

The Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program: What It Is and How It Can Be Made Relevant

**A Monograph
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Abstract

THE MILITARY ACCESSIONS VITAL TO NATIONAL INTEREST PROGRAM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT CAN BE MADE RELEVANT by MAJ John M. Lorenzen, USA, 45 pages.

Non-citizens have served in the United States military during every war since at least the Civil War. In 1862 Congress, in an effort to increase the size of the Army, passed the first legislation which authorized expedited citizenship for immigrants who agreed to serve in the Army; a practice which continues to the present day. This monograph looks at the history of non-citizens serving our country during times of war. Specifically, it examines the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) Program which is a Department of Defense recruiting program that targets non-citizens who speak languages deemed to be of “high-value” to the military and certain health care professionals. Individuals who agree to serve are granted expedited citizenship.

This monograph argues that the Army should expand the MAVNI program in order to make it more viable. The military’s success in current and likely future operations demands adaptable and flexible Soldiers. These Soldiers also need to enhance the commander’s understanding of the environment in order for him to visualize, describe and direct. Soldiers recruited through the MAVNI program possess language skills and cultural expertise that can help the commander make sense of what is going on around him enabling his practice of mission command. This monograph provides a framework for expanding the MAVNI program. Based on the above, two proposals are made; (1) further development of the MAVNI program in order to better leverage the language skills and cultural expertise of the Soldiers recruited through the program, and (2) the integration of MAVNI Soldiers into operations with more precision.

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Oh the army, the army, the democratic army,
All the Jews and Wops, the Dutch and Irish cops
They're all in the army now.

Corporal John Mullin,
Lyrics to marching song sung by the 77th "Melting Pot" Division¹

Research Question

This monograph seeks to determine how the Army should optimally employ Soldiers recruited through the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) program thereby leveraging their cultural expertise and language capabilities.²

Rationale and Relevance

The purpose of this monograph is to contribute to the ongoing research and discourse in the Army as to the best method of employing Soldiers who enter the service through the MAVNI program. It is motivated by the author's experience as a battalion executive officer at 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne). During that assignment, the author was involved in the development and implementation of a program designed to leverage the skills of Soldiers who joined the Army under the MAVNI program. The MAVNI program was originally conceived in 2007 as a way to expand the pool of potential recruits for military service. It allows certain non-citizens who are legally present in the United States without green cards to join the military and apply immediately for U.S. citizenship without first obtaining lawful permanent residence. United States laws 10 USC Sec. 504 and 8 USC Sec. 1440 outlines the categories

¹ David Laskin, *The Long Way Home* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2010), introductory page (no number).

² See Appendix A. This Memorandum For Record was eventually signed by the 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) commander and sent to Headquarters, United States Army Special Forces Command (USASFC). It details how the 1st SFG(A) commander utilizes Soldiers recruited via the MAVNI program and the challenges involved. As of 1 February 2011, 1st SFG(A) had the largest population of MAVNI Soldiers in the Special Operations Command (SOCOM); a total of 53.

of non-citizens who may join the U.S. military.³ Thousands of non-citizens serve in the military today doing a variety of different jobs. The intent of the MAVNI program to recruit individuals who possess specific foreign language skills and professional medical skills (see appendix B).⁴

MAVNI Soldiers began to arrive at 1st SFG (A) in fall 2009. Their arrival was somewhat of a surprise as knowledge of the MAVNI program was extremely limited, there was little notice that they were being assigned to the unit, they were in excess of the allotted personnel strength, and there existed no guidance from higher as to their utilization, training, and equipping. The fact that many of the Soldiers spoke English as a second language and were trained in military occupational specialties (MOS) not authorized on the Group's Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) added to the confusion. COL Rand Binford, commander of 1st SFG(A), directed that the Soldiers temporarily work in the Group's language lab (which is where Special Forces Soldiers receive language training) until further guidance regarding their employment was received from the United States Army Special Forces Command (USASFC) and the Special Operations Command (SOCOM). MSG Mark Saichompoo, a Special Forces Soldier and Non-Commissioned Officer-In-Charge of the language lab, was charged with the immediate supervision of the Soldiers. In terms of task organization the language lab fell under the purview of the Group Support Battalion (GSB) of which the author was the executive officer.

The early employment of the MAVNI Soldiers at 1st SFG(A) was informed by discussions between LTC Lee Hudson, commander of the Group Support Battalion, and relevant members of his and the Group headquarters' command and staff. Continued refinement of the Soldiers' utility is ongoing and, as of January 2011, is still left to the discretion of the Group commander; a situation which exists

³ C. Todd Lopez, "Army seeks language, medical skills from non-citizens," *Army News Services*, February 23, 2009. Online at <http://www.army.mil/-news/2009/02/23/17328-army-seeks-language-medical-skills-from-non-citizens/>. Last accessed in March 2011.

