

DEVELOPING AIR FORCE STRATEGIC LEADERS IN TODAY'S COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT

BY

COLONEL CHAD P. FRANKS
United States Air Force

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

DEVELOPING AIR FORCE STRATEGIC LEADERS IN TODAY'S COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT

by

Colonel Chad P. Franks
United States Air Force

Colonel Jeffrey Caton
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

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Recent failures by Air Force strategic leaders and the emergence of a more complex security environment demand the Air Force change the way it develops its strategic leaders. This will require changes in not only its processes but also in its culture to ensure fundamental and lasting success for senior leaders. From junior officers to the most senior, a new approach to officer development will be required to ensure effective Air Force leadership and success as an institution for future challenges. This paper will look at a new theory of war and the relationship between war and politics. It will use this new theory of war to suggest how the United States Air Force should develop its senior leaders to better prepare for this new environment.

DEVELOPING AIR FORCE STRATEGIC LEADERS IN TODAY'S COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT

No study is possible on the battlefield, one does simply what one can in order to apply what one knows. Therefore, in order to do even a little, one has already to know a great deal and know it well.

—Marshal Ferdinand Foch¹

The United States emerged from the Cold War as the world's only super power. Its military when faced with force on force has proven successful as in Operation Desert Storm in Iraq and Operation Allied Force in the Balkans. As stated by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates "...other nations have learned from the experience of Saddam Hussein's military in the first and second Gulf wars that it is ill-advised, if not suicidal, to fight a conventional war head-to-head against the United States, fighter-to-fighter, ship-to-ship, tank-to-tank. They also learned from a bankrupt Soviet Union not to try to outspend us or match our overall capabilities."² Yet, the United States has struggled in the years following the Cold War in the international arena. Secretary Gates stated as well. "The military campaigns from Korea, to Vietnam, Somalia, and Iraq today – have been frustrating, controversial efforts for the American public and for the U.S. armed forces."³ The U.S. military has been involved in as much conflict as it had been during the stand off with the Soviet Union. Secretary Gates notes about our adversaries, "Instead, they are developing asymmetric means that take advantage of new technologies, and our vulnerabilities, to disrupt our lines of communication and our freedom of movement, to deny us access, and to narrow our military options and strategic choices."⁴ There have been arguably successes as well as failures. But how could a power like the United States with its awesome military might struggle against enemies far less capable?

Technology continues to change the global environment, making international relations and the nature of conflict itself very different. This paper looks at the current security environment and proposes a different way of viewing conflict and war among the nations of the world. This new theory of war should drive how the United States military, and specifically the United States Air Force, rethinks development of its senior leaders in order to better prepare them for a new security environment. To be effective Air Force strategic leaders require a keen awareness of the ongoing struggle between nations on the diplomatic, informational, economic and military level of conflict. Such conflict, which is ever present, will require successful strategic leaders to be culturally savvy, economically familiar, intellectually advanced and knowledgeable in government and interagency workings. As the Secretary of Defense summed up “the security challenges we now face and will in the future have changed, and our thinking must likewise change...the Defense Department needs to think about and prepare for war in a profoundly different way than what we have been accustomed to throughout the better part of the last century.”⁵

A New Theory of War

Carl Von Clausewitz referred to war as the duel.⁶ The duel between states has been a part of the human experience since their inception. Even though mankind has had much experience in the conduct of war, it remains a complex set of ideas and concepts. There have been many theories set fourth on the concept of war, by Clausewitz, Sun Tzu, Jomini and many others. These theories are significant because they shape views of why peoples go to war, how they conduct war as well as define war itself. No two theories are exactly alike but many have several of the same themes that run throughout. It is important to look at a theory that goes beyond the idea of war as

an armed conflict between belligerents. The nations of the world are in a constant struggle for survival and therefore find themselves in a constant state of war. This war is fought by various means through diplomatic, informational, economic and military means. To fully understand this idea, certain terms and concepts need to be clarified and defined.

Nations around the world possess different levels of national power. Among the power at their disposal rests diplomatic, informational, economic and military power. Some nations have different levels of power in the four different categories and it affects how they devise their national strategy. Non-state actors do not possess the diplomatic power, in most cases, but definitely possess and use the economic, informational and military power quite effectively. The diplomatic power of a nation is used in various ways but its main use is for the interaction between nations. Diplomacy has been used to keep the struggle between nations from escalating into armed conflict through talking, through treaties and through alliances. Since its inception, nations have used the United Nations with diplomatic tactics to help legitimize their causes to the world. The tactic of legitimacy is often used to help nations secure support for necessary actions needed to ensure their security. Diplomacy can be an effective tactic in the struggle among nations but it is often closely associated with the informational form of power.

