

Special Operations Forces to the Twenty-First Century: What Threat, What Response? (Coffin)

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Subject Area Operations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES TO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY:
WHAT THREAT, WHAT RESPONSE?

BACKGROUND: One assumption underlying successful guerrilla or revolutionary war is that to be successful, it must be supported or sponsored by an outside power. For the last seventy years, the Soviet Union has been the prime sponsor of unrest. With the Soviet Union's economy in a shambles, and with it apparently in retreat around the world, the Soviet Union may no longer be capable or willing to sponsor revolutionary movements.

If the Soviets no longer can, are there any other candidates capable or willing to fill that role? If so, who might they be and what is to be the United States' response?

ISSUE: This paper conducts a brief overview of the history of Special Forces, including the present force structure.

It examines the various levels within the spectrum of conflict, and does a region-by-region analysis of political, social and economic factors affecting the region; it assesses the likelihood and nature of potential conflict to 2010. It also estimates the likelihood of US involvement in such conflicts.

The paper then examines the capabilities of Special Operations Forces and discusses current and potential problems with existing force structure, including the most pressing: Integration of the Reserve Special Forces fully into the US Special Operations Command. The Reserve problems include, but are not limited to: inadequate training time; multiple layers of command/control; varying, uncertain sources of funding; problems with existing law governing Reserve/Active Component relations. It addresses the USMC, which currently has units advertised as being "Special Operations Capable," but which are not in the US Special Operations Command. It briefly discusses the Drug War.

CONCLUSION: The prospect of General Global War has decreased dramatically. There are a few, but not many, candidates for the sponsorship of movements; none on the scale of the Soviets for the last seventy years. Therefore, conflict between now and 2010 is most likely to be at the lower end of the spectrum, of various types, depending on the region and the "players." Special Forces is the only force trained and equipped, with the linguistic and cultural expertise, to operate across the entire spectrum of war, from benign peace to total war, as their primary mission, not as

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an adjunct or additional mission. Reserve SOF funding should be totally separate from Reserve and NG accounts. This is being attempted, but some surprises may be lurking. Reserve SF units should be validated and if they cannot maintain SF standards for the total SF package of missions, they should be assigned other Special Operations missions less demanding of their resources. The USMC should have an element assigned to USSOCOM. The strongest objection to this will probably come from the USMC.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES TO THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: WHAT THREAT,
WHAT RESPONSE?

by

Major Charles F. Coffin, USAR/AGR

Major Charles F. Coffin, USAR/AGR
USMC School of Advanced Warfighting
Quantico, Virginia
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All opinions expressed herein, unless otherwise noted, are my own and my sole responsibility, as are any factual errors.

ASSUMPTION

The Soviet Union, caught up in its own domestic and economic unrest, will focus internally for the next five to ten years, rather than externally. This change in focus will create the inability or unwillingness to become involved in revolutionary or guerrilla movements which do not have a direct benefit or effect on the Soviet Union itself. The threat from the conventional forces of the Soviet Union and the likelihood of an conventional assault on western Europe will also decline.

OBJECTIVE

This paper will attempt to trace the implications of that change of focus, with particular emphasis on the impact on Special Operations Forces, over the near term (the next 5 years), the mid-term (from 5 to 10 years), and the long term (from 15 to 20 years). This paper is not meant to be predictive, but, rather, speculative, with the intent of examining some the possibilities inherent in a world that is changing rapidly in almost every area of human endeavor.

BACKGROUND OF ASSUMPTION

One of the commonly accepted tenets of revolutionary or guerrilla war is that, to be successful, it must be sponsored or supported by an outside power. This sponsorship is necessary for a number of reasons. Primarily, of course, a guerrilla or revolutionary movement needs supplies, arms and munitions. But

just as importantly, a movement needs the legitimacy that outside support provides. Without this recognition and support, the movement can be considered just another band of outlaws.

This tenet is generally, though not universally, accepted. Often cited as examples are the American Revolution, the Spanish guerrillas resisting Napoleon's occupation, the various resistance and guerrilla movements throughout the world during World War II and others. The very few exceptions to this rule seem to be either coups or rapid, popular uprisings. Few other exceptions can be found.

For the last seventy years (with the exception of the WWII years) the primary sponsor of revolutionary movements has been the Soviet Union. Soviet communism has always been evangelical in nature, with the stated purpose of spreading its doctrine. It has from the beginning vowed to support wars of "national liberation." Marxist-Leninist doctrine holds that all previous economic states, particularly capitalism, are merely stages that must be passed through until the perfect state of socialism is achieved. Communism is the next to the final state.

Since socialism is viewed as the inevitable state towards which the world is evolving, it is the moral duty of communists to assist revolutionary movements wherever they may exist, and encourage them to begin where they don't exist. This imperative has driven the Soviet Marxist-Leninists since before the October Revolution of 1917./1

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

Special Forces (upper case)--often referred to as "the Green Berets"--is the US Army's designated force trained for various special operations. Special Forces comprises less than 2% of the US Army. Special forces (lower case) is the generic term for such units or personnel, from any branch of service or any nation's military. Within the US military, they are "military personnel with cross training in basic and specialized skills, organized into small multiple purpose detachments with the mission to train, organize, supply, direct, and control indigenous forces in guerrilla warfare and counter-insurgency operations and to conduct unconventional warfare."/2 Within this paper, Special Operations refers to military or para-military operations normally beyond the training and/or capabilities of conventionally trained soldiers or units, or "operations conducted by specially trained, equipped and

1. Donnelly, Christopher, Red Banner, The Soviet Military System in Peace in War, Jane's Information Group, Ltd., Alexandria, VA, 1988, pp. 52-63. The clearest and most lucid explanation and history of Marxist-Leninist doctrine that I have seen. The above also applies to Donnelly's description of Soviet military history, organization and doctrine.

2. Joint Pub 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 1 Dec 89, p. 385.

organized DOD forces against strategic or tactical targets in pursuit of national military, political, economic or psychological objectives. These operations may be conducted during periods of peace or hostilities. They may support conventional operations or may be prosecuted independently when the use of conventional forces is either inappropriate or

infeasible."/3 Special Operations Forces (SOF) is the current term for forces within the US military organized and capable of conducting such Special Operations and includes supporting forces from other Services.

US SOF TO 2010

Considerations bearing upon the implications for US Special Operations Forces fall roughly into three categories. The first category is historical. We can get a better sense of where we might be going if we understand a little about the past and the decisions which led us to our present state.

The second category is the evolving force structure--how special operations forces have been and are at present structured to accomplish perceived missions. This obviously is affected by the historical category, by political considerations (such as budgets and the mood of the country), and by our perception of the world, both as it is and as we anticipate its changing.

This third category, our perception of the world, is the

3. Op. cit., p. 339.

most difficult to deal with. The world changes so rapidly today that almost any discussion of mission or force structure may already be obsolete. Our task is to do a careful analysis of what is occurring in the world, trace its implications, try to note how unsuspected items (social trends, population growth, technology) may affect any or all of the above, and prepare ourselves to best serve our country. A most daunting assignment.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

(This is a rough summary of Special Operations Forces, by decade, since the 1950s. It is not precise and there is considerable overlap by decade. Its purpose is not to provide a pigeon-hole in which to fit all SOF activities, but rather, to provide a rough thumbnail guide for understanding the evolution of SOF.)

After World War II, the goal of the West became to contain the expansion of communism. With a greatly reduced conventional army, the West relied on nuclear deterrence to prevent the still-massive Soviet armies from continuing the westward march that had been halted at Berlin--but only temporarily halted, it was feared.

In the event nuclear deterrence failed, planners realized that they would have the choice of either carrying out their nuclear threat or attempting to counter the invasion conventionally. It was presumed that a Soviet army would have initial success, before the remaining conventional forces of the west could be mobilized, transported, and brought to bear. The depleted state of the US Army at that time ensured there could be no rapid conventional response.

A part of the successful campaign plan against the German war machine had been the use of resistance forces, the Maquis in France, the Partisans in Yugoslavia, and others. Assisted by the outside support of various types of OSS teams, they were

successful in tying up large numbers of Wehrmacht troops. General Eisenhower reckoned the Maquis resistance had been worth 15 divisions./4

Some far-seeing planners realized that should the Soviets roll westward, it would be well to have personnel trained and prepared to operate behind Soviet lines as a guerrilla/resistance force./5 On 20 June 1952, the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) was activated at Ft. Bragg, NC./6 Originally the idea of a behind-the-lines resistance force was oriented primarily toward Europe, but eventually plans included various Asian scenarios as well.

Since that time, Special Forces has gone through a number of different orientations. As stated above, the original intent for

4. Sutherland, Ian D. W., LTC (ret.), Special Forces of the United States Army, 1952-1982, R. James Bender Publishing, San Jose, CA, 1990, p. 16.

5. A "resistance" is a group fighting an outside invasion. Generally, it dissolves when the invader is repulsed. "Guerrillas" are engaged in an attempt to overthrow an existing government. Obviously, there can be considerable overlap between the two.

6. Op. cit., p. 19.

employment of Special Forces was to train, equip, assist and advise guerrilla and resistance forces in a country which had been overrun. This orientation continued through the 1950s and early 1960s.

Beginning in the 1960s, the orientation shifted. Always shunned by the conventional army, Special Forces had struggled for its very existence. Wearing the now-famous "Green Beret" was

forbidden. Officers volunteering for SF duty put their careers at risk.

Then President Kennedy took an interest. During his remarks at the graduation of the 1962 West Point class, he said (referring to the communist wars of "liberation"), "This is another type of war..., war by ambush..., by infiltration..., seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him." His interest provided legitimacy to the Special Forces (he authorized the Beret), but also changed the direction of SF orientation.

From guerrilla operations behind enemy lines, the focus shifted to counter-insurgency, the combatting of a revolutionary movement.⁷ While not the same mission, it required many of the same skills and training. Particularly it required a language capability and sensitivity to the culture, the ability to get

7. Not "counter-guerrilla." "Counter-guerrilla" is a military operation, chasing down guerrillas. "Counter-insurgency" spans the entire spectrum of political/civil/military effort, not only to eliminate guerrillas, but also eliminate their bases of support, their popular support and address sources of civil unrest or dissatisfaction with the existing government. along with people from a different culture, and a maturity and awareness of larger, political objectives, as well as purely military ones.

During the 1970s, after the US failure in Vietnam, the existence of Special Forces was again in jeopardy. SF strength shrank to a fraction of its strength during the heyday of the Vietnam years. And again its focus changed. There was little talk

of "counter-insurgency," and although the guerrilla mission remained the primary SF mission, except for the European-oriented SF Groups, little was done.

Instead, emphasis was placed on "Direct Action" ("DA") missions and "Special (or Strategic) Reconnaissance" (SR). The Direct Action mission was essentially planning for raids on strategic targets, ambushes, and similar small-scale short duration activities./8 Special Reconnaissance is the reconnaissance of strategic (as opposed to tactical) targets or objectives, or reconnaissance to obtain or verify information concerning capabilities, intentions, and activities of held, contested or denied areas. "SF teams may perform SF missions at the strategic, operational, or tactical level. At the strategic level, SF teams collect and report critical information for the NCA, JCS, or unified commander in crisis situations and in support of national and theater CT [Counter-Terrorism) forces. SF teams perform operational-level SF missions in support of

8. The Son Tay Raid into North Vietnam in November of 1970 is an example of a "DA" mission.

insurgency, counter-insurgency, and contingency operations. SF teams may also perform tactical reconnaissance when the nature or sensitivity of the mission makes the use of LRSUs [Long Range Surveillance Units] inappropriate."/9

During the 1980s, the SF emphasis continued its evolution. Security assistance to friendly governments, training forces of either friendly governments or rebels, nation building, in the

form of Foreign Internal Defense (FID), or Internal Defense and Development (IDAD), all became part of or continued to be part of the SF charter. The term "Low Intensity Conflict (LIC)" first began to be heard.

