post-mission PA plan and how that plan has to account for possible negative stories.

<u>Case Study 2</u>

The second case study points out what can happen when a SOF mission has negative and unplanned for negative consequences that are not addressed during the PA planning stage.

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OASD-PA announced 24 January 2002 that on the previous evening US Special

Operations troops had conducted a successful raid on an al-Qaida or Taliban ammunition

dump, killing fifteen enemies and capturing twenty-seven others. On 29 January 2002

the *Associated Press* reported that Afghan officials, including Hamid Karzai, the new

provisional President, claimed that the US raid had killed fifteen friendly Afghans and

had incorrectly imprisoned twenty-seven others. Karzai, AP reported, that it had, "sent a

delegation to investigate last week's raid after conferring Monday with President Bush in

Washington" (Kelly 2002a). The AP also reported Pentagon spokesmen had "no

comment" and that the US military's Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida,

spokesman Gunnery Sergeant Charles Portman said, "We have no additional

information" beyond what the Pentagon has said in recent days (Kelly 2002a). The

following day a PA strategy seemingly emerged. Deflect criticism of the operation by

ensuring a thorough investigation, but ensure the public understands that US troops acted

in self-defense. SECDEF Rumsfeld announced: "The Defense Department is

investigating claims that US Special Forces killed or arrested the wrong people during a

raid in Afghanistan last week" (Kelly 2002b). But he pointed out: "As the American and

Afghan forces approached, they were shot at by the people in the compound, which is

something" (Kelly 2002b). *Inside The Ring,* columnists Bill Gertz and Bill Scarborough

stated: "The raids last week on a large compound of Taliban fighters near Hazar Qadam

marked the largest mission by the super-secret Delta Force since its October mission

against Mullah Mohammed Omar's home in Kandahar" (Gertz and Scarborough 2002).

The article continued, "30 to 40 Delta and Army Special Forces soldiers infiltrated the

remote mountain area and then stormed two buildings at the sprawling compound. A

fierce firefight ensued after the Taliban fired the first shots. The result: 20 to 30 enemy killed, and 27 held as captives" (Gertz and Scarborough 2002). The same day, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff continued to mitigate the damage by saying: "I don't think it was any sense on our part that we've done something wrong" (Robert Burns 2002). Local Afghans said, "Some of those killed were anti-Taliban forces loyal to Hamid Karzai, the head of the interim Afghan government, and that among those arrested were a police chief, his deputy and members of a district council" (Robert Burns 2002). Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesman Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem added, "It just wasn't clear whom exactly we were dealing with" (Robert Burns 2002). By 9 February 2002 there was still no indication from the Pentagon on the status of the investigation and the press sensing a scandal continued to look for answers. Barry Bearak, of *The New York Times* reported, "The military ordered its investigation of the January 24 commando raid only after Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's pro-American interim president, personally complained to Gen. Tommy R. Franks, commander of the operation in Afghanistan" (Bearak 2002). In the same article William H. Arkin, a former army intelligence analyst who is a military adviser to Human Rights Watch said, "The military knows they'll get pummeled about issues relating to civilian casualties, and they don't have a clue how to address it in a non-propagandistic way." He added, "The subject ties them in knots. It's an irritant, and they avoid it" (Bearak 2002). Bearak, interviewed Nayaz Muhammad, twenty-seven, an Afghan survivor of the raid. Muhammad said, "I had recently gone to work as a soldier in the government's weapon confiscation effort, and was asleep in a school when awakened by a blast. Most of the 11 other men in the room died almost immediately in a barrage of gunfire." He continued: "I didn't know why they were

shooting" (Bearak 2002). Muhammad Yunas, a former district government chief, who had been sleeping in the other compound saw the charging Americans and said, "I told my men, `Don't shoot, they're our people, they'll come to talk,'" he added, "We were amazed. Why would the Americans come to attack us?" (Bearak 2002). More bad news stories followed when on 11 February 2002 *The Washington Post's* Foreign Service reported that released Afghans reported being treated in captivity so harshly that, "two men lost consciousness during beatings while others suffered fractured ribs, loosened teeth and swollen noses" (Moore 2002). Even though the imprisoned Afghans had been freed, OASD-PA did not release a statement. On 12 February 2002 *The London Times* raised the question: "Did the SAS attack friendly village." The article stated: "The attack on two villages on January 23 is now the subject of a high-level US military investigation, and a Pentagon source admitted that while it had been an American operation, 'allied special forces from an unnamed country, likely to have been Britain or Australia, helped spearhead it.'" The article continued: "The only other units in that category inside Afghanistan are from Britain's 22nd Special Air Service regiment, its Australian equivalent, and a small team from Canada's Joint Task Force 2 counter-terrorist unit" (Bruce 2002).

OASD-PA management of this ongoing story is compelling for several reasons. First, it shows how quickly a positive story can become negative if all the facts are not known or released at the same time. Second, it hints at a policy of "blaming the other guy" before the investigation is completed. Finally, it exemplifies the need for a comprehensive PA plan that addresses US, host nation, and allied equities. The plan must be similar to the crisis action plan discussed in chapter II. It must identify the most

likely major negative events that could happen and have a PA response to each scenario. All involved parties prior to the mission to ensure unity of voice during the coming media questions must approve the plan.

Case Study 3

The third case study is the examination of the friendly fire incident that killed three Special Forces soldiers assigned to Operational Detachment Alpha 574 on 5 December 2001. The study focuses on the PA efforts after the incident was reported and will detail Captain Jason Amerine's views of the PA support he received while at a US military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, from the European Command (EUCOM) PAO and the temporarily assigned Special Operations Command PAO. Case study 1 showed the importance of coordinating the PA message among SOF units. Case study 2 attested to the need to coordinate among allied units. This case study will show the importance of that coordination-taking place between SOF and conventional units. The lessons from this case study can easily be transferred to a domestic scenario involving SOF and conventional consequence management units. According to EUCOM PAO Army Lieutenant Colonel Loomis and SOCEUR PAO Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick, they had only an hour notice of injured team members' arrival at Landstuhl and did not know the condition of the men. The team was assigned to the JSOTF forward, which had no assigned PAO. Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick said that she meet the team as it was off loading at the airfield fresh from the battle and immediately realized the severity of the situation. She said, "Some of the men were still on stretchers and most of them had bloody bandages" (Jaddick 2002). Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick also immediately recognized that media interest in the story would be high. Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick

tried to ascertain the disposition of the men and to determine their ability to address the press. Captain Amerine, the ODA commander expressed an interest in speaking to the press. He said, "I had learned a lesson earlier in my career about not telling my unit's story and I knew I never wanted to make that mistake again" (Amerine 2002). Both EUCOM and SOCEUR PA offices in coordination with OASD-PA worked out general guidelines in the limited time available and conducted refresher training with Captain Amerine. Neither office contacted USCENTCOM PAO, USASOC PAO, USSOCOM PAO, or the JSOTF to see if their messages or themes were in concert with any existing PA plan or strategy (Jaddick 2002). Captain Amerine faced his first of many news conferences Saturday, 8 December 2001. His primary message delivered articulately and honestly was that: "I don't want these guys to be remembered as people who died in an accident. They saved a town from being slaughtered. They're all heroes" (US Troops Died Heroes-Comrades 2002). Over the course of the next couple of days Captain Amerine working very closely with Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick delivered the same focused message many times over. On 11 December 11 2001 during a telephonic interview arranged by OASD-PA Captain Amerine read a prepared statement: "Let me just reiterate what I've been saying over the last couple of days. The soldiers in my detachment, the soldiers of the headquarters, need to be remembered for the work that they accomplished. They cannot be remembered as victims of a tragic bombing. They have to be remembered as soldiers who were fighting in a noble cause, and they need to be remembered as heroes. That's all I'd like to say at this time" (Triggs 2001). Captain Amerine and his men were the President's invited guests at the State of the Union Address 29 January 2002. In an interview with the *Kansas City Star* Captain Amerine's

focused message broke down, and another message took its place. This message was not approved by OASD-PA. He said that as soon as his men were hit he called for a med-a-vac from a Marine unit only one hour away at Camp Rhino. After three hours and one-half of waiting with ten dead Afghan soldiers, three dead teammates, and many more injured the helicopters finally arrived. To his surprise the helicopters were from an Air Force Special Operations Wing based in Pakistan. The Air Force helicopters left within twenty minutes after Amerine's calls for help more than three hours earlier. Speaking about the Marines inability to arrive in a timely fashion Captain Amerine stated, "A trust was violated that day." He said, "They didn't come because they thought we had been overrun, and they were attempting to dissect the situation. Meanwhile, the Air Force launched to help us--immediately" (Kavanaugh 2002). The pilot and medical officer on the Air Force crew declined comment but Lieutenant Rosemary Heiss, 16th Special Operations Wing, PAO at Hurlburt Field, Florida, said: "No stories have ever been told publicly about the wing for a reason. Their missions are secret to protect lives" (Kavanaugh 2002). The same article reported that a Marine spokesman said, "If the Air Force responded more quickly, I'm not going to dispute that. The bottom line is that everyone was doing the best that they could."