Informational power is used by many nations in order to help ensure vital interests are kept secure. It is often used in conjunction with diplomacy to further the legitimacy of an action. Often informational power is used to shape the battlefield prior to an escalation of the struggle among belligerents to an armed conflict. This shaping, again, is used to help legitimize this escalation, not only among the other nations but

often among its own populations as well. This is true for non-state actors also and is one of their most powerful sources of power. It is used to help draw more to their cause and to gain support among other groups and nations of the world. Diplomacy and informational forms of power help to shape the battlefield but the economic form of power is a more direct tactic used in the struggle for security.

While the threat from physical attack is often seen as the major threat to a nation's security, an economic attack can have the same affects on a nation. The economic stability of nation is often as important as their physical security. Therefore the economic power of a nation can have a significant impact in the struggle for security. History has shown that nations have used economics as a low level form of conflict. Many have used trade wars, embargos and economic sanctions in order to shape the will of their opponents. Even non-state actors have often attacked the economies of other nations in order to further their cause. An economic attack can have a significant impact on a nation and has been the central reason why many wars have escalated to armed conflict. Escalation to armed conflict is always a possibility when a nations security is threatened and military power has been used throughout history.

Military power is the most quantifiable source of a nation's power. It can be used to threaten its adversaries in many ways in order to impose its will and ensure its security. Military power can range from a threatening posture with the simple movement of troops to an all out clash between belligerents. The range of armed conflict can vary and its intensity can range from the low end to the use of nuclear weapons. While non-state actors rarely possess a formal military, they do conduct

military operations using terrorism, guerilla tactics or insurgencies to further their cause. The military form of power has cost nations much in blood and treasure. Military power is often tied to the economic power of a nation. The stronger economic countries can afford to sustain larger standing and better technological militaries. They also tend to use military power more often either directly or to back up their diplomatic and informational form of power. This diplomatic, informational, economic and military power that nations use in the struggle for security leads to a new theory of war and its relationship to politics.

Carl Von Clausewitz argues “war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means.”⁷ For Clausewitz it is politics or policy is that is the underlying force that nations are engaged in. He goes on to say that “the political objective is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.”⁸ For Clausewitz war only is implemented when policy fails. He does not consider the fact that the policy could be that nations are already in a struggle for security and war as an armed conflict is simply an escalation in the conflict. Clausewitz’s definition of war is “war is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will”⁹, but this can be done through diplomatic, informational or economic force as well as military force. Clausewitz focus on the military as the only entity in which force can be used to force our will upon an enemy is short sighted. A more appropriate definition of war would be the use of diplomatic, informational, economic and military force to ensure the security of the state. This theory of war is based on the fact that nations are engaged in a struggle for security at all times. Sun Tzu stated that “to subdue the enemy without fighting is the

acme of skill.”¹⁰ Sun Tzu was talking about subduing the enemy with military might but any one of the instruments of power could subdue the enemy. Even in peace, though there may not be armed conflict present, nations are involved in conflict using the other instruments of national power to fight the battles to ensure security. This theory of war can have an impact on how a nation ultimately devises its strategy.

This theory of war is important because it then drives a nation to consider how it will resource and coordinate into a grand strategy its instruments of national power. For the United States, this may drive a different budgetary process. If the nation acknowledges that it is involved in constant conflict in which all instruments of national power are in use, sometimes concurrently, then a new strategy may require a more proportionate funding process. This theory of war can also have a significant impact on our military forces. How we develop our senior leaders with this new view of warfare would be significant. Military leaders would be required to be educated in not only the strategies of armed conflict but in the strategies of the other instruments of national power. Secretary Gates recently advised senior officers at the Air War College “Conflict will be fundamentally political in nature and will require the integration of all elements of national power.”¹¹ They would be required, as would be our civilian leadership, to take a holistic approach to strategy. Even today during the prosecution of armed conflict, all of the instruments of national power are required on the battlefield. The current fight in Iraq and Afghanistan are examples of all of the instruments of national power are needed to ensure the security of the United States. The sooner nations view the world as an ongoing conflict in a struggle for security and that politics are an extension from that conflict the more successful they will be.