"Low Intensity Conflict [LIC] is a political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states."/10 They are localized conflicts, but with potential regional and global implications. "The term suggests that the conflict does not directly threaten US vital national interests. Another party to the same conflict may consider it a struggle for national survival."/11 LIC is a broad catch-all term, encompassing any number of other types of conflict (insurgency, counter-insurgency, drug-war, guerrilla or counter-guerrilla operations) all of which have implications for the

9. FM 31-20, Special Forces Operations, p. 3-4.

10. FM 100-20/AFP 3-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, p. 1-1.

11. FM 31-20, p. 1-4.

United States, all of which have broader social, political and military implications than pure "conventional" conflict might.

This evolution of Special Forces is a reaction to a changing world and the changing perceptions of what is needed in unconventional warfare. In the words of LTG Michael Spigelmire, "Special Forces has [changed] over time...and it's because Special Forces was meeting a need at the time. Just like any

other military force, we respond to the needs of the country."/12 Today, during the 1990s, there are five official Special Forces missions: Unconventional (guerrilla) Warfare, Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, Counter-Terrorism and FID/IDAD./13

While the "glamorous" missions of UW, SR, DA and CT draw all the publicity and attention, the less-"glamorous" FID/IDAD mission is at least as important and probably more important over the long term.

Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) are very similar. FID is "counterinsurgency, military assistance, civil actions," the assisting of a friendly government in training, advising and supporting counter-

12. Interview conducted with LTG Michael F. Spigelmire, Commanding General, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, by the author on 10 May 1991, at Ft. Bragg, NC.

13. Draft, The Commanding General's (USSOCOM) Annual Report, 5/14/91, page p. 22. Although FID and IDAD are not synonymous, and only LID is listed as an SF mission, because of their similarity and overlap, to my mind they are very much intertwined, differing primarily in the point of view. In this paper I will list them together.

insurgency operations./14,15 IDAD is the overall strategy for preventing or defeating an insurgency. It is all the measures taken by a country to defeat or prevent an insurgency. Both FID and IDAD can be considered nation-building, the assisting of a friendly or potentially friendly country in the building of a strong infrastructure. They range across a variety of activities, which might include civil action, engineering, agricultural activities, economic assistance, small business

instruction, industrial development, military assistance and instruction as well as many other forms of assistance. One key difference between FID and IDAD is the point of view. "Foreign Internal Defense is our idea of what we want to do [in a host nation]. But there's another side to that coin. It's called Internal Defense and Development. That is the host nation's view of what it wants to accomplish. The two may not be compatible. The two may be parallel, but not intersecting, not converging."/16

SOF FORCE STRUCTURE

It is not the intent of this paper to examine Force Structure or restructuring of Services for the next twenty years.

14. Ibid.

15. FM 31-20, p. 3-3.

16. Interview conducted with BG General David J. Baratto, Commanding General/Commandant Special Warfare Center and School, by the author on 9 May 1991, at Ft. Bragg, NC.

That has been done in some detail by a number of other writers./17 However, it might be useful to look at the structure we have created to deal with the lower spectrum of conflict.

As discussed earlier, Special Forces was originally intended to be primarily a guerrilla training cadre. As time passed, the mission evolved. Today the primary force for dealing with the two lower rungs on the ladder of escalating conflict (Counter-

Insurgency and FID/IDAD) is Special Forces./18

Special Forces has also come to be a part of a larger entity: Special Operations Forces. SOF includes Army Rangers, Navy assets (including Navy Seals), Air Force Special Operations Aviation, as well as Army Special Forces. It does not include the US Marines.

The creation of a combined SOF capability was driven by many things, but primarily by a combination of the tragedy of the attempted Iranian hostage rescue mission (known as Desert One) and the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986. Both were tied together.

When President Carter asked for possible military options in

17. See, for example the final theses for the USMC School of Advanced Warfighting, 1991 class: Force Reductions: Being Smarter About Getting Smaller, by Major Paul L. Ladd, USMC, and Strategic Airlift After Desert Shield by Major John E. Valliere. Each have some novel and creative ways of dealing with reduced forces and transportability.

18. This Four-Step Ladder, in descending order, is: General Global War (including, but not necessarily nuclear exchange), Regional War, Counter-Insurgency, and FID/IDAD. response to the taking of American hostages by the Iranians, it quickly became apparent that no one Service was capable of performing the mission. What was needed was a force capable of assembling, transporting, and logistically supplying itself for such a mission. This force would need to cut across Service lines.

As such a force did not exist, the entire Desert One organization, planning and attempted execution was done on an ad hoc basis. Committees were formed and dissolved, plans were

made, but never written down, no clear lines of command and authority were ever established, and all equipment and money had to be borrowed from other sources, often across Service lines. After the mission's failure, many expressed concern over the ad hoc nature of that entire operation.¹⁹ They recommended (among other things) a special organization for any future such activities be created.

There had also been considerable pressure for a reform of the military and the Joint Chiefs of Staff for some time. While neither the failure at Desert One or the movement to reform the Joint Chiefs was the sole reason for the creation of a Special Operations Force or JCS reform, both provided strong incentive, each for the other.

Today the US Department of Defense Special Operations Forces structure consists of the USSOCOM. On 1 December 1989 the United

19. For example, COL James H. Kyle, in The Guts to Try, Orion Books, New York, 1990, passim, but especially pp. 33-42. States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) was created, by congressional mandate. It is a Unified Command, consisting of an Army, a Navy, and an Air Force component. By law, all US Special Operations Forces fall under it. It is responsible for all Department of Defense Special Operations Forces. Forces of any Service which claim Special Operations capability but are not under USSOCOM are being misleading at best.

USSOCOM can act as either the supported or the supporting CinC, and, unlike other Specified and Unified Commands, "owns" no

geography. USSOCOM has its own budget, its own Program Objective Memorandum (POM) and has authority to develop its own doctrine and joint doctrine, which other CinCs do not. It reports directly to the Secretary of Defense and is commanded by a 4-star General, at present General Carl W. Stiner.

Reporting to USSOCOM is a Special Operations component from each Service; the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), the US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), and the Naval Special Warfare Command (NavSpecWarCom) (See Figure 1.)

In this paper I am primarily interested in the Army component of USSOCOM. This is not to denigrate the other services, but with some exceptions, they are primarily in support roles, whereas USASOC forces tend to be primarily the "players." Therefore, further discussion will focus on USASOC, the Army Component.

USASOC is a Major Army Command and the Army Component Command of the US Special Operations Command. The USASOC

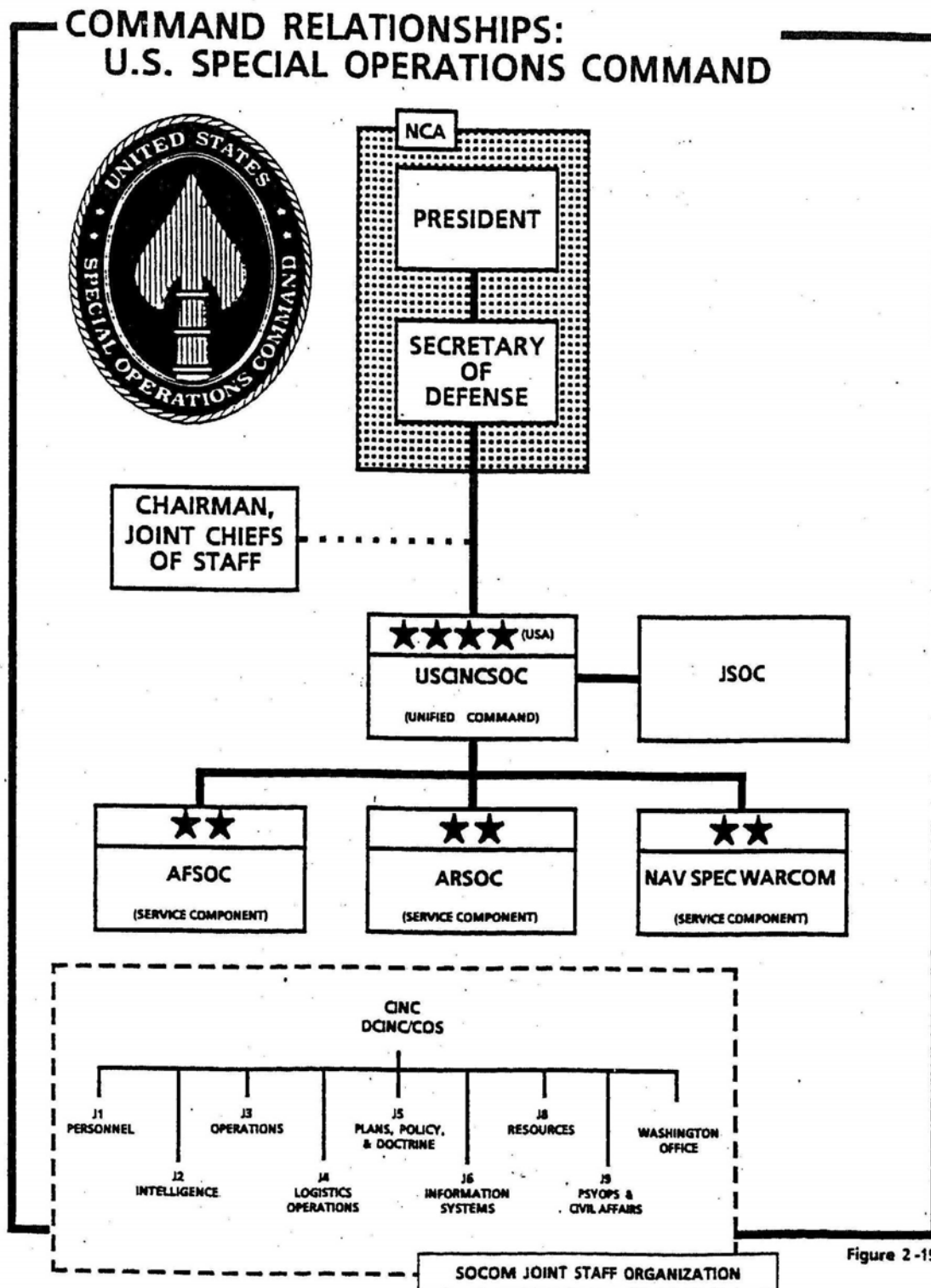


Figure 2 -19

Figure 1

Source: Joint Staff Officer's Guide, 1991

Commanding General reports directly to the Chief of Staff of the Army for administrative and support matters and to the Commander-in-Chief, USSOCOM for operational and training matters./20

Primary commands under the US Army Special Operations Command consist of the Special Warfare Center and School (SWCS), US Army Special Forces Command (USASF Cmd), the US Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC), the 75th Ranger Regiment and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). (See Figure 2.)

The basic building block of Special Forces is the Special Forces Operational Detachment (SFOD) also known as the A-Detachment or A-Team. This team consists of 12 individuals, commanded by a Captain, with a Warrant Officer Executive Officer, two Operations and Intelligence NCOs (E-8 and E-7; the E-8 doubles as the Team Sergeant), two Weapons NCOs (E-7 and E-6), two Engineer NCOs (E-7 and E-6), two Communications NCOs (E-7 and E-6) and two Medic NCOs (E-7 and E-6). The ranks on a team may vary slightly. There are rarely E-5s on a team, and no one below the rank of E-5.