The change in message is significant because not only was it counterproductive to DOD's PA efforts, but the interview was given without a PAO present or any PAO guidance issued (Amerine 2002). Captain Amerine said, "I wish Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick could have stayed with my team as we deployed back to the US." He continued: "We really trusted and relied on her a lot when dealing with the press." Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick expressed similar thoughts: "It doesn't make any sense just to pass these

guys off from one PAO to another. The message is too important to leave to chance"

(Jaddick 2002). In this case study the PAO system broke down. Captain Amerine

initially got his message out because he is a very articulate and thoughtful officer. His

team was guided through their media ordeal by a passionate and competent PAO who

ensured the message stayed focused. However, this all occurred by force of personality

not through an adherence to procedure. Other than EUCOM and SOCEUR the message

was never coordinated. The JSOTF had no PAO and passed no PA guidance to EUCOM

or SOCEUR (Jaddick 2002). USASOC and USSOCOM, force providers with an interest

in crafting and supporting the PA message, were not informed of the 8 December 2001

interview until after it was completed. Finally, PA responsibility was not clearly

established when Captain Amerine was traveling between Germany and Fort Carson,

Colorado.

<center>Interviews</center>

The lack of planning may not be due to a lack of effort but more correctly a lack

of PAOs to conduct the planning. Interviews with senior Army PAO leadership indicates

that all recognize and acknowledge a need for more PAOs within the SOF arena but force

modification details are at the embryonic stage. USSOCOM PAO Colonel William

Darley, DOD's senior SOF PAO, sees a crucial need for additional SOF PAOs. Among

Colonel Darley's highest priorities is to, "Establish a senior PA position at the SOCOM

Washington Office" (Darley 2002). This asset would represent "CINC SOC's key

interest and provide him a dedicated conduit to both the DOD and Service Public Affairs

agencies in the Pentagon and would also facilitate support of USSOCOM Legislative

Affairs initiatives with appropriate media contact." USSOCOM was created by the

Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (*SOF Reference Manual* 1998, 20), so it follows that Congress is SOCOM's number one target audience. A senior SOF PAO interfacing with OCLL through SOLA could help focus on media access to SOF subject matter experts in order to more fully explain to the public and opinion leaders SOF programmatic requirements. Such a relationship would appropriately foster closer ties with Congress by providing to the public factual and expert media accounts that would serve to counter ill-informed criticism in the press mitigating negative congressional queries that frequently result from such coverage (Darley 2002).

Another important target audience the SOCOM WO PAO could help inform is the Joint Staff. Colonel Darley said, "SOCOM, as a force provider, must sell itself to the services. Since USSOCOM draws its recruits and main material support from the military services themselves, it is imperative that each service continues to support SOCOM's access to high quality personnel and continued priority in obtaining resources so that collectively we can ensure the best product to the war fighting CINCs" (Darley 2002). Colonel Darley has helped to establish a temporary PAO at three of the Theater SOCs (SOCSOUTH, SOCEUR, and SOCPAC), but sees the need for permanent positions to be established in all SOCs. He said, "We are letting the SOC Commanders down if we don't establish these SOC PAOs as permanent positions and make them robust enough to support TSOC Commanders with the strategic public communications requirements as they deploy throughout their respective areas of responsibility. With the increased exposure of SOF and the ever-increasing globalization of the media, SOC commanders are no longer insulated from either regional or global media exposure or criticism, and cannot rely solely on the 'Quiet Professional' moniker to shield them"

(Darley 2002). "Moreover, the SOC Commanders need to recognize that in an age of increased competition for diminishing resources, the long-term survival of SOF lies in the overall institution's ability to 'sell' its unique capabilities to the respective CINCs and to resource allocators in Congress. Experience is showing that PAOs are vital in this role" (Darley 2002).

Colonel Darley's SOF PA vision includes a PA detachment at either the SOCOM or USASOC level. He said, "Media training requirements for SOCOM units routinely go unmet and deploying units are not provided the PA support they deserve because of a lack of internal assets" (Darley 2002). Colonel Darley would also like to increase the number of PAOs within SOCOM by assigning PAOs at the SF group level. He said: "It is impossible for one officer at USASOC to provide responsive support for all five SF Groups and SF Headquarters Command" (Darley 2002). Special Forces recruits, from within, the very best the Army has to offer. That implies young soldiers must be informed of the extraordinary achievements accomplished regularly by SF soldiers. Over tasked group and battalion adjutants performing collateral duties are not sufficient to ensure this task is accomplished. Colonel Darley reasons the SF PAO should posses the same language skills as the other members of the group. As a special staff officer and advisor to the commander, a PAO should possess the requisite skills to read and interpret a foreign newspaper or magazine article in his groups' geographical area of concentration. Possessing the required language skills establishes professional credentials and may speed acceptance by the unit members. Language skills combined with a basic knowledge of a regions culture, history, ethnic makeup, and information

regarding major religions should be required of a PAO before being assigned to support a regional SOC (Darley 2002).

By position and experience Colonel Darley articulates a strategic view for the future of SOF PA. His answer to, How does the PAO bridge the gap between himself and the closed society he supports? is through professional excellence. In his view it is not enough for a PAO to write an article about a unit so that family members and the local community are informed. His vision sees the PAO as a strategic asset with which the commander can garner congressional support or educate a CINC on SOF's unique capabilities; therefore, ensuring SOF's continued relevance in today's strategic environment. This is keenly insightful because it helps to answer one of the secondary questions, How does the PAO gain acceptance in the closed society that he supports?

Major General Gotarddi, The Chief of Army Public Affairs, and Colonel Hovatter, the Chief of the Office of Army Public Affairs, both support Colonel Darley's vision or desire for more SOF-oriented PAO, but have not yet identified where the additional manpower will come from. Major General Gotarddi said, "I would like to see an increase in spaces allocated for PAOs across USASOC" (Gotarddi 2002). A temporary measure, he said that USASOC should draw upon available resources in the reserve community. He announced, that he would no longer support PAOs earning an advanced degree in journalism. He feels the discipline is to narrow and does not provide the PAO with an extensive educational or professional background. He said, "I will only support PAOs attending programs that offer a Mass Communication or Marketing degree" (Gotarddi 2002). When asked if PAOs assigned to SOF should earn international relations or foreign affairs degrees he answered, "That is a stretch, I do not think so, but I

have not considered it before. An Ethics degree on the other hand could be useful"

(Gotarddi 2002). On the topic of a SOF PAO track he commended, "Army Public

Affairs doesn't have the personnel resources to support a specialized career field and I

think it is counter-productive to my philosophy of providing well rounded PA

generalists." He continued, "I believe it is more beneficial to the SOF community to

provide them with a well trained, broad-based PAO who comes to the table with an

outside perspective. There is a danger of being too specialized or too isolated. The

PAOs role is to provide the commander objective, PA doctrine-based advice" (Gotarddi

2002). He feels a PAO with a language capability is a plus but not a requirement,

"Certainly, I can see where a language skill would be useful but the PAOs focus should

remain the American audience not the foreign press." When asked if he believes the

SMU PAG constrains or hamstrings commanders and PAOs, he answered, "Absolutely

not. The PAG provides them with much needed protection and establishes a line that the

media understands we will not cross" (Gotarddi 2002).