Developing New Strategic Leaders

The world has become an extremely complex environment with a very diverse range of actors participating in a world struggle. Nations, terrorists, businesses, non-governmental organizations and many others are participating in a new globalization that the world has not seen before. This new globalization, driven by technology, expanding economic inter-dependence and a new wave of immigration, has created a complex security environment that all nations will have to deal with now and into the future. This new security environment will demand that the nations of the world take another look at their grand strategies of dealing with this diverse range of actors on the world scene. It will impact how nations use their elements of national power and more importantly how they resource, develop their armed forces, and establish new relationships within their interagencies.

This environmental scanning is especially important for our military. The United States military will require our future strategic leaders be developed differently in order to be successful in this new complex security environment. This different way of development will not be easy and will require the services to change the process of senior leader development and the current culture will need to make the transition as well. While all the services face their own challenges, the United States Air Force faces a huge challenge to changing senior leader development and the culture required to ensure permanent change due to some recent senior level failures.

The current culture of the Air Force in its senior leader development has lead to some recent high-level failures at the strategic level. The Air Force acquisition program came under intense scrutiny following the sentencing to prison of one its strategic leaders. The lack of discipline in the nuclear career field following several inspection

failures, the inadvertent shipping of nuclear parts to another nation and the inadvertent flying of nuclear weapons aboard an aircraft across the US indicate serious problems for the institution. In a Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management, the report, “revealed a serious erosion of focus, expertise, mission readiness, resources, and discipline in the nuclear weapons enterprise within the Air Force.”¹² The same report also noted serious problems in senior leadership, “First, in the years following the end of the Cold War, senior Air Force leaders devalued nuclear capabilities. Second, they failed to acknowledge and did not anticipate the full consequences of their decisions...Senior Air Force leaders failed to adjust policies, shift priorities, or support key nuclear assets, thus contributing to the decline of the nuclear mission.”¹³

The Secretary of Defense made numerous statements about the lack of mission focus on the current fight in Afghanistan and Iraq in regards to the Air Force participation and five wing commanders have been relieved from command in less than a year due to lack of performance. Secretary Gates while speaking to an audience at the Air University regarding increasing the number of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) said, “We can do and we should more to meet the needs of men and women fighting in the current conflicts while their outcome may still be in doubt. My concern is that our services are still not moving aggressively enough in wartime...because people were stuck in the old ways of doing business, it’s been like pulling teeth.”¹⁴ These incidents eventually led to the Secretary of Defense firing the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. In an article for the New York Times, Secretary Gates stated he had taken the action because an investigation identified “a lack of effective Air

Force leadership oversight”.¹⁵ The removal of two its most strategic leaders in a time of war are an indication that the development of senior leaders in the Air Force must be re-evaluated.

Along with the process of how the Air Force develops its strategic leaders, the culture that exists in the officer corps needs to be re-evaluated in order to ensure long lasting change to the institution. The Air Force will require mentally agile strategic leaders that are capable of dealing with complex problems in a new globalized world. They will need to be culturally savvy, economically familiar, intellectually advanced and knowledgeable in government and interagency workings. These traits should not and will not replace the traits of leaders that have been successful in the military, but complimentary to ensure success in a changing environment. It is important to look at these complimentary traits and understand how they will help strategic leaders in today's environment.

In today's new and complex global environment, strategic leaders will need to be more culturally savvy. In the last eight years the members of the military have had a large dose of Middle East culture. In the fighting in both Iraq and Afghanistan, everyone from the lowest rank to the strategic leader has had to become intimately familiar with the Middle East culture in order to be successful. Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently visited the Middle East along with Tom Friedman from the New York Times, a Middle East expert. The chairman quoted Tom Friedman as saying “the soldiers and Marines he met with, they truly have Ph.D.s in the Middle East.”¹⁶ Many are now very familiar with the teachings and rituals of Islam in order to be successful in their missions. As the world gets smaller from the use of technology and

the porous borders across the globe, it will be imperative for senior leaders to be aware of cultural implications. The Special Operations community has culturally developed its senior leaders due to the nature of its mission. That community has a heavy focus on language training and culture orientation throughout its officer corps. It has served them well with many of their senior leaders rising to posts such as the Army Chief of Staff, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and recently the Air Force Chief of Staff. Cultural awareness will be crucial for strategic leaders but equally as important will be a solid understanding of the economic environment.