Six SFODs (and a company headquarters) make up a Special Forces Company; three Companies (and a battalion headquarters) make up a SF Battalion; three battalions, a headquarters and headquarters company, and a support company make up a Special Forces Group. The Group is authorized a total of 1385 personnel. There are at present five Special Forces Groups on Active Duty

20. Draft, "CG's Annual Report", op. cit., p. 3.

FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT

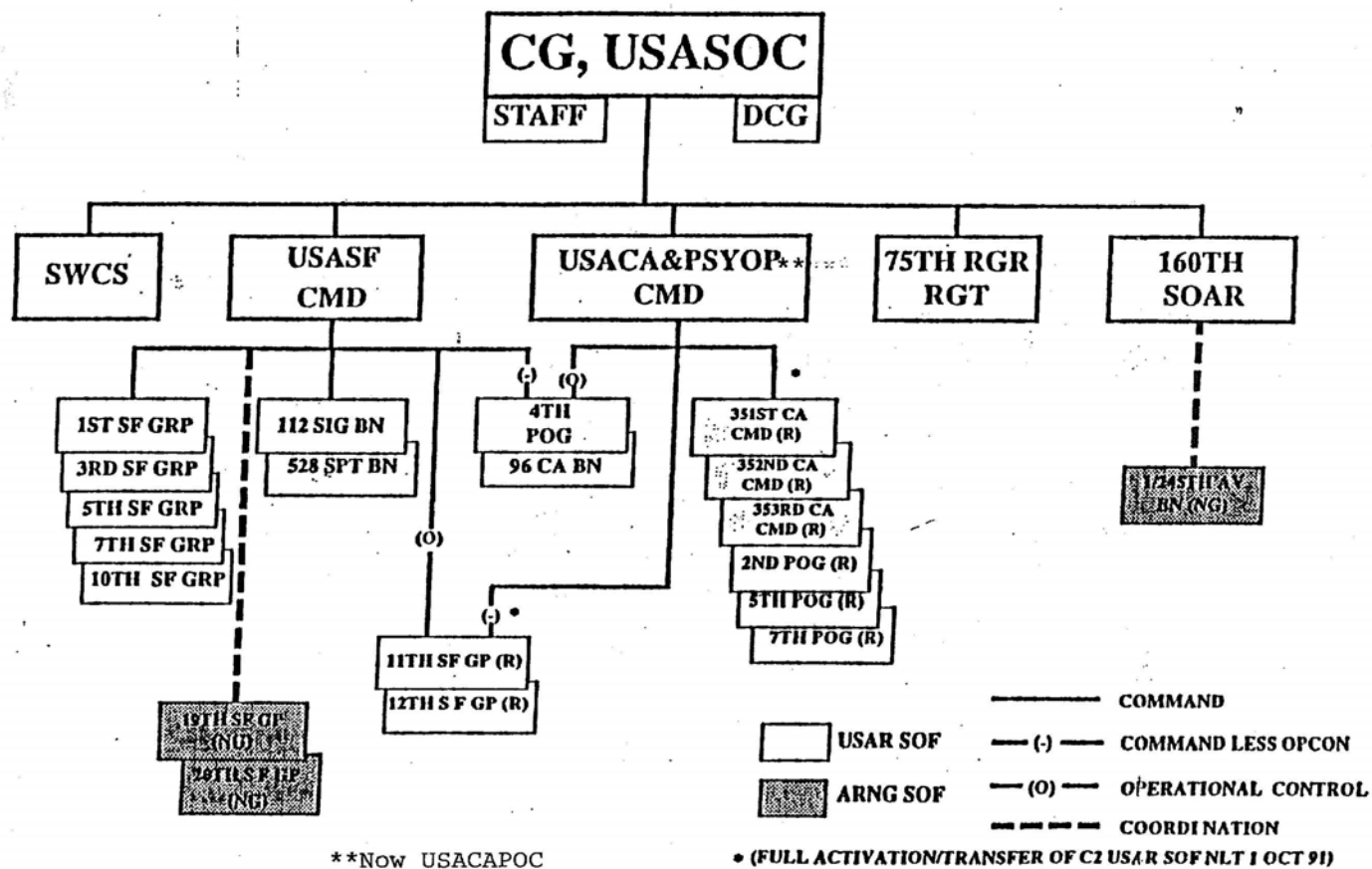


Figure 2

and four in the Reserve Components (2 NG, 2 USAR).

The SFOD can operate either as a unit or split into two subunits. It will be apparent from the rank structure that the individuals are much higher ranked than one might expect from the size of the unit. This is intentional. The SLOD is composed of mature, experienced individuals used to authority and responsibility.

Probably the greatest difference between US Army Special Forces and any other combat military unit is the language and cultural orientation. Each Special Forces Group is oriented toward a specific region of the world. Within the subordinate structures of the Group, the Battalions, Companies and Detachments each are more precisely oriented to a given country or region. The members of the SFOD are immersed in the culture, the language and mores of the region.

Because of their maturity, the team members are also expected to be able to work closely with members of the host country's military, police, and governmental officials as well as representatives from other agencies and organizations within the US government (for example, USAID, State Department, etc.). Their experience and education give them a world-view not available to most members of a military organization in a region, who generally are there for a limited, military mission and then depart.

Because of its small size, the SLOD is able to maintain a relatively low profile in the host country. This is a major

consideration in areas of the world where 1) there may be opposition within the host government to foreign military presence, or 2) where there may be opposition within the US government to assisting a country, or 3) where any US military presence is resented by the people of the country or region as a whole.

With their primary focus on teaching and assisting the people of a country, Special Forces teams are ideally suited to perform the FID/IDAD mission.

ANALYSIS OF WORLD TROUBLE SPOTS

If this is the existing SOF force structure, how does it fit into the world today? If the Soviet Union is no longer the main player on the world stage in terms of US security, who are the other candidates? What are the threats in the world, where are they most likely to come from, and in what way is the United States interested? What countries are candidates for sponsorship of revolutionary movements?

There must either be an ideological or political reason for a country to commit itself to revolutionary sponsorship; otherwise, it may not be worth the risk. A country sponsoring a movement risks being accused of meddling in the internal affairs of another country, which can lead to much more serious consequences--such as open war.

As stated, such support will most likely stem from an ideological or political reason. Ideological reasons could be

religious fanaticism or communist Marxist-Leninist dogma, where expanding the belief is required by the belief. A purely political reason might be the support by the allies of various movements during World War II, ie, we were at war and other concerns were secondary. What areas of the world might provide such a climate for the exportation of revolution?

Europe. Europe, it would seem, provides little in the way of a breeding ground for such a commitment. Most of the European countries are militarily weak and have little interest in spreading any kind of dogma. This would seem to hold true for the near and the mid-term. The long term is more difficult to estimate. If a united Germany should acquire expansionist desires, it could conceivably be a source of trouble.

This seems most unlikely, however. Given that the West Germans have saddled themselves with the economic disaster area formerly known as East Germany during reunification, it is doubtful that a united Germany will pose any kind of military or political threat for quite a few years.

The Soviet Empire seems on the verge of collapse. It would appear that there are two directions it may go: The union may disintegrate, with a number of the captive republics attempting to declare themselves independent. If such should happen, either Moscow will try to hold them in by force or let them go. If the former, considerable unrest and fighting will follow. If the latter, the entire union will be in economic and political collapse.

(Of particular difficulty from the Soviet (Russian) point of view, are the Muslim republics. This mostly Turkish speaking group of about 50 million is divided among six republics./²¹ At present, one of every two Soviet citizens is not a Russian. But with the much higher birthrate of the Muslim countries, the Russian power holders are rapidly being outnumbered. Population of the USSR in 1986 was about 281 million, by the year 2000 it is projected at 312 million. This is an increase of about 0.6% per year, far below the 1.8% mean annual rate projected for the rest of the world, and this figure includes the much higher Muslim birthrate. Thus, Soviet (Russian) birth rate is probably on the negative side, by far the lowest of any industrialized country in the world.)

The second possibility is that Gorbachev could retire or be retired/²² and a more militant leader take power, determined to hold the empire together by force. This would have to happen in the very near future to keep the captive republics in line; they are attempting to break away at this writing. If such a leader took power, he could be expected to reestablish the attitude toward the west that has characterized the Soviets since the end of World War II.

However, the strategic situation is no longer the same.

21. Unless otherwise noted, all population and resource figures in this section are taken from A Strategic Atlas, by Gerard Chaliand and Jean-Pierre Rageau, translated from the French by Tony Berrett, Harper and Row, New York, 1990.

22. It is well to remember that since the October Revolution of 1917 only one leader Khrushchev, has left office alive.

East Germany has joined West Germany and Soviet troops are on their way out. Instead of being the forward edge of Soviet power, what was East Germany can now be considered a trip wire. Indications are that the former East German army would resist re-occupation by their erstwhile masters.

In either of the above cases--the collapse of the empire or the attempt to hold it together forcibly--it is unlikely the Soviet Union will be economically or politically able to interest itself in creating or supporting movements outside its borders for the near or mid term. Economically, the Soviet Union will be no threat up to the long term.

Africa. The region of Northern Africa seems a much more likely source of problems. The rising religious fundamentalism of Islam could quite possibly be a source of continuing problems, for the near, the mid, and the long term.

What is often forgotten is that not all Arabs are Muslim, and not all Muslims are Arabs. The regions of the Islamic faith stretch from Bulgaria in Europe (officially atheistic under communist decree; in actuality, closer to 50% Muslim) through Africa and across to India. There are any number of countries which could be sponsors for movements. Libya and Iran spring to mind; there are several other candidates. This fundamentalism can provide the motivation and spur to export trouble. After all, if you're doing God's work, you're on a Holy Mission.

Additional regional problems will almost certainly arise from a diminishing resource base, coupled with a population

growing at an explosive rate. Jordan has the fastest growing population, both reproductively, and from Palestinians who consider it a haven. Although the Mid-East is thought of primarily as an oil region, one cannot drink oil. The region's critical resource (for the inhabitants) is water. Three countries, Turkey, Ethiopia and Israel--all non-Islamic countries--control the headwaters of the region's waters.

Southern Africa does not appear to have any country with the political or ideological motivation to become involved in sponsorship and our vital interests in the region are limited. There are some rare earths and metals the US imports from South Africa, but those importations are increasingly under fire.²³ Despite a well-equipped, competent army, it appears that the white South African government will fall in the mid-term. If and when the nation comes apart, based on what has happened to every other sub-Saharan country, it appears the resulting chaos will eliminate the region from the world scene for fifteen to twenty years at least.

India. The Indian sub-continent remains an area of unclear

23. South Africa produces 45% of the world's platinum, 34% of its chromium, 30% of its vanadium, 23% of its manganese, and has 81%, 67%, 42%, and 41% of the important reserves of those metals, respectively. Of the remaining world supplies, the Soviet Union produces 48% of the platinum (with 16% of the reserves), 37.5% of the chromium (with unknown reserves), 30.5% of the vanadium (with 39% of the reserves), and 39% of its manganese (with 44% of the reserves). These metals have important defense and technological applications; it is obvious if we no longer have access to South African exports we face critical shortages. Nevertheless, we will not intervene in South Africa. (See Figures 3 and 4.)

Minerals and the Major Producers (% of world total)

	P: production		R: reserves		Iron		Cobalt		Chrome		Manganese		Molybde- num		Nickel		Tungsten		Vanadium		Bauxite	
	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
Major producers																						
South Africa									34	67	23	41							30.5	42		
Australia	10.5	11			6	11					7.5	6					6				28.5	21
Canada	5.5	8.5											10.5	7	26.5	15		15				
United States	8.5	5											65	54			6	8	13.5			
USSR/Eastern countries	28	30	13	13			37.5	?	39	44	11	9	24	14	17	7.5	30.5	39	5.5			
Important Producers																						
Bolivia																	6					
Brazil	11.5	20									8										5	11
Chile													11	25								
China	8										6						26	47	14	13		
India	5.5	5.5									6											
Mexico																						
Peru																						
Zaire					51	38																
Other producers																						
Algeria																						
Botswana					5																	
Cuba															5.5	5.5						
Spain																						
Finland																			7			
Gabon											6											
Guinea																					16	26
Indonesia																					14	9
Jamaica																						
Malaysia																						
Norway																						
N. Caledonia (Fr.)															7	25						
Philippines									6													
Thailand																						
Zambia					9	12																
Zimbabwe									6	30												
Total (%)	77.5	80	84	74	83.5	97	95.5	91	97.5	95	97.5	95	63	64.5	61	77.5	81.5	94	69	67		
prod. and world reserves																						

Notes :

- Only production and reserves over 5% of the world total are counted.
- ? Indicates probable important production or reserves (lack of data, principally USSR and China).