Colonel Hovatter stated, "The need for additional PAOs to support Army SOF has

been identified and is valid. However, the Army has a limited pool of personnel and

these personnel must also have the appropriate associated equipment" (Hovatter 2002).

Walter Solkaski, Deputy USASOC PAO with over thirty years of PA experience,

has similar ideas but expresses them from a more operational or tactical perspective. In

response to the question, Should SOF develop its own PA track? (USASOC, JSOC,

SOCs, SOCOM, DOD). Mr. Solkaski states, "Yes, because despite what everyone says,

SOF is different. There is a lot more to protect." He added, "Because the number of

slots is so small such a 'grown your own' philosophy is just not practical except for

maybe the SOCOM PAO position which should be someone who has served in one of the component commands" (Solkaski 2002). After a lifetime of service to PAO, Mr. Solkaski still feels as if the PAO is an outsider who must prove himself. "As far as the lower level operators are concerned, the PAO is entering a closed system of superstars. A rear echeloned attachment needs to prove himself to them before he can be accepted. He does this by not 'becoming a spy' for higher headquarters and by making an effort to help in other areas besides PA when he is deployed with a unit" (Solkaski 2002). On the question of educational background and training Mr. Solkaski believes journalism should not be the degree of choice for PAOs because, "We are not Journalists! Public Relations should be the degree of choice with a minor in Foreign Affairs" (Solkaski 2002). In regards to his analysis of the relevance of the current SMU PAG he writes, "The SMU PAG never was rooted in reality. It needs to be rewritten more along the lines of the British SAS model. We are spending too much money and resources protecting a name when those efforts should go to protecting tactics, techniques and procedures." He also noted SMUs becoming more bold and attempting to dictate PA policy to DOD and higher under the guise of IO and security (Solkaski 2002).

Another longtime USASOC PAO Carol Darby echoes his comments. She wrote: "I remember coming to SWCS in 1990 from XVIII Airborne Corps (14 years in the Corps office), I was confident that I knew SF and would have little to learn--I was an idiot. It has taken me years to really understand who we are and why we operate the way we do. A one-week intro to SOF doesn't cut it" (Darby 2002). She added, "SOF PAOs must be confident in their knowledge, and more importantly have full understanding of SOF profession, training, missions, and the lines in the sand that we don't cross. Our

SOF soldiers demand PAOs who are knowledgeable, confident and willing to take great risks simply because that is what we expect of them" (Darby 2002). When asked how does she gain the confidence and trust of the SOF soldier she replied, "We have to be willing to sleep on the ground, sweat, eat MREs, sit in the woods for 38 hours and do absolutely everything we can to support our soldiers. Bottom line: SOF PAOs have to be hard as nails in many ways but at the same time keep a cool head" (Darby 2002).

Major Gary Kolb, USASOC PAO, has different beliefs. When asked if SOF should grow their own PAOs and stay within a SOF PA track (USASOC, JSOC, SOCs, SOCOM, DOD), he answers, "No, I think SOF is not that unique that it needs its own career track. There are certain characteristics of PA that aren't practiced as much outside of SOF but these can be overcome by competent PA professionals" (Kolb 2002). He does believe that PAOs are needed at the SF Group and Ranger/SOAR level. "What needs to be done is PAO's need to be assigned at the Group and Regiment level which would preclude new PAO's being 'parachuted' in when that unit deploys to a theater and they have no organic PA of their own. I don't believe in a strictly SOF PA but I do believe that PA's need to be assigned to all units and not just at major command level" (Kolb 2002).

In order to study the broader range of attitudes and ideas, SOF commanders and SOF operators were also asked their opinions on the role of the PAO in SOF. General (retired) Schoomaker, CINC SOC from 1997 to 2000, former SMU commander, and veteran of many SOF missions, provided his considerable insight on many issues. His insight is particularly significant to understanding the SOF PAO function and force

structure because through his position and influence he was one of the primary molders of policy for years. He writes,

> In general, the PAO business should not be conducted at the tactical level but rather should be orchestrated from a strategic/theater level perspective at the CINC and Component Commands. In my experience, the responsibility for PA concerning operational matters should reside at the Joint Command level...ie. the JTF commander, the CINC that SOF is supporting on an operation, or at SOCOM when he is the supported CINC. The tactical commanders should not be burdened with this important responsibility since it will absolutely distract him from his central purpose. For example, on the Iranian Hostage (Desert One) PA was retained at the national level and we were not involved at all . . .on URGENT FURY in Grenada and JUST CAUSE in Panama it was retained at the CINC and JTF level and I do not remember any instance where we dealt with the media at the tactical/operational level . . . the same for our involvement in DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM for our JSOTF activities. . . . CINCCENT controlled it for us. During HAITI, LTG Shelton dealt with it at the JTF level and as his JSOTF, I had no contact at all with the media. In Somalia, MG Garrison did not deal with media to the best of my memory. This approach is even more important when dealing with both covert and clandestine operations. It is very important to have all of this worked out at the highest levels . . . the levels at which these kinds of operations are approved . . . and definitely not at the tactical/operational levels. Again, in my experience . . . the only way to keep a secret is to not tell anyone. Sometimes, even the units conducting deception activities don't know that they are deceptions. (Schoomaker 2002)

General Schoomaker also addressed the issue of PA as a function of IO. He states that the command spokesman should not be involved in IO planning. He wrote: "To ensure PA and our domestic audiences not be dealt with inappropriately. However, PA professionals who do not have PA responsibilities probably need to be involved in the planning to prevent these things (deception and OPSEC) from washing over improperly" (2002).

<u>Questionnaire</u>

A questionnaire containing seventeen queries was electronically mailed to the SOF members of Command and General Staff College (CGSC) class 2002 to elicit their

opinions on and attitudes on the role of the PAO in SOF. Twenty-seven of the students

responded, and their answers have been compiled into a matrix for quick analysis. The

attitudes and opinions offered by this select group of service members are significant

because they represent the future of SOF. What they think today may become policy

years from now. The students were promised anonymity so they were free to express

themselves without fear of attribution. It must be noted that twenty-seven responses from

a select group of students does not represent an official Army position.

Many of the majors disagreed with General (retired) Schoomaker's comments.

The most surprising result was that an overwhelming percentage of the respondents

answered, "yes" to the question of: Is a disinformation campaign targeted against US

media acceptable if it is conducted to ensure operational secrecy and security? Most of

the majors felt that there is a need for a PAO at the SF group and regiment commands.

As for the question of acceptance, most felt a PAO with some SOF experience was a nice

to have but none viewed it as a requirement. The overriding sentiment was if the PAO

were competent he would be accepted. The question is though how is competency

judged. One major said, "If he (PAO) can hump a ruck and handle his weapon he will be

accepted otherwise he should look for new employment" (questionnaire results). This

answer implies that the PAO must come from the SOF community because this is not the

normal PAO job description. Below is the complete questionnaire with a tabulation of

answers. Each question below helps answer this study's primary and secondary

questions.

Table 1. SOF Student Questionnaire Answers

	YES	NO
1. Is disinformation against US media OK if it is for OPSEC?	24	2
2. Would you have concerns for your family's safety if media broadcasts your name and unit?	27	0
3. Has DOD gone too far with SOF-media interaction?	4	22
4. Is DOD non-acknowledgment of SMU's a valid policy?	12	10
5. Should DOD policy to protect SMU's be further restrictive in view of 11 September 2001?	22	2
6. Should DOD request retired officers stop speculating on future missions?	14	10
7. A. Should OASD-PA been more proactive ref: Somalia?	5	17
B. Could a proactive PA plan have changed the eventual outcome?	17	5
8. Should DOD use real name of SMU missions?	2	23
9. A. Number of hours of media training in last job		
B. Effective and realistic?	14	12
10. A. In last job, was PAO involved in any planning?	0	24
B. Involved in mission execution?	0	24
C. Should they be?	0	24
11. Is there need for PA at SF Group or Rgr/SOAR Regiment level?	17	8
12. Should SOF grow own PAO's?	8	14
13. Are PSYOP Officers more accepted than PAO's in SOF units?	0	17
14. Should SOF assigned PAO's have language/foreign affairs training?	12	9
15. A. Should PA be part of IO?	14	8
B. Does IO taint PAO?	2	18
16. A. In your last job, did you ever engage media pre, during, post deployment?	10	14
B. Was it successful?		
17. Feelings on embedding journalists on future missions?		