The world is becoming more globalized and the world economic environment is a perfect example. Global business organizations that make goods in one country, sell them in another and provide service support for those goods from yet another is becoming the normal way to operate in the new global environment. This new globalization has given rise to a large interconnectedness of not only nations but non-state actors as well. R. Duane Ireland and Michael A. Hitt argue that the new global environment has created a new landscape in which the changes are rapid and revolutionary requiring strategic leaders to make decisions at a faster pace.¹⁷ As our strategic leaders develop it will be crucial to understand how this new globalization works and its effects on relationships between nations, business organizations, non-governmental organizations and non-state actors such as terrorist organizations. Economic power is constantly shifting among the nations of the world and many argue we are in the midst of a change now with India and China on the rise. Future military strategic leaders will need to have more than just an awareness of economic power, but will require an understanding of its transformational power and uses by our adversaries.

This understanding of economic problems and cultural awareness demands that our strategic leaders be intellectually advanced.

The new security environment will demand that our strategic leaders be intellectual. Our own Secretary of Defense told our future officers at West Point, “in order to succeed in the asymmetric battlefields of the 21st century-the dominant combat environment in the decades to come, in my view-out Army will require leaders of uncommon agility, resourcefulness, and imagination; leaders willing and able to think and act creatively and decisively in a different kind of world and a different kind of conflict than we have prepared for over the last six decades.”¹⁸ This is not to say that our current strategic leaders are not smart or bright. Indeed they are and would not be where they are today without being smart individuals. But with an environment much more complex, just being smart is not enough. Intellect is the ability to reason or understand.¹⁹ The military, especially the Air Force, places a high amount of emphasis on education. The professional military education system within our military services does a great job of laying the foundation and molding the knowledge of the officer corps. But knowledge is different than intellect. Someone with a good intellect has the ability to not only know facts but are also able to reason and understand those facts as it relates to complex problems. Our strategic leaders need to be intellectual in order to deal with the ambiguities and complex problems that will arise in the midst of such a changing security environment. These ambiguous and complex problems will require strategic military leaders to work in concert with government and the interagency process.

Today's military has come a long way in being capable of working in the joint arena. Surely the last eight years has increased our capabilities and joint awareness. But, the past eight years has also highlighted the need for interagency cooperation as well. In this area the military has not made the advancements that it has in the joint arena. As the military scans the strategic environment it is clear that much more interagency cooperation will be required in such a globalized security environment. During the Cold War the military role and that of the interagency was pretty clear. The military prepared for the red army marching across Europe and the rest of the government had its focus on watching and assessing the communist threat. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the military, as well as the rest of the US government, realized that there were a lot more complex threats requiring solutions from various agencies. The number and complexity of threats will only grow greater and can only be dealt with via a whole of government approach. It will be imperative for strategic leaders to understand and be able to work in an interagency environment.

Culturally savvy, economically familiar, intellectually advanced and knowledgeable in government and interagency workings are traits that the Air Force must develop in future strategic leaders in order to help them be more mentally agile. This will need to be accomplished by ensuring that our most senior officers are developed appropriately through education, selection and command experience.

In order to be successful the Air Force will be required to make changes to its to its current culture of leadership development. The Air Force current culture is one that has a heavy emphasis on professional military education as well as advanced degrees. While this first appears to be a culture conducive to well-rounded officers being readied

for future strategic leadership, it is not. Air Force officers tend to get advanced degrees in order to “check the box” for promotion boards. Distance learning professional military education serves as a good foundation but it is distant, with little actual interaction with fellow officers. Again, distant professional military education tends to be done in order to “check the box” for promotion. Officers chosen for attendance to in residence professional military education are still pressured by superiors to complete it in correspondence to show the promotion board their dedication. This poses a very difficult challenge for the Air Force as it become part of its norms and values.²⁰ Even more disconcerting is that the underlying assumptions²¹ are that officers with any advanced degree or any professional military education, no matter how it is achieved, will be promoted. In order to get to an officer corps focused on real intellectual discovery, the culture of “checking the box” must be changed.