Figure 3

Source: A Strategic Atlas

	Copper		Tin		Lead		Zinc		Silver		Platinum		Antimony		Mercury		Titanium	
	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	R	R
Major producers																		
South Africa											45	81	16	7			15	5
Australia					11.5	14	8.5	10									7	7
Canada	9	7			10.5	13	17	26	10.5	19	5						25	
United States	19.5	18			13	27		20	10.5	21					14.5	7	6	
USSR/Eastern countries	12	7	15	10	17	11	17	9	14.5	30	48	16	12	20	32.5	11	?	?
Important Producers																		
Bolivia			10										23.5	8				74
Brazil																		
Chile	13.5	19											18	39	?			
China				15													20	
India																		
Mexico							5.5		14	13								
Peru		6			6		8.5		13									
Zaire	6																	
Other producers																		
Algeria															15	8		
Botswana																		
Cuba																		
Spain															15	33		
Finland																		
Gabon																		
Guinea																		
Indonesia			13	16														
Jamaica																		
Malaysia			25	12														
Norway																	21	
N. Caledonia (Fr.)																		
Philippines																		
Thailand			14	12														
Zambia	7.5	6																
Zimbabwe																		
Total (%)	67.5	63	77	65	58	65	56.5	65	62.5	83	98	97	69.5	74	77	59	94	86
prod. and world reserves																		

• A number of useful minerals (boron, lithium, magnesium, niobium, strontium, tantalum, thorium) have been left out of this table for lack of data

• Minerals used for fertilizer (potassium, phosphates, etc.) are not included here.

• Titanium: derived primarily from two ores, ilmenite and rutile (incomplete data).

Figure 4

Source: A Strategic Atlas

Source: U.S. Bureau of Mines.

direction. India borders on Pakistan, with whom she has had a long-standing border dispute. India is the most populous democracy in the world, inhabited by some 850 million souls, 530 million of whom are voters. Her population is growing at a rate greater than China's and one observer has predicted she will be more populous than China by the year 2000./²⁴ Nevertheless, she is wracked by internal strife and violence, as witness the recent assassination of the apparent Prime Minister-elect, an earlier Prime minister and others, less noted by western eyes.

India has a sense of history and a sense of paranoia. She knows that in Africa from Kuwait to Zanzibar used to be Indian. She also sees Iran, Turkey, Pakistan as a "Muslim spear, pointed at her heart."/25 She has one of the largest military forces in the world, a navy with two aircraft carriers, and a third being built, is the largest importer of arms in the region and has no clearly stated defense policy explicating the need for such a force. Twice defeated by China (1959, 1962), she has since grown much stronger. Indian troops were sent to Sri Lanka in 1987 to crush the Tamil uprising. With a large restless Muslim population, a military build-up and ongoing regional clashes, India could become a candidate for sponsorship of movements, if

24. Indian editor (name uncertain) of Newsweek, on the "MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour", PBS, 21 May 1991. A Strategic Atlas projects India with a population of 994 million and China with a population of 1.2 billion in 2000 (p. 221).

25. Richard Armitage, Presidential negotiator for Philippine base rights, "Erskine Lecture Series", FBI Academy, Quantico, VA, 24 April 1991.

not world-wide, certainly with her neighbors.

There would be no vital US interest in this region except for two things: India has nuclear capability and with her navy, India could close or control the vital Strait of Malacca between Malaysia and Sumatra. Any country in the world with nuclear capability and the ability and willingness to use it must certainly draw the attention of the United States and her allies.

The Straits of Malacca are a vital sea lane, both for commerce (oil transport shipping), and for the use of naval forces. From the Persian Gulf to Japan, for example, it is 6,500 miles through the Strait of Malacca. The Strait of Sunda route, around the eastern coast of Sumatra, adds 1,000 miles to the route, and the deeper Strait of Lombok route adds even more. (See Figure 5.) This area will be of concern for the long term.

The Pacific Rim. Of the countries of the Pacific rim, only two regions appear to be of concern as possible exporters of unrest, for vastly different reasons. The first is North Korea. The second is the Golden Triangle area of Burma, Thailand and Laos.

With the crumbling of Soviet and European Marxist states, North Korea is probably the most tightly controlled and dominated population in the world today. It is also probably the most militarized, with one of the largest armies in the world. North Korea has forces estimated between 750,000 /26 , 810,000 /27

26. Detrio, Richard T., Strategic Partners: South Korea and the United States, National Defense University, Washington DC, 1989, p. 19.

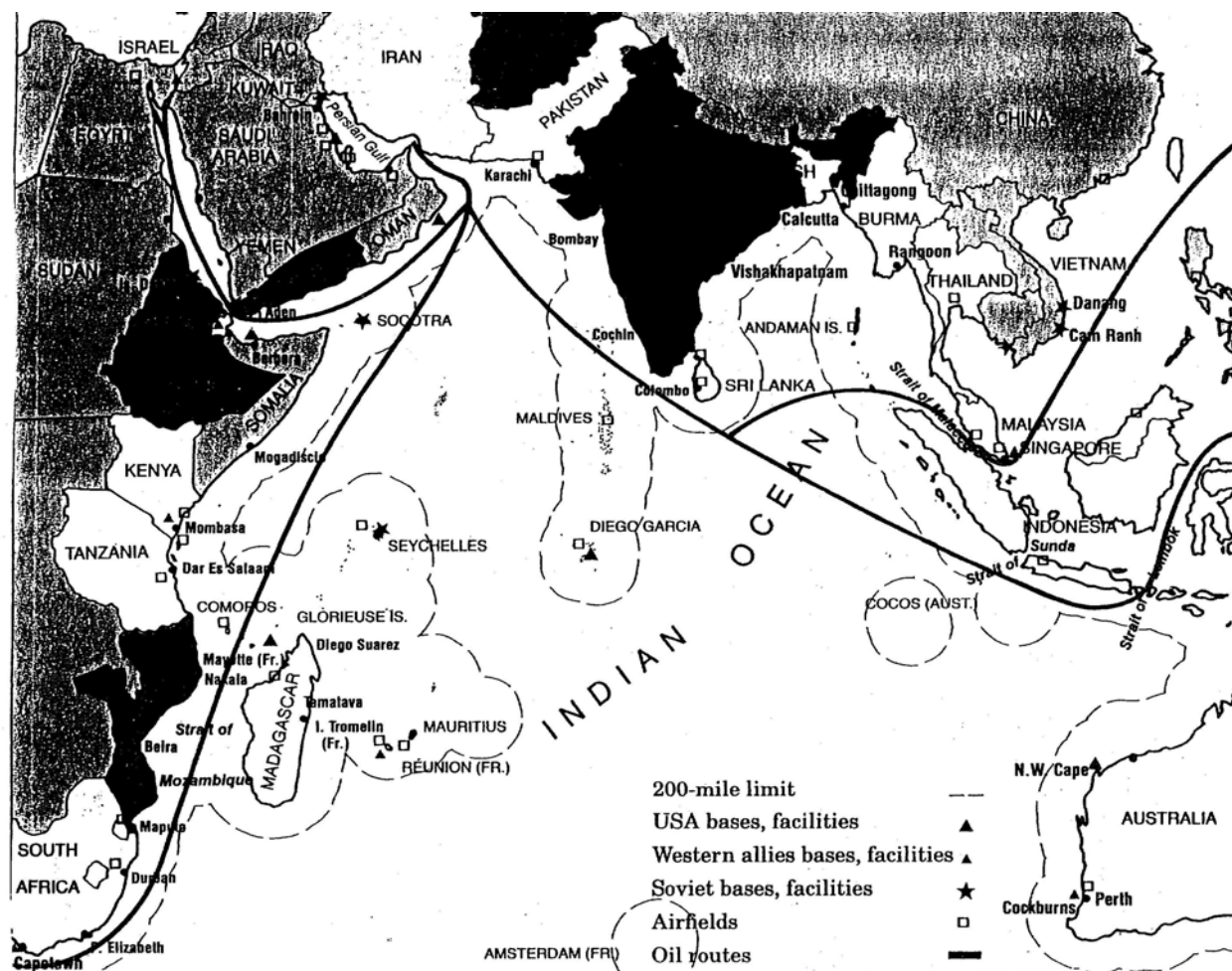


Figure 5

Source: *A Strategic Atlas*

and 840,000 /28 , arrayed in at least 33 divisions plus spetznaz-type troops. In defense, are 21 South Korean Divisions and one US Army Division, for a total of around 550,000 troops./29

North Korea has constantly been fomenting trouble since the cessation of fighting in 1953. North Korea has sent agitators, terrorists, and guerrillas, it has dug tunnels, it has fomented riots in South Korea. It seems unlikely North Korea will cease this activity.

Coupled with this is Kim Il Sung's attempt to arrange for the succession of his son. If successful, this would be an anomaly: a Marxist dynasty. In either case, Kim Il Sung has tightly controlled the country for over forty years. It must be obvious to him that any loosening of the reins of power will result in the crumbling of the power structure as it has in Europe. North Korea will be a problem for five to ten years. Once the succession has been determined, in whatever fashion, there will be the opportunity to reassess.

The Golden Triangle region will be an exporter of problems, but not necessarily revolutionary ones. The continuing shipment of heroin and other drugs from the region will be a major concern

27. Bermudez, Joseph S. Jr., North Korean Special Forces, Jane's Publishing Company, Ltd., Alexandria, VA, 1988, p. 1.

28. Chung Mm Lee, "Holding the 'Hollingsworth Line': Conventional Deterrence in the Korean Peninsula," in The US-Korean Security Relationship: Prospects and Challenges for the 1990s, Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Washington, DC, 1988, p. 55.

29. Detrio, Ibid.
for the near, mid, and far term.

Most other countries in the Pacific Rim region appear to be primarily economic competitors rather than sources of revolutionary trouble. Japan and South Korea are economics-minded rather than revolutionary-minded. Vietnam is an economic basket case even worse than the European communist countries, and is in no shape to be any sort of threat as an exporter of violence.

China. The largest unknown may be China. China is still essentially an agricultural country. Putatively communist, the communism is a different version from the Marxist-Leninist version of the Soviet Union. Mao Tse Tung recognized the difference between the pre-industrial state of Europe and the agricultural society that is China and created a Chinese-specific variation of communism. This divergence from the pure "truth" as perceived by Marx, Engels, and Lenin has been a major source of the differences between the Soviet Union and China during the last forty years (as well as the border clashes which have a long-standing historical basis).

This variant of communism has not seemed as proselytizing as the version created in the Soviet Union. China has been involved with movements within her own region of the world, has supplied arms to Algeria, Libya, Iraq and the like, has participated in some exportation of revolution and unrest, but not with the enthusiasm and zeal that Soviet missionaries have displayed. One suspects that the cultural differences between China and the rest of the world, and China's own view of itself as the Middle

Kingdom/³⁰ may have much to do with a communist belief that may not be deeply held.

China is not, however, a free country nor is it likely to become one. Whoever the leaders have been, down through the centuries they have all treated opposition the same way, that is, harshly. One observer has referred to China's recent political turmoil as "perestroika [restructuring] without the glasnost [openness]."

China (like India, which has many of the same problems) is in a race against time. At present, China has a population over one billion, growing daily. That figure is expected to increase by 200 million--that is, almost equivalent to the population of the United States--before the end of the next nine years. It is unable to feed all its people. There are ongoing attempts to enforce radical birth control measures. Families are limited to one child and if a woman becomes pregnant a second time, abortions are almost mandatory into the eighth month.

China can be expected to make a major attempt to modernize herself in the near, mid, and far term. To do so, she will have to cast off some of her communist belief, but it is unlikely she will completely open up to the western world. If she fails to modernize, or fails to do so quickly enough, widespread famine

³⁰. The Middle Kingdom, halfway between heaven and earth as the Chinese view themselves. This attitude partially accounts for China's xenophobia; her treatment at the hands of many foreigners, particularly Europeans, accounts for much more.

and unrest can be expected to result. Radical methods of birth

control will probably continue to be enforced, but given the dynamics of population growth and the extreme poverty of most of her people, it is unlikely they will be effective./³¹

If she does succeed in modernizing, or during the modernization period before collapse, China may become a major economic competitor. Though her economy suffers from the same centralized planning that curses the Soviet economy, her very large and very poor population give her a work force that can compete far more cheaply than the more advanced South Koreans, Japanese, or other economic forces. During the mid to far term, we may hear the same cries of "unfair competition" from those countries about China, that we now hear in the United States about them.