(Note Not all columns add up to 27. Not all respondents answered every question)

Table 2. SOF Student Time Questionnaire

	0 hours	1-5 hrs	6-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	> 20 hrs
Number of hours of media training in last job	8	16			
	Not supportive	A little supportive	Neutral	Somewhat supportive	Very supportive
Feelings on embedding journalists on future missions?			12	10	

The PAO must understand the attitudes and beliefs of the soldiers he supports, but he must also understand the attitudes and beliefs of the journalists he comes in contact with. The last area of research involved interviewing journalists who have experience covering DOD in general and SOF in particular. As a group the journalists were the most responsive to questions and their answers demonstrated a depth of knowledge on the subject of media coverage and special operations. As a group they were not in favor of responding to a questionnaire but preferred to conduct phone interviews. A few reporters initiated the interviews after being informed of the questionnaire by fellow journalists.

Joe Galloway's, noted coauthor of *We Were Soldiers Once and Young*, frequent quest lecturer at DOD officer professional development schools, and ambassador for better military-to-media relations, comments are particularly relevant. He has years of experience covering military forces in combat and has a vast knowledge of DOD policies and practices. He sees the central question of determining the PAOs role in SOF as a subquestion of, "How much press coverage can we (military/media/society) tolerate on a secret mission" (Galloway 2002). He notes that a PAO must help a commander identify the delicate balance between SOF coverage and OPSEC. He wrote, "The Special Ops

community wants credit for spearheading the war efforts but they do not want a reporter within 20 miles of their AO. They do not want their photo taken and they worry about their tactics and SOPs being revealed by said coverage" (Galloway 2002). He thinks, "It is clear you cannot 'embed' your average reporter or photographer with a SpecOps or SMU force for a number of good reasons. But you can arrange timely briefings of the media in theater or near the theater on those parts of an operation that are determined can be released. This should be done in a timely fashion, within a couple days" (Galloway 2002). In response to the question, Is the DOD SMU policy still relevant or does it need modification? he cited the previously discussed Seymour Hersh article. Basically, "It was a cocked up story about a Delta assault that had some had some broad details correct." He wrote, "I am not certain that DOD's policy of 'no comment' on such an Op was the correct one, it left a bunch of lies dangling out there in the wind . . . along with an implication that the people involved were incompetent" (Galloway, 2002).

In general terms Mr. Galloway thinks DOD's policy of keeping SMU mission secret, should be changed, "carefully and gradually." "The American people ought to know more than they do about these forces and some of their capabilities" (Galloway 2002). However, on the subject of security Galloway has very strong views, "If it (the story) is leaking ahead of time, someone ought to be shot in McPherson Square, downtown DC, as an example" (Galloway 2002).

Rick Newman, a war correspondent for *US News and World Report,* offered his views of the problems associated with military secrecy. His discussion did not specifically address the PAO's role in SOF. However, his views on SOF and secrecy are important for a PAO to understand because other journalists may share them. His views

are best understood in context of chapter II's discussion of Just War. He feels that journalists understand the valid need for security and will not violate that need if they are given a chance. However, he says, "DOD hides behind security classification when operations go bad and they just want to cover it up" (Newman 2002). He stated, "Many times the military will not release information in order to appease a host nation. As a journalist I am not bound by those considerations. I do not work the host nation" (Newman 2002). He insists the press's role is to shine a "public spotlight" wherever there is darkness. He used Somalia as an example, and said, "Major General Garrison was out of control. Delta had conducted four or five similar raids and had established a set pattern. The Somalia's all knew it, the only people who did not were the American public because there was such limited press coverage" (Newman 2002). He thinks the press should act as a conduit of the people in an oversight capacity. He does not believe the conventional wisdom that, "the truth always comes out sooner or later" and instead believes that some real disasters are probably hidden forever. The problem he says is, "if they (problems) are not publicized there can be no external review and therefore they can never be fixed" (Newman 2002). On the specific question of DOD's policy of not formally recognizing SMUs by name he said, "The policy serves a purpose, it keeps the media focused in the wrong direction" (Newman 2002).

Steve Myers of *The New York Times* sees the need for military secrecy but feels there may be some room for flexibility. He offered:

> I think that public support is essential to military operations of any sort. I think, frankly, that journalists will sometimes overstate that, since my experience is that the American public generally has faith in its political and military leaders to conduct some operations without public disclosure. At the same time, I believe that broader access and coverage would build support. I also think that that would

serve the public's interest since coverage offers checks and balances that can avoid a fiasco. What might have happened had the Bay of Pigs operation been disclosed in advance by *The New York Times*? While that situation dealt with knowledge of an operation in advance (which I fully agree is enormously sensitive), I believe that once operations are underway and thus no secret to those being targeted, there is room for allowing coverage, even if with some ground rules. (Myers 2002)

Henry Cunningham is a long-time military reporter for *The Fayetteville Observer*. Fayetteville, North Carolina, is the home of Fort Bragg and most of the Army's special operations units. Mr. Cunningham's job puts him in direct opposition with DOD's "no comment" policy. He has published hundreds of articles about Army special operation units and always refers to them by name. Therefore, he has a unique perspective to offer this research. He is very well connected to the special operations community and is immensely qualified to discuss the role of the PAO in SOF.

Mr. Cunningham believes there will always be some level of agitation between the reporter, the PAO, and special operations soldier. He says he tries to reach a balance in his reporting, "I have printed more than the Army wanted me too but less than I wanted too" (Cunningham 2002). In reference to DOD's SMU policy his thoughts lay somewhere between Newman's and Galloway's, "I think DOD's policy ties the hand of the PAO. He knows but can't say, so I ask the question of someone who can say but doesn't know" (Cunningham 2002). Asked if the secrecy surrounding the special operation units invited inquires Mr. Cunningham said, "That is certainly one element, for me I like to tell the truth. I like to tell a good story" (Cunningham 2002). He said no one has ever asked him not to write a story, and he would never publish information he thought could jeopardize a mission or cause harm to anyone. He added, if the PAO could

convince the commander to allow the reporter access the commander than has much more control of the story.

John Miller of ABC's *20/20* thinks secrecy has become secrecy for secrecy's sake. "There is no one on earth that doesn't know the existence of the Delta Force or the SEALS or what they are tasked with" (Miller 2002). Miller understands the need for public support and thinks DOD should loosen SMU PAG restrictions and engage the media more as a conduit to the American public. He wrote:

> Bad press will find you, a mission gone wrong, a soldier arrested for murder off base, etc. The only way to receive your good press is to generate it. That builds good will with the media and fosters a positive public image among civilians. If something goes bad, you have that positive image as a base to rely on. If nothing goes bad, you are just stuck with a positive image and some friends in the media, and how bad is that? (Miller 2002)

Mr. Miller agrees with Mr. Cunningham and believes that trying to keep a secret just makes the secret holder a target. "Secrecy always attracts attention. There is no more intriguing story than the one they don't want you to know about. In a world where Tom Clancy is an automatic best seller, the media will have an eye toward the cloak and dagger aspects of military operations. It's interesting, and it sells papers" (Miller 2002). On the question of reporting a classified or sensitive mission, he said that his decision process is based on, "Will it effect national security? Will it endanger U.S. forces or hostages? If we keep quiet, will the story hold, or do other reporters have it? (Miller 2002).

This chapter began with an examination of three PA SOF case studies. Each possessed similar PA characteristics and each stressed the importance of conducting PA coordination in planning that carries through to the post mission phase. The chapter then

reviewed the thoughts of the Army's current SOF PAOs. These opinions were informative because they illustrate that even amongst SOF PAOs there is no agreement on the skills, education, or background requirements for the position. Next the chapter looked at the views of retired General Schoomaker and balanced them against the newer generation of SOF leaders to ascertain if there was continuity or have new thoughts emerged. The chapter closed with a discussion by civilian journalists who were eager to share their ideas and opinions in an effort to reach mutual understanding. For the SOF PAO all of these diverse opinions, positions, and perceptions are important to acknowledge and understand when trying to determine the balance between openness and OPSEC.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand
> bayonets. (1815)

> Napoleon Bonaparte

> Truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a
> bodyguard of lies. (1944)

> Winston Churchill

This thesis's introduction painted a picture of the unique societal questions posed by the government's need for secret military capabilities and soldiers and the problems these capabilities and personnel pose for a free and open society. Four allied nations; Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada have all experienced public debate about their country's secret military units and have struggled to reevaluate their respective secrecy policies. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 the American public has not yet joined this debate.