In order to make a cultural change in the development of Air Force strategic leaders it needs to begin early in an Air Force officer’s career. In order to begin the development of officers to be culturally savvy, all junior officers should be required to learn and know a foreign language by the time their record is reviewed for promotion to captain. Language of a group is important because it is a window to its mindset, vision, discipline and hierarchy.²² Much scientific research points to the hypothesis that language also determines our way of thinking.²³ The Air Force should start by increasing the requirement for foreign language credit in all of its commissioning sources. This could then be augmented at the base level and orientation classes should be taken focused on the language studied. This would lay the foundation that cultural awareness is crucial and a primary focus in the development of Air Force

leaders. Admiral Mullen said recently “No training is more crucial to the U.S. Military than education in critical foreign language and cultures...language is a necessary tool for the exchange of information and ideas, it also can be a window into the culture of a foreign people.”²⁴ While cultural awareness is crucial for strategic leaders, so also is a solid intellectual foundation.

“From reading history, walking many battlefields with scholars, and watching a number of flag officers”, General Montgomery C. Meigs concluded “that one essential characteristic of generalship starts with force of intellect, from which derive the elements of decision and execution”.²⁵ In order to ensure solid intellectual foundations, the Air Force needs to move toward an interactive professional military education. Major General Perry Smith noted in his book that teaching is a fundamental aspect of being a leader. He suggests that “teachership”, as he refers to it, offers the leader the opportunity to not only influence young officers but also keep leaders intellectually sharp.²⁶ Not all officers will be able to attend professional military education in residence so the distant learning program plays a crucial role. However, officers should be doing distant learning by interaction with other officers to ensure a solid intellectual development. Commanders should be heavily involved, not just with the status of completion of distant learning but the quality as well. Commanders should have and play a role in that distant learning education which is currently not part of the culture. Commanders should be required to have discussions, review work and participate in the grading of distant education for intermediate and senior development education. This interaction would greatly increase the chances of officers learning intellectually as opposed to “checking a box.” Levying this change on commanders not only gives it

weight to the importance of the Air Force but also shows that commanders will be involved in all officer development.

Another aspect of the professional military education system that needs to be considered is the question of who should be considered for attendance to in-residence courses. Intermediate development education is correctly oriented and all career fields should be considered for attendance. However, as officers move up and are considered for senior development education the Air Force needs to closely consider exactly how it should parcel out this limited resource. These few precious resources should be limited to line of the Air Force officers. This can be quite contentious and there exist many good arguments to spread these allocations across all career fields but the Air Force would have more line officers to choose from when it comes to senior strategic leaders that will lead the Air Force in the future. It is safe to say that there is not a high likelihood that the Air Force Chief of Staff in the future will be a legal or medical officer. Non-line of the Air Force career fields are specialized such that they can develop their senior leaders through academic institutional fellowships. This would expand the pool of senior officers with senior service school education that Air Force leadership could choose for further strategic leadership.

Commanders, in order to play a role in the complete development of an officer, should have oversight of the types of advanced degrees pursued by officers. That is not to say they should have to approve an officer's degree but simply discuss how it will contribute to his or her development. This interaction will further reinforce the cultural shift from "checking the box" to a culture of education that is intellectually sound and

valued. The Air Force will also need to identify those senior leaders with the most potential for strategic leadership.

This new culture towards professional military education will also need to be taken through to the most senior level. With a solid foundation of professional military education started early in a career, it will need to be built upon later as an officer progresses through the ranks. Resources preclude the Air Force from upgrading its entire officer corps to a strategic senior level of education and development. A method to determine which officers will be upgraded to a senior strategic level of education will be needed in order to narrow the field and establish a select number of officers from which senior strategic service would be required. The current promotion system already lends itself to such a selection process but should be expanded. The process of selecting or narrowing the field is key if the Air Force is to improve its chances of developing the right officers for senior strategic leadership.

Below-the-zone promotions are an excellent method for identifying officers that should be considered for upgrading to senior strategic leadership development. Officers selected below-the-zone have demonstrated not only the potential to lead in the next grade but also demonstrated they are ahead in relation to their peers. Officers selected below-the-zone for both Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel should be designated as high potential officers. Using this criterion makes the number of officers manageable for a new program. On average the promotion rate for Lieutenant Colonel is 3.7 percent and for Colonel 3.1 percent.²⁷ Officers that have been promoted below-the-zone both for Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel is only .4 percent.²⁸ This low percentage of officers makes the concept very feasible to enact with little impact on the assignment system.