Japan will begin redeveloping her military power. Although her Constitution prohibits other than a self-defense force, constitutions can be changed. Recently she sent minesweepers to the Persian Gulf, the first time she has deployed outside her waters since 1945.

³¹. This is true in all poor countries. Those who preach birth control so the poor in these countries can improve their wealth have it backwards. In a poor country, children may be the only form of wealth you have, the only riches you can create to take care of you in your old age. Almost without exception world-wide, the reality is that the greater the per capita wealth, the fewer the children per family. Therefore, the way to reduce births is for the people to become wealthy. Unfortunately, in many countries, the birth rate is rising far faster than they can possibly become wealthy enough (through industrialization or entrepreneurial activities) to voluntarily slow reproduction.

Japan is an oil-consuming country and is critically vulnerable to interruption of that oil. If a force should cut

off oil supplies, or close the Indonesian Straits (Malacca, Sunda and Lombok), Japan would strangle. The United States might not take steps against closure of such a shipping lane, or might not take it quickly enough for Japan to avoid serious difficulties. Japan realizes this and will, sooner or later, take steps to reduce this vulnerability.

Although economically one of the strongest countries in the world, Japan cannot expect to be a world power without a military to defend her interests. This is particularly true if China becomes an economic power. Economic competition will continue with Japan, but it is highly unlikely we will become militarily engaged against her.

South, Central America and the Caribbean. Cuba has been considered the prime sub-contractor in the exportation of revolution in the Western Hemisphere. Whether this will remain true in the near term is problematical. Consumed by its own problems, the Soviet Union can no longer afford to prop up Cuba's moribund economy with massive infusions of goods, equipment and money. Fidel Castro has vowed he will not retreat from the "socialism" he has imposed on his people. If he holds to that promise, even though the lot of his people will grow worse, it is probable that Cuba will have a decreased capability to engage in extra-border activities.

Fidel Castro cannot live forever (though it would be a mistake to begin writing his obituary too soon). He appears to have done little planning for his succession, nor has he given

any candidates the opportunity to exercise any power. Thus it seems his death will precipitate a leadership crisis. Post-Castro Cuba (in the mid and long term) will probably attempt economic recovery. To that end, it seems likely that she will attempt to establish economic ties with other powers. If Cuban exiles return home, they may be a force toward economic ties with the United States and other countries. It seems unlikely Cuba will be either willing or able to continue her revolutionary activities

Central and South America will continue to be troubled areas through the long term. The serious economic conditions of most countries, which includes their massive debt, the fragile and almost non-existent middle class, the lack of viable industries and the vast gulf between a very rich minority and a grindingly poor majority will be a source of unrest for the next twenty years.

This last may be the greatest problem for Central and South American countries. The social unrest will not ease. Communications in the world are such that almost every small villager can at some time or other see a television. When people see shows like "Dallas" and compare that fantasy with their own lives, they become envious. When they realize or believe there is no hope to improve their situation--or far more significant, that of their children--when there is no hope of breaking out of the poverty into which they were born, no hope to change their social and economic class, no hope for a better future for their

children, they will turn to whatever means they can to change that situation. Where before they might have accepted it as "God's will" or "that's the way it's always been," television and other forms of communication have shown that people don't have to live that way. And people will not accept it if they think there's a better way. These very real concerns will cause unrest, but it appears unlikely that such unrest will be exported from one country to another.

Like the Golden Triangle area of Asia, the Andean Ridge region of South America, Peru, Bolivia and Columbia will continue to be a major source for illicit narcotics. There is little hope that these narcotics can be eliminated at their source: there is no cash crop that is as simple to grow and has as sure a market for the poor people of the region as narcotics. They will do what they must to survive.

One region where revolution may be exported in the near to mid term is Peru, where there is something of an anomalous situation. The Sendero Luminoso, the "Shining Path," claims to be a Maoist-Marxist revolutionary group. At present they are receiving support, not from another country, but from drug sources within the country. The Sendero Luminoso work with the drug cartels, guarding shipments and processing plants and helping arrange transportation and enforcement.

This partnership between a Marxist group and what is essentially an entrepreneurial (although illegal) money-making concern would appear to be inherently unstable. Nevertheless, it

may be potentially one of the most significant arrangements extant, and should not be allowed to slip from notice.

The South American continent has substantial resources, but only Argentina can export a surplus of agriculture or livestock, and only Brazil has really large mineral assets. Peru, Chile, Bolivia have mineral assets, and Mexico, Venezuela and Ecuador have oil deposits. The potential for development and a better life is there, much more so than in Africa, for instance, but the political and social unrest continue to inhibit economic development. Without the development of a middle class (which is fragile in the best of the South American countries, non-existent in the worst), economic growth faces an uphill struggle.

The above cursory examination of potential trouble spots is by no means complete, and is not meant to be comprehensive. Each individual country or region is sufficiently complex to keep any number of dedicated Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) actively employed for many years to come. It is simply the author's assessment of possibilities.

LIKELIHOOD AND TYPE OF CONFLICT OR US INVOLVEMENT

In March 1991, the Joint Chiefs of Staff released the "Military Net Assessment," which stated that it was "a first report of the transition from planning and programming principally for global war with the Soviet Union to planning and programming for the regional situations we expect to face in the 1990s."/32 Included in the Military Net Assessment are charts

presenting the likelihood of various military contingencies in which the United States might engage, regions likely to be involved and the relative violence such engagement might produce. (See Figure 6). "Counter-Insurgency/Counter-Narcotics Operations" and "Major Regional Contingency--East [meaning Mid-East or Europe]" are listed as most likely, with global conflict and nuclear conflict listed as least likely.

Conflicts or involvements in which the United States might become involved fall into four types: General Global War (including thermonuclear), Regional War, Counter-Insurgency, and Foreign Internal Defense (FID) or Internal Defense and Development (IDAD).

General Global War is largely self-explanatory. It is massive war, involving a majority of the countries on earth, with large scale deployments of troops and equipment, particularly armored and air forces, and confrontation occurring between belligerents and their allies at any location on earth. Regional War is much the same, involving fewer countries and is confined to the region involved.

Counter-insurgency is the attempted suppression of a

32. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Military Net Assessment," quoted in The Washington Post, May 19, 1991, p. A14. I did not find the quote as stated by the Post in the copy of the JMNA I obtained from the JCS PAO. However, the quote does accurately reflect the tenor of the JMNA, and the Post's chart accurately reflects a compilation of several of the JMNA's charts.

FUTURE CONFLICTS: HOW LIKELY, HOW VIOLENT?

This bar chart, based on information presented in the Joint Chiefs' 1991 "Military Net Assessment," lists potential conflicts and shows how likely they are to occur: the higher the bar, the more likely the

occurrence. The chart also indicates the level of violence military Strategists predict: Less violent incidents are depicted with narrow bars, more violent incidents with wider, darker bars.

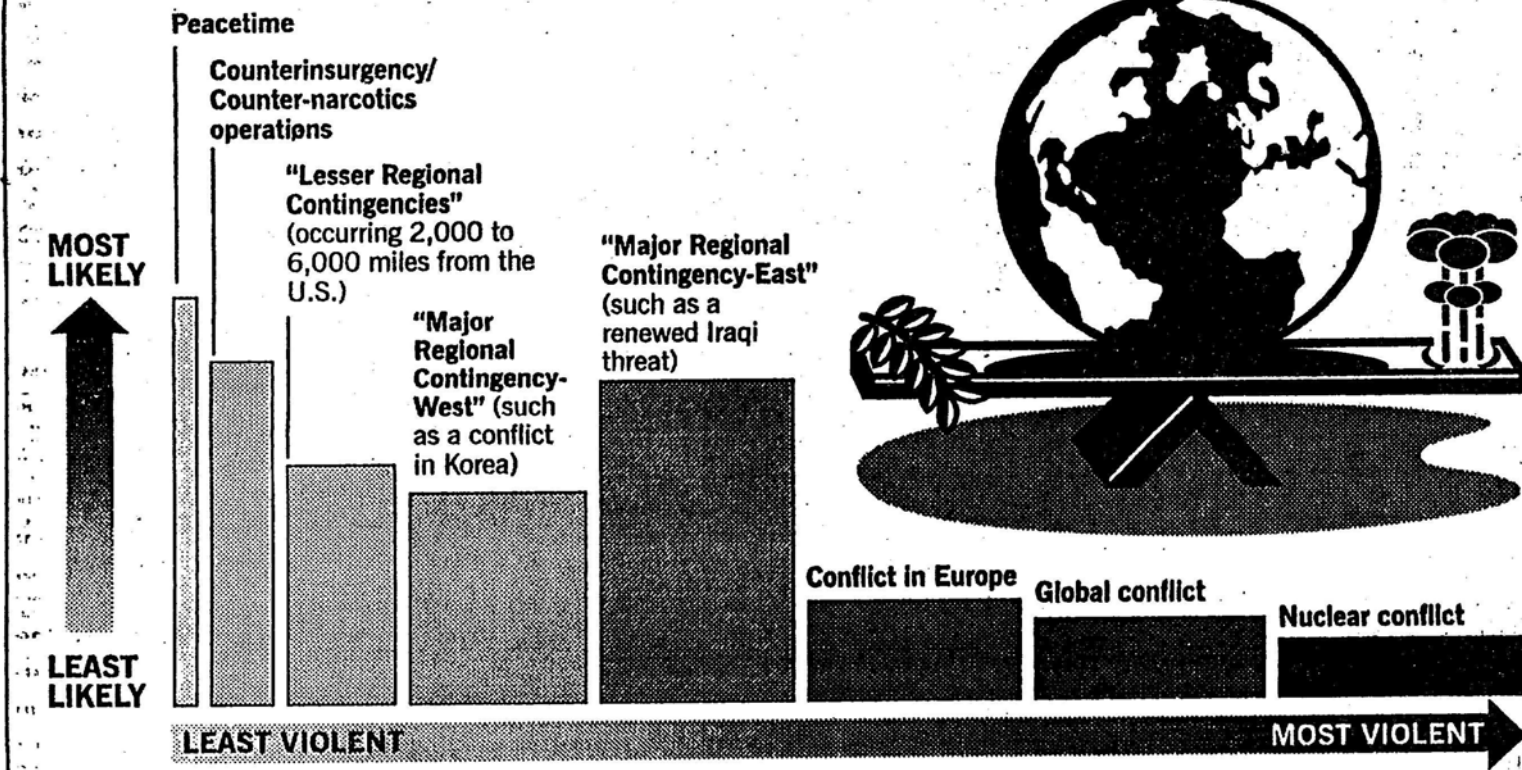


Figure 6

BY PETER ALSBERG—THE WASHINGTON POST

Source: Washington Post, 19 May 1991
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revolutionary movement. To be successful it must address all the legitimate concerns of the movement, and must attack the movement across a broad spectrum, ranging from political and civil action, to military.

FID/IDAD have been defined earlier. It should be remembered that FID/IDAD may cross the spectrum into Counter-Insurgency and may be a part of Regional War. Indeed, none of the types of conflict are exclusive; they may all overlap each other.

Until recently, the order of likelihood of US involvement might have been considered to be much the same as listed above, ie, Global War, Regional War, Counter-Insurgency and FID/IDAD. The presumption of defense planners for the past fifty years has always been that a European war with the Soviets was the most likely scenario. This ignored US involvement in each of the other scenarios. It was always considered that any involvement in other than the European scenario was an anomaly.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the seizing of power by a strong leader determined to hold the union together by force, could, as discussed earlier, cause the US and the western European countries to reconsider the likelihood of the European war scenario. It is more likely that even should such a strong leader come to power, his energies will be focused on forcibly holding the bolting republics and maintaining civil order, not a westward march./³³ Over the long term, though, historical

³³. Though the case can be made that this method could mobilize the people and focus them on other than their problems, it ignores the nuclear capabilities NATO still has and the

Russian imperatives (such as a drive for a warm-water port) should not be forgotten. When the Soviets (or Russians) resolve their current instability, they will once again bear close watching.