Within this construct this thesis sets out to answer the primary question, How does a Special Operations PAO achieve the required balance between the clear and dominant need for operational security, before, during, and after an operation while maintaining the PA imperative of "Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay?" In short, can the special mission community move beyond the "no comment" or "I can neither confirm nor deny?" approach and adopt a more sophisticated and effective PA plan. Supporting or secondary questions consisting of, Is the current PA force structure within United States Special Operations Command sufficient to support the needs of the

community? What, if any, unique skills or background should the SOF PAO possess?

How does the PAO span the chasm that exists between him and the rest of the often-

closed society he supports? Is the SMU PAG still relevant and adequate in today's world

of global real-time media and intelligence coverage or does it need modification? Is a

new PA annex or planning methodology required to facilitate SMU-media interaction?

What impact does PDD 68, have on the SOF PAO, and how does he use it to his

advantage?

To answers these questions the paper conducted an historical review of the

doctrinal literature concerning the evolution of PA doctrine as it applies to media

facilitation, security review and censorship. This literature review was essential because

it illustrated the conceptual progression the US military has made towards acceptance of

the media on the battlefield. It unmistakably demonstrated the importance military

planners have always placed on protecting information and shows the limited discussion,

direction, guidance, or doctrine on special operations' interaction with the media. Next

the paper examined the current force structure and manning levels of PA within SOF to

provide baseline knowledge from which to make an informed decision of findings. The

third area of study was a discussion of the concept of Just War and how it applied to SOF

and the SOF PAO. This discussion was important because it tied together the

introduction case studies with the role of the SOF PAO. The fourth area reviewed was

Crisis Management. This discussion focused on the importance of possessing a prepared

PA campaign plan for a command's most likely crisis scenarios. The final literature

review of chapter II was the *Federal Response Plan*. This analysis informed the reader as

to the duties and responsibilities USSOCOM has in response to emergency and crisis

situations both domestically and aboard. It is within this interagency response plan that the SOF PAO may find himself issuing SOF PA guidance to a LFA.

In chapter IV the research was expanded to include recent case studies, interviews, and a questionnaire to help define the PAO's role in SOF. Three recent SOF PA case studies were analyzed to determine future trends, strengths, or deficiencies. Each of three studies provided worthwhile insight into the PA planning process and methodology employed by SOF.

Interviews were conducted with current and former SOF soldiers to include retired General Schoomaker. Interviews were also conducted with current civilian and Army SOF PAOs in an effort to identify any unifying concerns or ideas. A third set of interviews was conducted with journalists who all have extensive backgrounds covering SOF. The journalist views are valuable because each of these professionals grapples with the decision to publish or not to publish an article that may contain secret or sensitive information. Understanding the journalist's point of view may prove invaluable to a PAO planning a campaign strategy.

A short questionnaire designed to discover the attitudes and thoughts of current SOF professionals assigned to CGSC. These attitudes may one day become practice or doctrine as these soldiers grow to become the Army's future leadership.

Finding One

With regards to the primary question, How does a special operations PAO achieve "Maximum Disclosure with Minimum Delay?" the finding is that despite the often noted notion of an ideological division between SOF operators and the media there is common ground. Every journalist interviewed responded that they understood the need for

secrecy and that they were willing to report within established OPSEC procedures. Some

journalists were more outspoken than others, but all of them said they would never

jeopardize the life of a soldier or the mission in their rush to publicize a story. Walter

Cronkite said that history could wait and that the American people would still get to

know who their heroes were (King 2001). Conversely, SOF operators responded by a

fivefold margin that DOD has not gone too far by embedding media with SOF units

(Table 1, Question 3). This response implies that SOF operators understand the import

role they play in gaining and maintaining the public's confidence and trust. Also, it

suggests an acceptance of media on selected missions and some degree of trust. Most of

the operators, all of the SOF PAOs, and senior Army PAOs felt that there needs to be

more PAO representation in SOF, particularly at the Regiment and Group command

level. None of the SOF operators had experience with PAOs conducting mission

planning, and very few thought that they should be involved. This response is

understandable considering the limited number of SOF PAOs and the tactical level of

planning that most of the respondents have been conducting to date. General (retired)

Schoomaker said that SOF PA should be conducted at the operational or strategic level as

to not burden the tactical commander with such an important operation (Schoomaker

2002). The danger of this philosophy is that the operational or strategic PA planner does

not have the same visibility, understanding or involvement of a tactical plan and therefore

may not provide the best PA support. The internal video taping of the Ranger's assault

onto Kandahar airfield serves as an excellent compromise and may be the way ahead for

SOF PA.

Finding Two

Is the current PA force structure within United States Special Operations
Command sufficient to support the needs of the community? No. There is widespread
agreement by SOF practitioners, SOF PAOs, Army PAO leadership, and journalists that
SOF needs more PA assets, both personnel and equipment. As the war on terrorism
projects out over the next ten years SOF will not be able to hide from the media. With
every stunning victory and each unfortunate loss the media will increase its demands for
SOF interaction. Without additional PAOs SOF may be overrun by the media's demands
and adopt a bunker mentality. This tactic could jeopardize public confidence and rob the
nation of learning about true heroism and sacrifice.

Finding Three

What, if any, unique skills or background should the SOF PAO possess? Other
than the belief that a journalism degree is no longer required in PAO, there is no
consensus on this question. Many thought a language skill could be useful, if assigned to
a SF Group or SOC, but no interviewee or questionnaire respondent viewed it as a
requirement. There was also no consensus on whether SOF should "grow their own"
PAOs. Operators generally thought SOF PAOs should have SOF backgrounds, but again
it was not a requirement. Major General Gotarddi, Major Kolb, and Walt Solkaski all
expressed the view that a SOF PAO career track would be counterproductive and is not
desirable.

Finding Four

Is DOD's SMU PAG still relevant and adequate in today's world of global real-time media and intelligence? Yes. Precisely because we conduct operations in this real time environment the SMU PAG provides a clear line in the sand that reporters know PAOs will not cross. This line, admittedly a very thin line, provides the operations a minimal amount of protection for them and there families. Questionnaire respondents answered in overwhelming majority that they think DOD PA guidance actually needs to be more restrictive post 11 September 2001. Every respondent answered that they would have concerns for their family's safety if the media broadcast their name and unit. Journalists expressed universal frustration with the policy but articulated they understood its function.

Finding Five

Is a new PA annex or planning methodology required to facilitate SMU-media interaction? Yes. The SMU PAG provides some measure of protection in terms of not identifying specific individuals or units and gives a PAO or a command the time to develop any required answers. A new planning methodology that would identify those aspects of a mission that could be divulged could assuage critics in the media and foster greater public support by keeping the nation informed.

Finding Six

What impact does PDD 68, have on the SOF PAO, and how does he use it to his advantage? PDD 68 has virtually no impact on a SOF PAO because SOF PAOs are not positioned to influence the process.

<u>Recommendations</u>

After analysis of the findings six recommendations, in order of priority, are offered. First, SOF PAO needs to create a unique PA Annex. Second, a senior SOF PAO position should be established at the SOCOM WO. Third, the Joint Staff should establish the manning documents for the establishment of permanent PAOs assigned to the SOCs. Fourth, OCPA needs to create and Army personnel needs to resource additional SOF PAO positions at the SF Group and Ranger and SOAR commands. Fifth, SOF PAOs should receive specialized training designed to broaden their education and professional knowledge base. Sixth, continue to exercise the current SMU PAG with no modifications at this time.

<u>Recommendation One</u>

The SOF PAO must plan for the unexpected, be involved in the planning and have a complete understanding of the mission's complexities. He must look for those parts, if any, of a mission that may be publicized before during or after mission execution. He must discover methods of broadcast that do not endanger the security or safety of the soldiers or their families.

This plan should combine the tenants of crisis management planning with Mr. Kelliher's concept of post-mission information operation planning. Every SOF mission has one of four possible PA outcomes. These outcomes can occur at any moment once the mission is initiated to include years after an event is over.