A recent study conducted by the Center for a New American Security states that the military has to find a way to prepare itself better for the vast array of complex challenges that it now faces.²⁹ In order to do that one of their recommendations is for the services to increase the use of sabbaticals to allow for officers to pursue higher education and additional experiences.³⁰ Based on those recommendations, high potential officers should be designated to attend senior development education in the normal school process that exists within the current system. However, they should also be designated to attend a follow on fellowship. These fellowships should be at accredited universities for six months in order for the officer to further their understanding of diplomatic, economic and informational issues. The next six months of the fellowship should be spent in Washington, DC at various agencies within the government. This would result in a two-year senior development education experience for these high potential officers.

Current Air Force leadership at the Headquarters Air Force and Major Command level lack the advance study of the diplomatic, informational and economical aspects of national power. While all have attended intermediate and senior service school, none, according to their current biographies, have attended any kind of in depth academic study of the elements of power other than the military element.³¹ In contrast, General David Petraeus, one of our most recent successful senior leaders not only attended intermediate and senior service school but also attended Princeton in which he received an MPA and PhD.³² Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Peter Chiarelli, acknowledged that in order to help our leaders in an increasingly interconnected world,

the services need to expand their educational programs and allow for leaders to serve in assignments outside the military structure to include the interagency.³³

Additionally, these officers should be assigned a senior mentor from the General ranks to help the officer stay focused on two years of intellectual study that will benefit their development. These senior mentors would be required to review their research work at senior development education and approve their course of study during the fellowship. The mentors would also participate in the follow on assignment for these high potential officers. Peter Senge argues in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, that in learning organizations, leaders are designers and teachers responsible for ensuring that people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity.³⁴ Senior mentor participation would help move the Air Force toward becoming a learning organization. This two year intense study would immensely help prepare these high potential officers for the challenges in a new global security environment. Future strategic officers will not only need to be mentally agile but will also need to have command experience at all levels.

Often in the Air Force the term “fast burner” is used to describe an officer quickly moving up through the ranks. While many of these officers are above and beyond their peers, there is no substitute for command experience. All command experiences bring a unique development to an officer that cannot be duplicated. Normal command tours from squadron through wing command are two-year tours. However, often “fast burners” are often only given yearlong tours so they can be positioned elsewhere to continue the rapid movement up the chain. There are cases when some officers skip all together levels of command. An example would be an officer with squadron command

experience skipping group command and going right to wing command. Every level of command brings distinct challenges and experiences that shape and develop an officer's leadership skills. In a recent article for the Air Force Times a retired Air Force general officer was quoted as saying "the high number of dismissals this year shows the Air Force is picking officers who don't have the experience to lead and needs to change the way it selects commanders."³⁵ Of the five wing commanders recently fired, two did not have experience as an operations group commander.³⁶ Air Force leadership needs to re-establish that command experience is highly valued and critical to a senior leaders development. Any command tours shorter than twenty-four months, except for combat command tours, should require an Air Force Chief of Staff waiver. This would place the authority in the hands of a senior strategic leader and show the force the weight of value that command experience has in the Air Force. This new emphasis on command experience would reap huge benefits in senior strategic development for years to come.

Many new threats are emerging due to economic interconnectedness, porous borders, and technology. Threats from other nations, non-state actors, non-governmental organizations and even business requires that our military begin to change the way strategic leaders are developed in order to meet these new emerging threats. Recent events in the Air Force, in particular, stress the importance of changing a culture of leader development that has led to some enormous failures. John Kotter's, Harvard professor in leadership, research over the last decade shows that culture only changes after you have altered people's action and everyone can see the benefit of this new action.³⁷ Addressing the underlying assumptions and implementing real change in senior leadership development will ensure long, sustained success for the Air Force.

Summary

The nations of the world are involved in an ongoing struggle for security. Many theorists have thought about war as an extension of politics. But history has shown that man has been and will continue to be in conflict at all times despite policy. This new way of looking at conflict and war should drive the United States military to a new way of developing its senior leaders. The Air Force, in particular, stands at a crossroads where it will need to decide on a better way of developing its senior leaders especially in the wake of such turmoil among its most senior strategic leaders. This paper attempted to lie out feasible and effective concepts toward a roadmap to ensure that future Air Force senior leaders are best postured for the incredible challenges that our civilian leadership and the American people trust to their military.

Endnotes

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