Examining the world then, as we did for the exportation of revolutionary movements, let's see if there are any potential locations for the European scenario war the US has prepared for the last fifty years.

Africa. Northern Africa and the Mid-East could provide a location involving such a regional war. The recent Desert Storm conflict shows that the United States can and will move troops and equipment to protect its vital interests. During the near, the mid and the long term, the United States can be expected to continue efforts to maintain the stability of the region. Nevertheless, the general instability of the region will continue, as will hostility towards Israel. The US will not abandon Israel as an ally and Israel (the sole democracy in the Mid-East) will not fade quietly away. This appears to be the most likely area for another massive involvement of US military presence.

Sub-Saharan Africa has no vital interest for us. There is no scenario in which the introduction of large bodies of troops and equipment on the European or Desert Storm scale becomes likely, although the US could provide considerable famine and

increased logistical difficulties Soviet planners would now have to face without East Germany as a launch point. Deterrence still works.

disaster relief, education, civil assistance if requested by existing governments--but not if assistance is requested by rebels. In either case, it is unlikely such a request will be made in the near or mid term.

The strategic metals we currently obtain from South Africa, we will do without, disastrous though that might be. The United States will not militarily come to the aid of the South African government, no matter what concessions it makes to the black majority. Any assistance at any level to the South African government will be perceived as racist.

India. It is unlikely the US would become militarily involved on a large scale in India, except as part of a combined force with the UN or other body, and then only if India had used nuclear weapons. The US might act unilaterally in any attempt by India to close or restrict passage through the Strait of Malacca or the other Indonesian straits. Although the US has ties to Pakistan, India is the most populous democracy in the world. Even should Pakistan and India become militarily engaged, the US would probably not become involved. Our only vital interest in the region at this time is the nuclear capability either or both may possess. This may be expected to continue for the near, mid, and long term.

Pacific Rim. North Korea provides the only large-scale military threat and the only location for the large scale introduction of troops. The United States can be expected to respond strongly to any overt military adventurism on the part of

North Korea. After the Mid-East, this is the most likely area of large scale military conflict in which the United States might become involved. This likelihood exists for the next five to ten years. The situation beyond that will remain unclear until the question of Kim Il Sung's successor is resolved.

Central and South America. Although we have interests in the hemisphere, it is unlikely we will become militarily engaged on a large scale in any Central or South American country or Cuba. Although deemed by the president a threat to the security of the United States, even the narcotics problem will not cause large scale military commitment. There is ample scope, though, for involvement on a much smaller scale; FID/IDAD, Security Assistance or other types of assistance. We will certainly be involved in Counter-Narcotics efforts.

CAPABILITY AFTER THE DRAWDOWN

It is well for the United States that the sites for potential involvement in large scale regional war are limited. The present intent of the legislative and executive branches is to drastically reduce the size of the US forces in the mid-term. The US Army will shrink from a strength (as of this writing) of 171,000 and 18 combat divisions to a strength around 156,000 and 12 combat divisions. Other Services will undergo a similar 25% reduction. Despite world-wide interests, the United States will be unable in the near to mid term to deal with regional war on the scale of Desert Storm. Both the transportation assets and

the troop strength will be lacking.

Therefore, if any situation does arise requiring the US to honor commitments or make a stand, the US may either have to break a commitment or engage without all required assets. If, simultaneously, a second situation should occur, the US may be unable to deal with it (for example, if North Korea had attacked South Korea while the US was involved in Desert Storm, it is doubtful reinforcements could have been sent). In any case, it is unlikely the US will be able to take any large-scale military action in the near to mid term without activating the Reserves.

It appears likely, then, that the United States will not become engaged in major ground combat in the near to mid term. This assessment is made despite the recent Desert Storm campaign. Indeed, Desert Storm seems more likely to reinforce to the world that the United States does have the will and determination to follow through on its pronouncements--a perception that has been not at all convincing during the last twenty-five years.

ANALYSIS CONCLUSION

As mentioned, until about five years ago the most likely military situations were visualized by planners as being General Global War, Regional War, Counter-Insurgency, and FID/IDAD, in that order. It would appear today, however, the most likely military situations for the next twenty years are almost the reverse of that previously visualized.

FORCE STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY

The plan to reduce the military by about 25% of its present strength by 1995 will require a drastic re-examination and re-evaluation of traditional roles and missions. There will not be sufficient resources for all Services to compete over jobs. It will be necessary for all Services to critically examine not only their own roles and missions, but those of other Services and realize that other Services are not going to go away. Since that is true, it would be well for the Services to amicably agree on what each can do and clearly state what those roles will be before someone else (for example, Congress) does it for them--to the displeasure of all concerned.

The problem of air lift and transportability will also have to be examined closely. The Desert Shield deployment showed what many had been saying for years, that there is not enough lift and transport available for rapid massive deployment.³⁴ The US military had seven months to prepare for Desert Storm--it is unlikely it will have comparable time for the next massive deployment.

IMPACT OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

During the last thirty years technology has advanced far more rapidly than most people realize. The tendency is to

34. Although one Air Force officer has told me that the problem was not lift capability, but airfield facilities receiving the aircraft. He concedes the impossibility of dealing with multiple crises.

accept the technology as it becomes available without looking at the larger pattern that produces it. The explosive advance of technology has affected every aspect of our lives, yet we don't often realize it. This advance has been in large measure a result of the space program of the 1960s and early 1970s, with each scientific or technological advance spawning several others, and each of those spawning several more. The advances cascade at such a rapid rate it is almost impossible to keep up with them.

At the present time there are a number of technical advances that are either being used exclusively by and for the military, or are being adapted from civilian use. While it is unlikely that these technical advances will change the principles by which military organizations operate and fight, they will have significant effect on the tactics which may be used. This will affect the military greatly during the near and mid-term. The advances for the long term will be so radical it is impossible to predict them or their effect.

The Global Positioning System (GPS) units currently being fielded allow users to determine their exact location within a few meters. This will allow the conduct of coordinated movements, attacks, assemblies of forces, planned fires, rendezvous' and much more in a much quicker and more efficient manner than previously possible. This will become particularly significant in terrain where it is difficult or impossible to determine location by other means.

For the Special Forces detachments working with forces

(either with or against a government), Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or Remotely Piloted Vehicles (RPVs) will be valuable. They can be weapons platforms, drop leaflets and propaganda, be used with loudspeakers for psychological operations, relay radio transmissions, drop mines, be loaded with explosives and crashed into targets, fitted with miniature television transmitters and used for reconnaissance. Used as a weapon in the drug war, RPVs and UAVs could detect processing sites, be fitted with infrared or other spectrographic means and detect growing sites, or countless other uses./35

One major American contractor is working on a device which uses a very broad laser beam to detect the optical systems of opposing weaponry. When it detects the optical system, it narrows and focuses the beam and burns out the optical system. In the search mode, it is safe and undetectable to the human eye. As a weapon, it is not very spectacular; it does not cause things to explode. It simply prevents the enemy from seeing you and shooting you with his system.

At the present time, the prototypes are very bulky and

35. One science fiction writer with a technical background pointed out to me that a Cessna could be fitted out with both GPS and a television camera such as RPVs use, loaded with explosives and fitted with remote piloting equipment such as model airplane fliers or the RPVs themselves use, and create a very cheap "Cruise" missile. Launched in Maryland or Virginia, given the coordinates of the House, the Senate or the White House, it would be difficult to detect, impossible to stop and would have devastating effect. During a recent visit to the Pentagon, during the five minute walk both to and from the parking lot, I counted five smaller aircraft in the National Airport approach pattern which passed very close to directly overhead.

heavy. However, if they can be lightened considerably, they

would be ideal weapons for Special Forces teams assisting guerrillas or counter-guerrillas. Used against a government ground force by guerrillas, they could blind the optical systems of tanks or armored personnel carriers or any ground forces using weapons with optical sights. The system would also be extremely effective against one of the most effective counter-guerrilla tools, the helicopter. Guerrillas who have the ability to blind helicopter pilots will find the morale of their enemies diminishing rapidly. The mujahadeen of Afghanistan could have made wonderful use of such a tool; and one shudders to think of it in the hands of the Viet Cong or the Iraqi army. Such a weapon will be available in the mid to long term.

One technical device, usually overlooked, which will have great impact in the mid to long term is the video camera. Part of the job of the guerrilla or insurgent is to mobilize the population against the government. Part of the job of the government forces is to turn the population against the guerrillas. With the cost of video cameras dropping rapidly, every platoon sized element will soon be able to have one. For an insurgent, the opportunity to record (or stage) the government's atrocities will prove an invaluable asset in gaining their support. For the Psychological Operations personnel of the SOF, or the government, the same device can be used to expose the guerrillas' lies or make the government's case to the people.

Filmless cameras are becoming available, which can digitalize what they record, transmit it by satellite hundreds or

thousands of miles, and be re-broadcast to the world.

"To counter this, governments must learn to effectively use the various media.... Governments will have to deal in verifiable and documented truth to erode guerrilla credibility and maintain their own.... If the fickle eye of the news [media] should be attracted to a movement or be attracted to (staged or real) incidents, the instantaneous effect of world-wide attention may make or break a government or movement."/36

Any force which hopes to be successful in any future conflict must have NODs--Night Observation Devices. NODs proved themselves during the Gulf War, and in the future will be essential for night operations such as ambushes, raids, for night movement, even for such mundane tasks as security or guard duty. Any future guerrilla or conventional force operating without NODs will be giving up fifty per cent of its operational and fighting time against opponents working with one hundred per cent of their time.

Although available now, improvements in the technology and reduction of cost will soon take away the present advantage the US enjoys. In the near to mid term, we can assume anyone we are working against will have NODs. This includes those engaged in the narcotics trade.

One note on the use of technology in FID/IDAD. There is no doubt that such technical advances will make the job on the

36. Coffin, Charles F., "Guerrilla Warfare in a High Tech World," is an article scheduled for publication in the anthology High Tech Wars, edited by Jerry E. Pournelle, PhD., and John F. Carr, and published by Baen Books. Publication date is late 1991 or early 1992.

ground easier. However, the United States, if involved in a

FID/IDAD operation, may wish to voluntarily restrict the use of some such technical devices to avoid having to refuse requests from host countries for the devices themselves.

Not every culture is ready or can support the most advanced technology and its attendant support. But a rude refusal can be humiliating and counter-productive to our aims. If the US is not careful, it can lose the ally it is trying to help. Applied technologies should be sustainable from the host country's available resources. The countries the US assists should not be forced to purchase sustaining equipment from the US, but, rather, be able to make them or develop them on their own. USAF LTC Kenneth G. Brothers uses a munitions factory as an example. "If the manufacturing process is properly structured, the different skills can be employed to meet other needs. For example, metal working skills used to make shell casings have broad application in many other manufacturing industries. Chemicals used to make explosives can also be used to make fertilizer."/37

The impact of technology cannot be accurately estimated--it comes too fast. However, given the current economic and business climate, as well as the current backing away from those activities most likely to stimulate the development of those technologies, it would appear technology development in the

37. "Technology Guidelines and Potential Military Applications in Low Intensity Conflicts," by Kenneth G. Brothers, USAF, Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, 23665-5556, February 1988.

United States has reached a relative lull./38 The period

between now and 1997 will be critical in re-starting the spinoff fountain. Technological advances will proceed regardless, but at a much slower rate than possible. It should be noted that countries other than the United States (Japan, China, France, the Soviet Union) are pursuing these technologies and have active space programs.

SOF MISSIONS TO 2010

Given this brief analysis, it is time to re-look the SOF missions: UW, FID/IDAD, DA, SR, and CT.

The likelihood of General Global War or long Regional War seems to have decreased greatly. Such a large scale war seems extremely unlikely during the next ten to fifteen years on the global scale, and only a bit more likely on a regional basis. That being the case, the "pure" UW mission, guerrilla warfare, seems extremely unlikely.