1. Mission success with public disclosure of US military involvement.

2. Mission success without disclosure of US military involvement.

3. Mission complications with significant negative impact potential without public disclosure of US military involvement.

4. Mission complications with public disclosure of US military involvement.

The plan must address each of the four possible outcomes in detail. The plan must identify potential adversarial actions and unintended incidents or accidents that could negatively impact the execution of a SOF mission. The plan should also identify potential enemy propaganda themes in order to formulate the appropriate counter-propaganda message. To the best of his ability, the PAO's plan should identify any enemy religious or national holidays, sacred areas, or cultural taboos that if violated could cause national, regional or international condemnation of the mission and plan the appropriate mitigation message. In this age of global mediazation the "perception management" battle will be won or lost in a matter of hours. The procedures for identifying these potential mission stoppers follow the steps of crisis action planning. For the SOF PAO that means preparing messages for assaults on the wrong target, a change of loyalty by an indigenous leader or unit, an ambush, a downed aircraft, US forces captured and many more. As with the crisis action plan, identifying the spokesperson in a time of crisis is critical. For the SOF PAO supporting a clandestine or covert mission that means identifying and preparing a spokesperson outside the unit. In a oversees mission this spokesperson may be the White House Press Secretary, the ASD-PA, an ambassador, a CINC, a dignitary or military leader of a host nation, or any combination. In a domestic CT, CP, or WMD situation the spokesperson could come from the White House, DOD, JTF-CS, or the LFA. It is plausible that messages may be prepared for affected civilians like hostages or property owners as well. To be effective at the time of

crisis, the plan must be approved by the impacted organizations in advance of the

operation. Each effected organization must comprehend how its respective message

supports the overarching message. The Annex would serve as a building block for any

potential planning by the IPI WG (see appendix A for an example).

Recommendation Two

A senior SOF PA position must be established at SOCOM WO. This is a critical

need that should be filled immediately. USSOCOM PAO Colonel Darley articulated the

need for the new position in terms of OCLL interface, but there are other roles the senior

SOF PAO could fill. For clandestine or covert missions the new proposed PA annex will

take on added strategic importance. It should be crafted by a PAO with the appropriate

level of military and professional education, SOF PA experience, and an extensive

knowledge of interagency and DOD PA issues. Provided interagency manning allowed

this senior PAO should have the additional duty of representing the DOD on the FEST or

DEST. As a senior SOF PAO this individual would be instrumental in crafting and

executing a strategic PA campaign plan while ensuring any SOF interests are protected.

He would also posses the appropriate rank and credentials to advise an Ambassador or

senior interagency representative.

Recommendation Three

Establish a permanent PAO position at the SOCs. The debate is over. SOCEUR

PAO Lieutenant Colonel Jaddick validated the importance of this position with her

handling of the media and message during ODA 574's numerous media engagements

following their return from Afghanistan. As the war on terrorism and media

globalization continues the world shrinks. Soon, there will be no remote areas for the SOCs to operate in. They must have full time, organic, PAO support. The SOC PAO could also function much like the senior SOCOM WO PAO and assist a CINC or an ambassador during a crisis situation that involved SOF.

Recommendation Four

Assign PAOs at the SF group and regiment commands. The same rationale applies to these units that was discussed for the SOCs. USASOC can neither support the training requirements of the units nor facilitate the large volume of media request with its limited staff. These units are made up of the very best and brightest the Army has to offer and the country should know it. Command level PAOs could alleviate much of USASOC's workload and provide more responsive mission support.

Recommendation Five

Broaden SOF PAOs education experience. PAOs assigned to SOCs or SF groups should be required to receive language training. This training could be conducted at the group's language lab after the PAO has been assigned or it could be accomplished prior to his arrival at one of the recognized service schools. Ranger and Special Operations Aviation Regiment PAOs do not require language training, as their assigned units have no civilian interface mission. PAOs assigned to the SOCs and SF groups should receive classes on the history, cultural, politics, and religion and media of the region. This education would prove invaluable as the SOF PAO conducts the planning for proposed annex.

Recommendation Six

No adjustments to the current SMU PAG are required. As discussed in the

findings sections it is a transparent document that frustrates journalist and hampers

spokesmen but it completes its task of protecting tactics, techniques, procedures, and

personalities of SMU units.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study raised the issue SOF PA uniqueness in terms of secrecy and security.

Two validate those claims further research should be done in two areas. First, a broader

scope should be undertaken to include SOF and conventional soldiers. This broader view

may determine if SOF's view of media acceptance, interaction, and facilitation is more

severe or restrictive than conventional forces or is it merely a perception. Secondly, more

study needs to be conducted in terms of PAO education. This study should use the

PSYOP educational model as a template to ascertain if Army PAOs are afforded the

appropriate level and breath of advanced civilian education.

APPENDIX A

POST INFORMATION PA PLAN

Appendix A, the Post-Mission PA Plan, is submitted as an example of a

potentially new planning methodology for SOF PAOs. In accordance with this study's

recommendation, it combines the tenants of crisis action planning with Mr. Kelliher's

concept of systematic, proactive planning for the post-mission information campaign. To

illustrate the new methodology a realistic scenario set in the US Central Command's area

of responsibility is used.

I. PA OBJECTIVE: Develop a Post Mission PA plan that that incorporates the CINC's
theater engagement plan, informational objectives and provides injects to the
International Public Information plan (IPI) in accordance with PDD 68 while protecting
the Special Operations Task Forces' (SOTF) equities. Also, provide coordinated
recommendations for input to DOS through the US Ambassador and OASD-PA through
CINCENT-PA for official public release of information regarding the political-military
response to planned or on-going operations.

II CONCEPT. SOTF PAO performs internal analysis to determine SOTF equities
relating to PMIO issues. Analysis will address four possible scenarios:

1. Mission success with public disclosure of US military involvement in operations.
2. Mission success without disclosure of US military involvement.
3. Mission complications with significant negative impact potential without public
    disclosure of US military involvement.
4. Mission complications with public disclosure of US military involvement.

SOTF PAO then provides results of analysis to OASD-PA through CINCEUR-PA in
order that the official DOD public information position can be coordinated in an effort to
provide public disclosure without jeopardizing sensitive SOTF essential elements of
friendly information.

III. SOTF Equities. These are defined as public information issues that are of significant
importance to the continued viability and effectiveness of SOTF and its forces. Public
disclosure of any JSOTF essential elements of friendly information will significantly and
negatively impact on the command's future viability and effectiveness. Request these
equities receive appropriate consideration by OASD-PA when developing public

information plans pertaining to this operation and all possible outcomes as defined in the scenarios below.

IV. SCENARIO. SOTF is currently conducting combined planning with the Government of Yemen for, the capture and possible handover to competent authority of al-Qaida leadership, and the protection of Yemen President Abdulah Salih. National level intelligence indicates al-Qaida leadership are located in Yemen's Northern Hydra Mount region, the birth place of Usama bin Laden, and have targeted Yemen's President Salih for assassination. This attempt is in response to his open support of the defeat of Usama bin Laden by US and Coalition forces in Afghanistan. This planning is made necessary because the US views the preservation of the leadership of the current president of Yemen as essential to maintaining peace and stability in the region, promotion and defense of democracy, enabling the right for self-determination of the Yemeni people, and to countering the active radical Islamic fundamentalist movement. Since its Civil War in 1994 Yemen's relations with the US have become increasingly stronger. The US recently pledged economic and military aid in return for the use of Aden's deep-water port. Regardless of mission outcome this action will likely garner immediate and intense global media interest. This exposure has the potential to expose SOTF tactics, techniques and procedures, assets and force disposition.

V. Scenarios and SOTF recommendations for PMIO planning.

1. al-Qaida is currently unaware of SOTF actions and intentions. OPSEC remains a critical component to mission success.
2. Current troop movements in the region in support of ongoing Afghanistan and operations provide cover for movement and basing of the current SOTF planning staff augmentation to CENTCOM. However, this cover significantly weakens once SOTF stages at multiple locations in region with significant air, ground and maritime forces and staffs, and then crosses recognized international boundaries during mission execution. (An operation deception plan executed at the CENTCOM level must be executed to maintain the element of surprise. SOTF PAO must be familiar with the plan and the associated cover story and must ensure CENTCOM PAO is also apprised of the plan in order to ensure that no unintentional disclosure occurs). This deception plan should provide official cover story to disguise SOTF posture and movements during staging and initial mission execution movements.
3. al-Qaida has a demonstrated localized ability to define propaganda terms to their advantage. This ability has been eroded over time due to the uncertainty regarding the death possible death of Usama bin Laden (UBL). However, local and regional Arab print media and Al-Jerzera TV are still sympathetic to terrorist themes (see possible themes).
4. Religious support throughout the region might manifest itself with anti-US actions if al-Qaida has unchallenged control of the information environment.

5. US public will support the service member. However, support of war on terror is showing signs of decline. A significant amount of casualties could further erode that support.
6. Actions must be sold to US public as War on Terror, not protection of a president or government historically unsympathetic to US interest.
7. Public support for the mission will be relative to its success and its education level as to the purpose and need of the mission.
8. Media and world populace will intuitively understand this was a special operations mission. Therefore, to ensure equities are protected SOTF must be prepared for increased media probes. SOTF must be fully backstopped by USCINCENT, USCINCSOC, OASD-PA and DOS.
9. If USG does not plan for and execute an aggressive PA campaign the mission may be tactical success and still be a strategic failure.

VI. Tasks/Purpose

1. White House Press Secretary. (Ari Fliesher) Immediately after the conclusion of the mission White House press secretary should issue a press statement announcing the operation to the American public. The announcement will serve to educate the American public on the importance of the mission and why it had to be conducted. Statement should emphasize rescue and de-emphasize ongoing destroy mission. White house should then pass PA responsibility to DOS as the LFA.
2. DOS should encourage Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Salih makes a public statement as soon as he is in their care. The timing of the statement is critical to winning the perception management battle. Uniformed military personnel should not be present at the conference. The purpose of the conference is twofold; first, to assure his nation that he is safe and to make his future intentions clear; secondly the absence of military personal should help establish the idea that he is the rightful leader in exile and that his rescue was a diplomatic maneuver.
3. DOS/DOD must be prepared to sell the story to the world. To support US assertions DOS/DOD must showcase intelligence, (SIGSEC, HUMINT reports, satellite etc.) that drove the rescue mission. DOS/DOD must make clear that the president was facing impending harm by Al-Qaida forces.
4. DOD must sell SOF capabilities without violating SOTF equities. The focus of the story needs to be presented as a rescue mission. Supporting B-roll of combat search and rescue assets aboard ships should be made available to the press. Combat camera crews could be employed to film Salih as he arrives at a safe location. (Probably US Naval ship in international waters. Coalition countries should be urged to participate in the post mission perception management battle but should not be part of the direct action mission planning. Footage of him holding a Yemen or American flag or hugging his wife and or children would provide potential positive images.

VII. Potential negative impacts to mission success.

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1. Any prior public disclosure of the mission.
2. President Salih or a family member is killed or severely injured during the rescue.
3. High number of SOTF casualties.
4. SOTF casualties coupled with unsuccessful mission. (Ambush scenario)
5. Helicopter or boat crash.
6. SOTF members captured and used for propaganda.
7. Salih is corrupted by a change of allegiance.
8. US actions receive no political support from neighboring countries.
9. al-Qaida is successful in exploiting media to define Salih as a traitor to Islam, coward, and tool of American interest.

VIII. Potential PSYOP themes issued through local press.

1. This action is an illegal US intervention in Yemeni internal affairs.
2. Salih is a coward; he fled in the face of danger.
3. The US knew al-Qaida would defeat Salih so they removed their puppet to fend off embarrassment.
4. Salih is a known criminal who fled to save himself from justice. (Al Jezera and local media may manufacture or have evidence to support this claim)
5. Salih is a traitor to the Yemen people and has fled to the safety of his US masters.
6. US kidnapped a Yemeni national in an effort to destabilize Yemen's politics, people or nation.
7. Continued US interference in internal matters. This meddlesome act by the US is a clear violation of UN charter. The US has no right, no authority, that is why they acted alone. The world's political leaders can recognize a rouge nation when they see one.
8. The US is trying to influence world politics through a system of intimidation, terror and unjustifiable pressure. First, Afghanistan then Yemen is Saudi Arabia or Egypt next?
9. This heinous act perpetrated by the US was a clear and obvious violation of international borders.
10. Extremely hostile action, an act of war, issue another call for Jihad.
11. Call on all nations/UN to condemn or take action against US.   This is another example of the US defying international law and conventions and acting in its own self-interests.
12. Violation of Yemen domestic law, US soldiers are outlaws and should be brought to justice.

IX. SCENARIO 1 - Mission success with immediate public disclosure of US military involvement in rescue operations. DOS/Embassy Themes: Active posture, press conference, and release statement, we must tell our story first and anticipate the irrationality of al-Qaida rhetoric. This outcome is highly potential and is optimum for ensuring public support for the mission and continuing backing of the American public for the war on terrorism.

1. The world has witnessed and the Yemeni people have felt firsthand al-Qaida's abusive, merciless deeds time and time again. In good conscience, the US could no longer standby and allow another human tragedy to unfold in the region.
2. The US government felt duty-bound and morally obligated to act swiftly and precisely to safeguard the present framework of peace in the region.
3. This daring rescue was a measured response fully calculated to resolve an impeding tragedy about to be perpetrated by "evil doers" men who are attempting to hijack Islam.
4. The need for action was of such an overwhelming magnitude that far-reaching yet surgically employed action was required.
5. Speed of action was essential to save the lives of President Salih and his family.
6. The al-Qaida have been warned repeatedly about US resolve. We will not falter, we will not fail.
7. The US quickly and methodically solicited support from trusted allies and only acted on its plans after that support was granted.
8. This heroic action of our servicemen and women saved lives, furthered the cause of democracy and sounded a clarion call that the US will not tolerate the trampling of the democratic process anywhere within its reach.
9. This mission was conceived, designed and executed with the sole intent of saving the life of President Salih and preserving the existing Yemeni leadership. This was quite simply a rescue mission of the highest order.
10. The united states views the preservation of the leadership of the current president of Yemen as essential to maintaining peace and stability in the region, to containing the repressive tendencies of the terrorist al-Qaida leadership, and to enabling the potential for self-determination of the Yemen people.
11. ISSUE CONDOLENCE STATEMENT FOR ANY LOSSES.

GOY Themes:

1. GOY expresses its sincere thanks to the USG and to the brave American soldiers who risked their lives to defend Yemeni life and freedoms.
2. GOY and US have a short but strong history of mutual respect and cooperation.
3. Shared values, zero tolerance for terrorist. Yemen will not be a safe haven for the "evil doers."
4. GOY took bold, decisive action to rid the country of terrorist.
5. President Salih was in a position to command his forces and oversee their dramatic victory.

DOD Themes: Active stance, press conference, with slides, photos, graphics etc. In time selected soldiers may be made available to the news media. These soldiers should be selected from supporting mission units and not from the units that conducted the rescue.

1. US service members acted heroically and should be commended for their actions.
2. Stress OGA support and coordination particularly from the intelligence field. (Fosters confidence).

3. Slides, photos and graphics must not violate SOTF essential elements of friendly information or critical information that could jeopardize the future viability and effectiveness of the force.
4. This mission demonstrates US military competency, capabilities and global reach.
5. The US military has at its disposal extraordinary resources and capabilities and will not hesitate to employ them given the proper orders.
6. As a matter of DOD policy we will not discuss any special operations involvement in this operation. That includes personalities, unique tactics techniques or procedures. This is done to safeguard potential future operations.
7. ISSUE CONDOLENCE STATEMENT FOR ANY LOSSES

CINCENT Themes:

1. Focus on service member's superior training and preparedness for actions. Stress jointness and complexity of operation. Stress core competencies, saving lives and protecting American interest in the region is number one priority.
2. Exceptional support from DOD and other government agencies.
3. Highlight rescue actions. Have combat search and rescue subject matter experts and selected personnel prepared to brief sanitized version of events.
4. Accent the great military relations between CINCCENT and the entire region. Highlight training with countries in the region.
5. ISSUE CONDOLENCE STATEMENT FOR ANY LOSSES

USSOCOM Themes:

1. SOF is the most capable force in the world.
2. SOF is comprised of highly dedicated, uniquely skilled professionals.
3. SOF plans for success.