Much more likely, however, is a CI or Counter-Insurgency role (usually considered a sub-set of guerrilla war), probably as

38. The current fountain of technological advances began in the mid-seventies. The source of this artesian well was primarily the space program of the sixties and seventies and the spinoff benefits proliferated in a compound interest-type expansion. The case for this assertion is too lengthy to delve into here, but interested readers are invited to examine Stine's The Third Industrial Revolution, Space Power, and/or The Space Enterprise, Pournelle's A Step Further Out, or The Endless Frontier, Congressman Newt Gingrich's Window of Opportunity, or Heinlein's Expanded Universe, especially the sections titled "Spinoff" and "Where To?" The present US retreat from space (including, but not limited to, the SDI program) has slowed the rate of spinoff technology.

a part of a FID/IDAD effort. Given the turmoil in almost all parts of the world in which the US has an interest, it seems a

certainty that some government friendly to the US will attempt to quash an insurgency and request US help. Thus, this aspect of the SOF mission will remain unchanged for the near, the mid, and the long term.

Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance are the more straight-forward of the SOF missions. The particular skills required--language capability, culture awareness, ability to cooperate with the indigenous personnel, etc.--will vary with the individual missions. A given mission might require the more esoteric skills of an SFOD, or the more basic, but still demanding skills of a Ranger element. Nevertheless, DA and SR will remain SOF missions for the near, mid, and the long term.

Counter-Terrorism (CT) will remain a valid SOF mission, although it will most likely remain the province of SFOD Delta ("Delta Force" in the popular press) unless other circumstances, such as time or distance factors, intervene. However, it appears the level of terrorism world-wide is dropping. Such terrorism as exists is generally localized. Part of this is undoubtedly because the prime source of funding, the Soviet Union, has been drying up, and secondary sources do not at this time appear to be either financially able or willing to run the physical risk of retaliation such as was visited upon Libya in 1986. If the general level of tension remains low, and funding and supply sources remain isolated, terrorism will continue to be isolated and sporadic for the near and mid term. The long term is subject to too many variables to hazard an estimate.

The FID/IDAD mission will remain unchanged into the twenty-first century; near, mid, and long term. Almost any of the SOF missions can be considered in some ways a FID or IDAD mission, requiring as it does the language, cultural and other skills.

Nor is this a conflict or hostilities-type mission.

"Something else...which is not well known in terms of the State Department and in many instances the military groups throughout the country (MIL Groups) is the peacetime utility of the Special Operations Forces, Special Forces specifically. If you take it in terms of disaster relief, an A-team is absolutely perfectly matched for any type of disaster, because you have very well-trained, highly conditioned individuals who are used to living in very rural and rustic environments for extended periods of time, you have language skills, you have various orientation skills, you have engineering skills, medical skills, organizational skills, all of which are needed in a time of disaster relief, be it a cyclone in Bangladesh, be it an earthquake, no matter where it is."/39

The FID/IDAD mission will remain an integral and central part of the SOF mission near, mid, and long term. It is difficult to conceive of US Special Operations Forces or US Army Special Forces being recognizably what they are without that mission.

RESERVE INTEGRATION

At present, the Reserve Components Special Forces Groups comprise 44% of all SF assets. That is, of a total of nine SF Groups, 4 of them are RC (two are USAR, two are NG). One of the

39. Interview with LTG Spigelmire, conducted by the author, at Ft. Bragg, NC, 10 May 1991.

existing problems with the Force Structure of USASOC is the integration of the Reserve Components into the Active Components.

This divides into two broad categories: Training, and Command and Control, with a subsidiary problem of funding affecting both.

Perhaps the greatest problem the RC Special Forces units face is the lack of training time. Unlike their Active Component counterparts, RC forces have--on paper--only 38 days per year in which to train to the same standard as the AC SF units. The reality is that most units and members train much more, both in paid status and on their own time. The question is: is it sufficient time? One recent change has been that there is no longer a double standard for Reserve and AC Special Forces. It is no longer possible to become qualified in SF through "phases" or partially qualified through correspondence courses.

"Now all AC and RC SF officers and NCOs must qualify at a three-week TDY Special Forces Assessment and Selection course and then attend at least 23 weeks of a Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC)....

"...A non-prior service recruit for a weapons sergeant position on an RC SF ODA must complete at least 12 weeks of One Station Unit Training (OSUT), three weeks of Basic Airborne Training, four weeks of Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) training, two weeks of pre-training, and a minimum 27 weeks of Special Forces Assessment, Selection and Qualification. The total: 48 weeks!"/40

Other MOSs can take longer to get a man qualified. It is a

40. Gritz, John P., COL, SF, "Reserve Special Forces: Faded Berets or New Centurions?", Military Studies Program Paper, 2 April 1990. This is the best examination of the training problems of RC Special Forces units I have seen. Any consideration of the problems of RC SF should begin with this paper. significant commitment for a "part-time" soldier to join a Special Forces unit. This may solve the problem of getting a man

qualified for the future, but does not solve the MOS qualification problem of existing SF units, nor does it deal with sustainment or language training. According to COL Gritz, quoting HQDA ODCSOPS (MOSO-ODF-SOF) RC SF MOSQ Briefing, 3 November 1989, current RC SF MOS qualifications range from 4% to 70%, for an average of 51% MOSQ, compared to the AC SF MOSQ of 90%./41

Language ability is a perishable skill. It takes time to learn a language and if it is not used, it is lost. Because of the limited amount of training time available in the first place, and turbulence in the orientation of RC Groups and subordinate units to target countries or areas,/42 little RC training is done on language.

The second problem is command and control. Units of the (Army Reserve) 11th and 12th SF Groups have home stations in 20 states under five different Army Reserve Commands (ARCOMs). The 19th and 20th SF Groups, which are National Guard units, receive "guidance" and funding from eight different state headquarters.

To a great extent, this has been alleviated by the creation of USASOC and the placing of all RC units under USASOC command and control, eliminating all standards but the USASOC standard.

41. The 4% represents MOSQ for the newly created Warrant Officer/Executive Officer Position, formerly occupied by a 1LT.

42. Based on author's experience.

The current Commanding General of USASOC, LTG Spigelmire, has stated that he intends to rectify other geographical problems

(for example, the Group Headquarters in Utah with a detachment in Rhode Island). "It makes no sense. So, we're going to work through that issue, and I've already discussed it with the TAGs, with the States, the Chief of the Army Guard and the Chief of the Army Reserve."/43

Other unresolved problems may exist. With the functional alignment of 27 November 1990, the former USARSOC (United States Army Reserve Special Operations Command) became USACAPOC (United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command). Ninety-seven per cent of the Army's Civil Affairs assets and eighty-six per cent of its Psychological Operations units are in the Reserve. All AC Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units, Active Component and Reserve, fall under this (Reserve) command, which is commanded by a RC Brigadier General. But at present, the law prohibits Reserve Officers from commanding Active Component units, except after mobilization or for certain Training Divisions.

The problem of funding may be more difficult to resolve. National Guard funding comes from the individual states and may be subject to various political whims. Some states have tried to prevent NG units from deploying for training when the governor disagreed with US policy. Although unsuccessful to date, similar such attempts could threaten SF units, given the type missions

43. Interview, 10 May 1991.
they perform./44

the Army, USSOCOM and Forces Command (FORSCOM), most USASOC operational (not Base Operations or non-operational) funding needs are met by the resourcing of the Major Force Program (MFP)-11 system. At the present time, USASOC shares responsibility for Reserve SOF units with FORSCOM. FORSCOM has been a funding facilities source for Reserve forces, but as of 1 October 1991, FORSCOM will no longer be involved with Reserve Special Forces. While this is fairly clear-cut for operations and training, it is not yet clear how facilities expenses and the like will be handled.

Up to the present, units that were tenant units in FORSCOM facilities or bases were allowed to "piggy-back" on such items as electrical bills, telephone costs, copiers, etc. As all expenses came out of FORSCOM funding, it was less expensive to allow the "piggy-backing" for units (which were all FORSCOM units, anyway) than to break expenses out separately. However, if FORSCOM is out of the RC SOF "business", there are significant dollar savings to be realized for FORSCOM if it no longer allows such "piggy-backing" for non-FORSCOM units. In an era of shrinking budgets, this may become critical.

Another area of contention is the status and future of the Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units. Many question

44. The author was once a member of a National Guard Ranger unit which was disbanded and converted to a cavalry unit when the State decided it was too expensive to maintain as a Ranger unit. whether such units should be considered Special Forces at all and whether they should be carried in Special Forces organizations.

Those who make this case cite the following:

Civil Affairs and PsyOps personnel are not Special Forces in that often they have not gone through the Special Forces training and become SF qualified. Rather, they are often considered specialists, whose valuable skills are undeniably needed and useful in many operations, but who should be carried outside the Special Forces organization, and brought in to perform specialized missions and tasks as needed.

If the above is not true (those questioning CA/PO continue), then CA/PO personnel should be forced to go through the "Q" Course, the Special Forces Qualification Course. One senses a certain elitism in this statement: The implication is that it is doubtful most CA/PO personnel could make it through the course./45 On the other hand, if the SFAS and "Q" Course are required, and many of the CA/PO personnel do fail the course, then they would necessarily have to be transferred elsewhere, out of both CA/PO and Special Forces.

This may be very much a "tempest in a teapot", and more a matter of definitions, semantics and proper alignment on "wiring diagrams" than a true obstacle. After all, many other

45. This should not denigrate the CA/PO personnel. LTG Spigelmire told me that "the most recent selection assessment started with 342 and only 142 made it through the first day...." And the assessment course is for the already tough, hard-core, motivated personnel, but it is simply an assessment to determine if they have the "right stuff" to go on for the whole "Q" Course. specialists (dentists, doctors, special intelligence personnel, etc.) are often brought in to assist and support, without being

forced to go through the "Q" course.

THE VIEW FROM THE NEAR AND MID TERM

In the near and mid term, the next five to ten years, these and other problems should be resolved. The funding problem between AC and AR/NG SF will have to be resolved. It strikes this author that the situation is analogous to the situation prior to the Desert One rescue attempt. That is, there are assets and equipment that we need, but we have trouble getting them because we must cross Service lines, with all the attendant funding, command, control and personnel issues that implies (if you think of the AC, the USAR, and the NG as separate Services, this analogy becomes clearer) and we don't truly have quite the authority to do so. Perhaps the solution needed is similar in nature to that of the earlier problem, that is, totally separate funding and authority for SOF units, regardless of component. Some efforts are being made in this direction, but at this time the results are unclear. It will eventually have to be resolved, the sooner the better.

The USACAPOC problem will resolve itself. It is either a non-issue, or will be resolved, probably by considering the CA/PO personnel as specialists, a necessary and valuable adjunct to, but separate from, Special Forces. They should probably still be carried within the USASOC, but perhaps elsewhere in the structure.

The more serious problem of a USAR officer commanding AC

troops should be resolved within five years. The best solution is to change the law and allow Reserve (including National Guard) officers to command Active Component troops. The greatest resistance to this will come from AC officers, who will see this as further competition for increasingly limited command slots. There are over 3000 AGR (Active Guard/Reserve) officers presently on active duty/46 most of whom would jump at the chance to command, but who are presently barred by law from doing so. However, as we move toward a Total Force, a proper integration of AR/NG/AC requires that opportunities to command be made available to all. The law should be changed.

The problem of RC SF groups and training readiness will also be resolved in the next ten years. Despite the assertions of many, this author does not believe Reserve SF units can train to the standard of AC SF groups, orient on a country or region, learn the language and culture, maintain that standard and be available for immediate deployment in the limited time they have available. I agree with one of the recommendations of COL Gritz, that RC SF groups should be given perhaps five years to validate as SF groups. If they fail validation, they should be given the still important, but less time-intensive, role as Direct Action units with the lesser training requirements. This implies, of

46. Figure quoted by Major Graves, Officer Management Division, DARP-ARO, ARPERCEN, St. Louis, MO, 24 May 1991.

course, that the slack will have to be taken up by the Active Component. It might be well to consider re-activating another of

the SF groups that were de-activated in the aftermath of Vietnam.

On a higher level, there is one asset that has been much ignored. That is the US Marine Corps. They are not, and can never be, Special Forces. But they do have unique capabilities, particularly in the amphibious role, that would complement very well the already existing skills of Special Forces and especially Rangers. As an amphibious Ranger-type force, they could be extremely valuable. They should be integrated into USSOCOM.