X SCENARIO 2 - Mission success without public disclosure of US military involvement in rescue operations. This outcome has a potential of occurring if the GOY does not want its neighboring countries to know that it asked for and received US assistance. Most countries will believe that the US was involved but the GOY has to protect its own equities. Any US injuries may be accounted for as part of ongoing missions in Afghanistan.

DOS/Embassy Themes: Lead agency for release of information. DOS must release a statement expressing relief that President Salah is safe and that an heinous act of terrorism has been foiled. The statement must make clear that the situation in Yemen is still volatile and being developed so no further release of information will be made.

1. President Salih, a democratically elected ruler of a friendly nation, was in danger of being executed by internationally recognized outlaws. He asked for our assistance and President Bush granted it without hesitation or indecision. (No discussion of US military involvement.)

2. The DOS affected the rescue of president Salih with the support of many agencies Don't specifically name DOD.
3. Due to the sensitivity of this operation, and the possibility for future actions, no information will be released detailing the rescue itself.
4. The leader of Yemen and his family are safe that is reason for celebration.

GOY Themes:

1. GOY expresses its gratitude to the USG for assisting Yemen military in the safeguarding of President Salih against the terrorist's failed attempts to murder the President.
2. GOY will not tolerate terrorist within its borders and calls on all Arab States to denounce the senseless and needless violence of terrorism.
3. GOY and US are stronger now than ever and look forward to future partnership.

DOD Themes:

1. As an important military partner in the region we are happy that President Salih and his family are safe.
2. DOD looks forward to continuing to develop ties and relationships with the Yemen Department of Defense
3. Express sorrow at the loss of any lives.

XI SCENARIO 3- Mission complications with significant negative impacts and no disclosure of US military involvement. This is the least likely scenario and has a great potential to destroy the creditability of the USG and DOD. If the mission is a failure al-Qaida forces will quickly ensure the world knows of their defeat of US forces.

DOS/Embassy Themes: Lead agency for release of information. Depending on the size of the rescue force and the US time it occurs DOS should delay making any statement. If queried DOS should state that the situation is still developing and that it is still in the process of gathering information.

DOD Themes: DOD will not make any statements until DOS has granted release authority.

GOY Themes: GOY may not be in a position to make any statements.

XII SCENARIO 4 - Mission complications with significant negative impact and disclosure of US military involvement in rescue operations. This scenario is highly probable and must be mitigated quickly.

DOS Themes: DOS must deflect negative criticism and lay the blame for any negative outcomes squarely at the feet of al-Qaida. This release must be very rapid in order to

prevent the terrorists from controlling the pace of the news cycle. Bad news must be given to the American people rapidly and by trusted authority figures.

1. President Salih, a trusted friend and ally, requested our assistance, the US responded to the crisis.
2. The US response was necessary, measured and appropriate.
3. al-Qaida attempts to cheat the people of Yemen of their freely chosen destiny forced the US to take this action.
4. The action was necessary to discourage any other terrorist groups and demonstrate US resolve to the region.
5. Allowing terrorism to shape the future of Yemen is not an option

DOD Themes:

1. The al-Qaida is solely responsible for the consequences of this incident.
2. DOD's actions were correct and lawful under the circumstances, al-Qaida invited this action.
3. US military intervention wasYemen's best hope for a free and democratic future.
4. The loss of life is tragic but we must continue to prosecute the fight against this terrorism at all costs.
5. Our forces will learn from this unfortunate experience and become better prepared.
6. Express heartfelt condolences and thanks to the courageous US heroes who died or were injured while trying to save lives.
7. Don't speculate or question tactical decision. Pledge support to mission commanders.

CINCENT Themes:

1. CENCOM soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice to save their fellow man without regard to their own safety.
2. CENTCOM will not be dissuaded from its mission; terrorism will be eradicated, and there will be stability in the region.
3. CENTCOM soldiers continue to stand ready for any mission.
4. CENTCOM will learn from this encounter and will only work harder to continue to be the most professional, best-trained force in the world. Military operations are never risk free and will never be.
5. CENTCOM service members understand the dangers inherent in their job but work tirelessly to minimize the risks.
   CENTCOM warriors performed their mission to the best of their abilities. They should be recognized for their professional response. Without their quick action, the outcome would have been much more severe - we would have allowed democratic reform to fail without lending our assistance.

6. Peace and security of the region was at risk as al-Qaida sought to topple a government, overturn a way of life, and impose repressive rule upon a democratic society.
7. Offer condolence to any civilians killed during the operation.

XII PMIO IMPLEMENTATION: SOTF PAO should prioritize the above scenarios in order of potential but should be prepared to execute any one of them.   The key to success in today's global information environment is speed. The perception management battle will be fought and won in a matter of hours. Whichever side is the fastest in presenting their story to the biggest audience will most likely win the immediate PA battle. Therefore, it is imperative that the appropriate CINC, OASD-PA and DOS approve this type of PA plan prior to mission execution to ensure "Maximum Disclosure With Minimum Delay."

APPENDIX B

MEDIA QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions were either electronically mailed to or verbally asked of journalists during this study's research phase. Depending on how well the researcher knew the journalist a private letter requesting his or her input preceded the questions. Every journalist contacted responded either by mail or phone.

1. Do you think DOD's policy of not acknowledging the existence of certain units is still valid? (What's the secret)

2. In view of special operations units taking a leading role on the war on terrorism should DOD broaden its policy to allow for SMU coverage in order to maintain public support?

3. Does the secrecy of a unit make it an inviting target/object for a journalist?

4. What thought process or procedures does a journalist go through before he publishes a story containing classified or sensitive information. What are the checks and balances?

5. What role does the reporter play in establishing and maintaining public support for the military?

6. Since 11 September 2001 has the relationship between DOD and the media changed? If so how?

7. Any general comments you would like to add would be appreciated.

Thank You.

APPENDIX C

SOF STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire was electronically mailed to SOF students attending CGSC class 2002.

1. Is a disinformation campaign targeted against U.S. media acceptable if it is conducted to ensure operational secrecy and security?

2. As a SOF operator would you have safety concerns for your family if the media reported your full name and broadcast your face during or after an operation?

3. Has DOD gone too far in their efforts to facilitate SOF-media interaction? (the embedding of journalists with SF ODAs)

4. Is current DOD policy of not acknowledging specific SMU by name still a valid policy?

5. Given the nature of the current conflict should DOD policy be more restrictive to further shield and protect SMU operators and by extension their families?

6. Should DOD request retired officers stop speculating publicly and broadcasting potential operational plans?

7. Should DOD PA have done more to mitigate the perception that TF Ranger lost the battle of Mogadishu? Could a more proactive PA plan at the SOTF have helped with the perception management battle?

8. Should DOD announce successful SMU missions by true name? (The reason I ask this is, the only time the public is informed of a SMU mission is when it fails. How does this public failure (or perception of failure due to our silence influence public confidence and will?

9. In your previous SOF assignment how many hours of media training did you receive? Was it effective and realistic enough?

10. At your last SOF assignment was a PAO involved in any operational or tactical planning. Were they involved in actual mission execution?

11. Is there a need for assigning school- trained 46A PAOs at the SF Group or Rgr/SOAR Regiment Level?

12. Given SOF units are built on small unit cohesion, trust, and reputation should SOF grow their own PAOs. These soldiers would come from within the community or once assimilated in remain and understand the unique challenges, missions, etc?

13. Because of their Special Ops designation and habitual relationship with units are PSYOP soldiers more accepted by the community than PAOs?

14. Should SOF PAOs, especially those assigned to SOC or SF Group (if that were to happen), have any specialized training or educational background like language or International/Foreign Relations?

15. Should the PAO be involved in IO planning or does this connection taint the PAO?

16. At your last SOF assignment did you ever engage the media before, during or after deployment? If so, when, where and was it successful?

17. How do you feel toward embedding journalists on future missions given the recent neutral to favorable media coverage of SOF?

Any additional general comments you wish to include would be appreciated.

Thank You.

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