Resistance to this may come, ironically enough, from the Marine Corps itself. The Marine Corps is so small that taking a force sufficiently large enough to be useful away from the Fleet Marine Force and placing it in USSOCOM, seriously threatens the capability of the Marines to perform their primary duties.

The Marine Corps vehemently resists breaking out portions of its force from its MAGTF (pronounced "mag-taff"), the Marine Air-Ground Task Force. It views the MAGTF (which comes in several different flavors) as a unit, complete with its own air support, which must not be broken up. The Marine Corps fears setting this precedent could erode the value of the MAGTF and dilute their greatest strength.

There has also traditionally been resistance to putting Marines under the command of other Services, particularly the Army, because of the fear that the other Services don't understand the Marine capabilities and strengths. This is not to say it hasn't been done, nor that it hasn't worked well--witness Desert Storm as a most recent example. But Marines are always

nervous about it.

All of this may be so. If it is, though, the Marines may be talking themselves into a corner. At present they have units that advertise themselves as "SOC", Special Operations Capable (as in "MEU (SOC), Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)"). This seems somewhat mealy-mouthed for the usually admirably straight-forward Marines. By law, all Special Operations Forces are under USSOCOM. If they are Special Operations Capable, some of them should be "chopped" to USSOCOM where their valuable and unique skills can be utilized. If they are not, they should quit advertising that they are.

The Drug War will be one of the top priorities during the near and mid term. Regardless of the potential success of attacking the supply, without successfully attacking the demand side of the problem, there will be much activity in this arena. And therein lies a danger.

For all of the Services, involvement in the Drug War is a distraction from their primary duty, which is to prosecute and win wars, on land, sea, or in the air. The more effort expended by a Service in the Drug War, the more of their training and readiness that is taken away from that primary responsibility.

Only for Special Forces is that not true. Because of their unique capabilities, Special Forces can focus maximum effort on the mission and not distract from their training and readiness. Special Forces participation in the Drug War actually enhances training and readiness./47 In such participation, Special

Forces uses language skills, training skills, counter-insurgency and tactical skills, skills in establishing relationships with members of host nations, skills in dealing with other US government agencies and the agencies and departments of other governments, intelligence gathering skills, civil action skills, psychological operations skills, direct action skills, special reconnaissance skills--in short, all of the skills which Special Forces train for in other types of conflict are not just needed, but required, and can be brought to bear in the Drug War. This is true for no other Service or branch.

THE VIEW FROM 2010

DE OPPRESSO LIBER--TO FREE THE OPPRESSED

In the long term, by 2010, we will have seen many changes, some of which we can not even begin to predict now. Although we are in a period of constrained resources, by 2010 things will have improved at least once. It is well to remember that much of military funding (much of everything, in fact) seems to go in cycles. Look back over the last twenty years. Between 1971 and 1991 we have had the worst period in the military in all respects and the best period for rebuilding and re-equipping after those

47. Both LTG Spigelmire and BG Baratto were emphatic about the value of SF participation in the Drug War for training and readiness. Interviews, 9 and 10 May 1991, conducted by the author.

bad years. Look at the twenty years before that, from 1951 to 1971. One sees almost the same cycle. We can be certain that by

2010 we will have gone through the cycle again. As constrained as things might appear now, it is well to remember, "This too shall pass." And when we again come to a period of growth and plentiful resources, we would do well to remind ourselves, "This too shall pass," and prepare for the coming lean times.

The Special Forces motto is "To Free the Oppressed." But there is more than just the oppression of tyranny. There is the oppression of hunger, and the oppression of poverty, the oppression of inadequate housing or debilitating health. Special Forces can help.

As technology brings the human disasters into our living rooms, there will be increased consciousness of the plight of the majority of the world. We are not the world's policeman, nor do we want to be, but we may very well be the last, best hope for help for the majority of the world./48

By the year 2010 there will be numerous opportunities for our assistance. Even as these words appear on the computer screen, Special Forces are involved in disaster relief along the Turkish-Iraq border. "Bringing order to this camp...would be a classic Special Forces mission." "The US forces are popular here and are working with the Pesh Mirga, the Kurdish freedom-

48. No one who served through the Vietnam years and its terrible aftermath, will ever forget, or remain unmoved by the sight of liberated Kuwaitis shouting "USA, Number One!" and "George Bush, Number One!"

fighters." "'I love these people,' said Sgt. Christopher Warner after an impromptu Kurdish lesson. 'I think it's absolutely

great we could help them.'"/49 This mission will not change, though the locale will.

The technology of 2010 will, even more than today, bring the world into our living rooms. And the American people are the most generous in the world. There is no country on earth that comes anywhere near to the United States in helping those in trouble, both on a case-by-case disaster basis and as a percentage of our income given to charity. We defeated Germany and Japan in a great war and rebuilt them into economic powers. When earthquakes struck Nicaragua and Armenia, whose governments our government was in serious disagreement with, Americans were the first to rush disaster aid. When famine struck Africa, Americans were the people who responded most to the "Live-Aid" concerts to donate money and food. When the horrors of Romanian orphanages came to light, Americans by the thousands spent considerable money to rescue them. No people on earth are as generous and giving as the Americans. And that, coupled with the technology of 2010 could spell trouble for some leaders and governments in the world.

No people are so implacable when aroused as Americans. The technology which brought the recent Gulf War into our living rooms will, by 2010, be even more capable of bringing the

49. "Mission of Hope: Special Forces provide comfort, aid to refugees," Army Times, 27 May 1991, pp. 12-13.

immediacy of any situation any place in the world into our homes.

The hearts of Americans are touched by the plight of the Kurds, as reported nightly on the news. Those who, a few months ago, were opposed to the use of military force in Iraq are now demanding we use military force to protect the Kurds and ensure their safety.

What will be the American reaction to the next famine and the scenes of children starving? What will they do when a child dies before their eyes? A few days ago (as this was written) the television show "60 Minutes" broadcast a segment in an African country where the dictator denied anyone was hungry. As he spoke, "60 Minutes" cut back in with shots of the starving people. What would be the reaction of the American people if they saw a similar situation, and realized that it was an inefficient government preventing help from reaching the dying people? Would they call for military action, as they are currently calling for action to save the Kurds? Would an implacably aroused American public demand a starving people be rescued if it was within our power, regardless of what their existing government said?

Early in this paper I discussed the evangelical aspects of supporting revolutionary movements. The American people have a strong evangelical streak ingrained in their culture, that it would not be well to arouse. In this humanistic era, we may cloak it in other terms, but we are familiar with "Holy War," though we may call it by another name. We know it well.

Whatever our government and the American people decide,

Special Forces will be actively involved in much that happens in the next twenty years. Involvement in various Low Intensity Conflicts is most likely, and it is a certainty SF will be there in helping and assisting the down-trodden, as it always has.

Special Forces, again unlike other Services, is trained and has the capability to work at any level of the Spectrum of Conflict. (See Figure 7.) From Peace, to Low Intensity Conflict of various types, to Total Global War, Special Forces are trained and expected to have a role to play. Not an adjunct role, or something cobbled together because it's now a popular "buzz-word" inside the DC Beltway, but a role which has always been part of the Special Forces charter--if only we could get the powers that be to listen.

By 2010, there will be a broader appreciation of the role of Special Forces. Special Forces is not, and was never meant to be, a separate Service. By 2010 Special Forces will have succeeded in educating the public, the conventional military hierarchy and Congress in what Special Forces has always known.

Conflict is fought across a wide range of activities, not just armed men shooting at one another. Conflict--War--truly is a battle for hearts and minds, despite the cliché that phrase has become. We must be successful in the psychological operations, the civil assistance, the engineering and agricultural assistance, all of the things that make up "hearts and minds," as

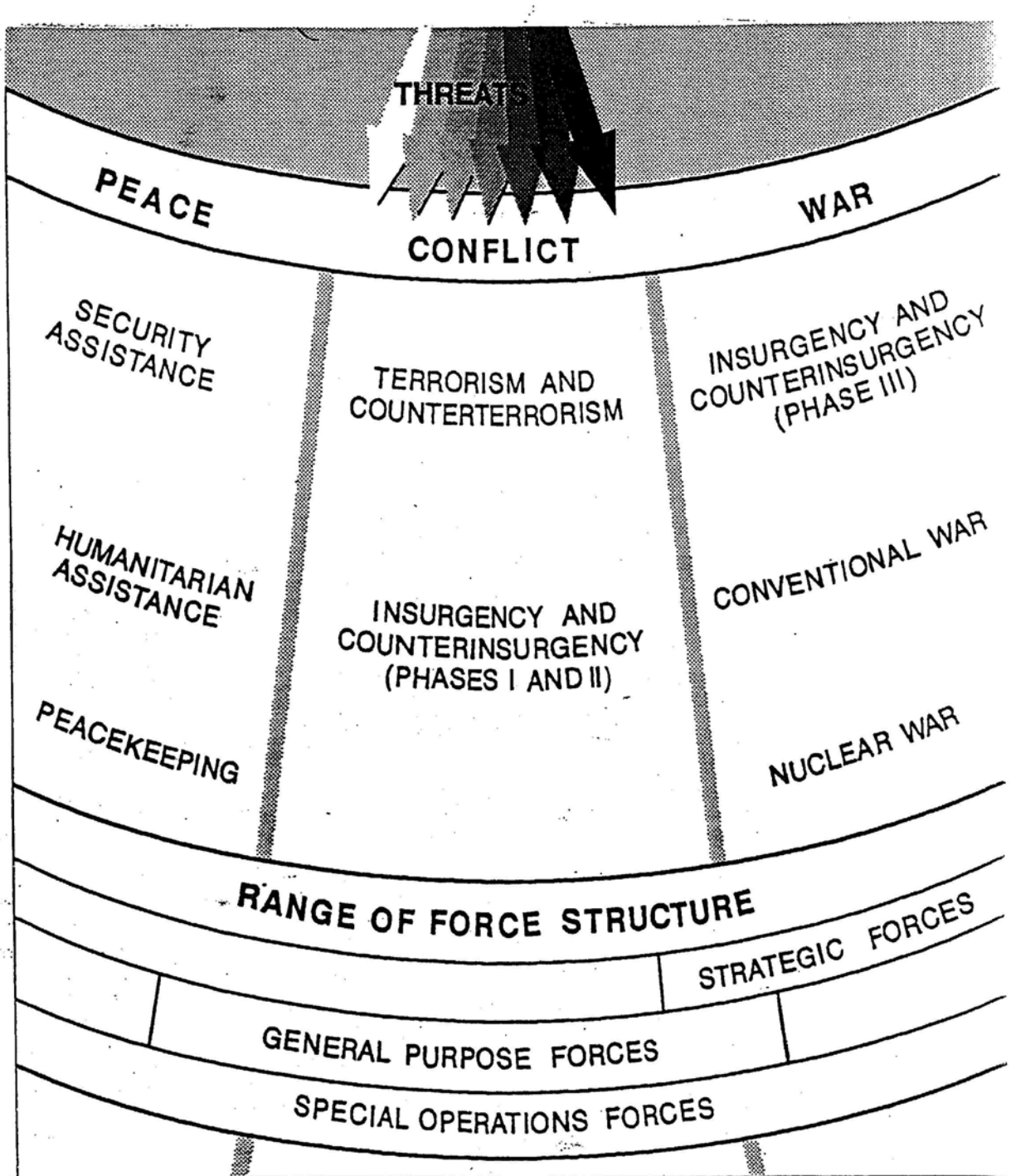


Figure 7

Source: FM 31-20, Special
Forces Operations

well as the military skills for which we are better known. The greater our ability to deal with conflict in the relatively peaceful environments, the less likely we are to go to the armed conventional" war.

The late Barry Sadler wrote a number of paeans to Special Forces. One of his songs, "The A-Team", has lines that go: "Wherever there's trouble, night or day/Go the men of the Green Beret/They bring hope where they are seen/Twelve men, invincible, the A-Team."

By the year 2010, that won't have changed a bit.

De Oppresso Liber.

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