⁴ Soldiers recruited via the MAVNI program will be referred to as "MAVNI Soldiers" throughout this monograph. In addition, it focuses exclusively on those recruited for their language skills and cultural expertise vice a medical expertise.

throughout the Army.⁵ As of 12 August 2010, 282 of 795 (35%) MAVNI Soldiers volunteered for assignment to United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) units.⁶ These Soldiers possessed 48 different MOSs; 27 of the MOSs were not authorized in the units to which they were assigned.⁷ The absence of a system to ensure that MAVNI Soldiers are trained in MOSs which leverage their particular expertise and then assigned to units authorized those MOSs means these Soldiers will continue to be utilized in an inefficient, ad hoc manner. The challenges of attempting to develop utilization, training and equipping plans, and subsequent review of the MAVNI program resulted in recognition that Army doctrine, organizations, and operations could benefit from improvements to the existing approach towards management of the MAVNI program in order to maximize its full potential.

Without changes in the current approach the MAVNI program will continue to be marginalized as a recruiting tool and hampered by less than optimal utilization of MAVNI Soldiers. They will continue to be trained in MOSs that do not utilize their language skills and cultural expertise, Soldiers will continue to be sent to units that are not resourced to train, equip and house them, and there will continue to be a failure to take into account the educational backgrounds of the recruits so they are utilized to their maximum potential. For these reasons, a discussion of the MAVNI program is relevant.

Background

There is a long history of non-citizens receiving expedited United States citizenship as a result of their service in the U.S. military. Since the Civil War Congress has enacted legislation which offered

⁵ Among the many who supported a groundbreaking effort to develop and implement a program at 1st SFG(A) to employ the MAVNI soldiers in a manner that leveraged their language skills and cultural background the following standout: COL Rand Binford, COL Francis Beaudette, CSM Jeff Stigall, LTC Rory Crook, MAJ Owen Ray, MAJ Jim Pugh, SGM Shane Shorter and MSG Mark Saichompoo.

⁶ United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Fact Sheet, SUBJECT: Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program Vignette, 20 August 2010.

⁷ Ibid.

expedited naturalization/citizenship to immigrants in an effort to maximize the size of the military.⁸

During World War I the United States Congress passed an amendment to the nation's naturalization laws that allowed alien Soldiers serving in the military to immediately become citizens. According to this new law, alien Soldiers in military service during World War I could file for citizenship "without making the preliminary declaration of intention and without proof of the required five years' residence within the United States."⁹ Prior to the United States' entry into World War II, Congress enacted legislation which granted citizenship to aliens who enlisted for three years and received an honorable discharge.¹⁰

However, the promise of United States citizenship in exchange for military service has not been only for expansion of the military. During the Cold War foreigners rather than immigrants were the target of legislation which promised expedited citizenship. The Lodge Act of 1950 permitted foreigners to enlist in the military; the ulterior motive being the recruitment of Eastern European refugees with the intent that they serve in United States Army units in Europe during the Cold War.¹¹ Additionally, the United States officially began recruiting Filipino nationals into the Navy in the late 1940s when it signed the Military Bases Agreement of 1947 allowing U.S. military bases in the Philippines.¹² In total, over 35,000 Filipinos enlisted in the Navy through the program between 1952 and 1991.¹³

⁸ The Constitution of the United States, in [Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4](#), allows the Congress to create law regarding naturalization, which includes citizenship.

⁹ David Laskin, *The Long Way Home* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2010), 167.

¹⁰ Time, "National Affairs: Passport to Citizenship" (April 2, 1951), online <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,814485,00.html>. Last accessed on 12 March 2011.

¹¹ James Jay Carrano, "Mobilizing Europe's Stateless: America's Plan for a Cold War Army," *Journal of Cold War Studies* (Spring 1999), online at <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/15203979952559522?journalCode=jcws>. Last accessed on 12 March 2011.

¹² Agreement Between The Government Of The Republic Of The Philippines And The Government Of The United States Of America On Military Assistance To The Philippines, Signed at Manila, March 21, 1947, online at <http://www.yonip.com/main/articles/1947.html>. Last accessed on 21 February 2011.

¹³ Prepared Statement of the Honorable David S.C. Chu, Undersecretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, July 10, 2006, online at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2006/July/Chu%2007-10-06.pdf>. Last accessed on 13 April 2011.

The Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) program represents the military's latest version of recruiting non-citizens legally residing in the United States. In its current state the number of personnel recruited through the program is capped and its very existence is almost unknown among Army personnel including senior officers. However, this program should not be viewed as merely a recruiting program to increase personnel numbers. Lessons learned from Afghanistan and Iraq point to the need for United States Army personnel who speak a region's indigenous language and are intimately familiar with its cultural nuances. As a result of these experiences and emerging situations all over the world which may require the deployment of United States Army personnel, the MAVNI program needs to evolve so Soldiers assessed into the military through the program become a valued resource for the commander.

Despite achieving a significant measure of success on the current battlefields, United States forces face continuing challenges in adapting to the diverse environments. The nature of the current conflict requires effective engagement, coordination, and collaboration with indigenous individuals and security forces. This study concludes that the MAVNI program has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of United State Army forces, as well as indigenous security forces, if it is managed correctly.

Based upon the above, two proposals are made; (1) further developing the MAVNI program by applying the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF) construct and (2) integrating MAVNI Soldiers into military operations with more precision.

Methodology

The approach used in this work is the case study methodology. The research is supported by primary (mainly United States Code) and secondary sources as it applies to cases involving the recruitment of non-citizens in United States history. Section 2 of this paper focuses on the history of alien veteran naturalization from the Civil War to the present thereby examining the historical precedent of

non-citizen service in the military. Section 3 will comprehensively examine the MAVNI program in its current state and how MAVNI Soldiers are presently being utilized. In Section 4, through the use of the DOTMLPF construct, a re-vamped MAVNI program will be proposed. This discussion allows an objective assessment of the feasibility and utility of increasing the number of MAVNI Soldiers in the Army. As a result of this assessment, this study posits the desirability of expanding the MAVNI program in terms of numbers and further refinement of its applicability. Section 5 serves as the conclusion; it examines the current operational context and how the Design concept could be aided by the refinement of the MAVNI program.

Summary

This section presents the primary research question of this monograph as determining how the Army should optimally employ Soldiers recruited through the MAVNI program thereby leveraging their cultural expertise and language capabilities. After a discussion of the rationale and relevance of this monograph, as well as the relevant conceptual background the paper, the section discusses the methodology used by the author.

SECTION 2

A HISTORY OF ALIEN NATURALIZATION FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE PRESENT

At some point, Sam's captain called him out of the ranks. "You're an alien", the captain told the twenty-two-year-old Jewish private, whose uniform fit him like a glove thanks to his abilities with needle and thread. "When we ship out, you don't have to go overseas." "It's my country," was Sam's response. "I go where you send me."¹⁴

The Civil War

Beginning in the 1840s the American population grew rapidly as millions of immigrants entered the United States, mostly from western Europe. Since many of these immigrants settled where they disembarked--in the North--on the eve of the Civil War the northern states had a large advantage over the South in terms of population size.¹⁵ Despite this manpower advantage enlistment numbers became a concern for the United States Government during the early years of the Civil War. Two days after Fort Sumter's surrender, President Lincoln declared that a rebellion existed in the South and asked the nation's governors to raise 75,000 troops in order to quell the rebellion.¹⁶ Although volunteers rushed to enlist at first, antiwar sentiment soon grew and the government had to take action in order to increase the size of the Union army. Hoping to tap into its large immigrant population in 1862 the United States Congress passed the Alien Soldiers Naturalization Act.¹⁷ This act was the first in a series of statutes to offer expedited naturalization to aliens who agreed to fight for the Union during the Civil War.

¹⁴ David Laskin, *The Long Way Home*, 172.

¹⁵ James M. McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 9. In 1860 the population of the United States was approximately 32 million. The population in the Northern states was approximately 23 million while that in the Southern states was approximately 9 million.

¹⁶ James West Davidson, *America: History of Our Nation, Beginnings Through 1877* (Boston: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009), 530.

¹⁷ Darlene C. Goring, "In Service to America: Naturalization of Undocumented Alien Veterans ", *LEXSEE 31SETON HALL LAW REVIEW* 400, (2000), 4.

This benchmark statute reads:

That any alien, of the age of twenty-one years and upwards, who has enlisted or shall enlist in the armies of the United States, either the regular or volunteer forces, and has been or shall be hereafter honorably discharged, may be admitted to become a citizen of the United States, upon his petition, without any previous declaration of his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and that he shall not be required to prove a more than one year's residency in the United States previous to his application to become such a citizen; and that the court admitting such alien shall, in addition to such proof of residence and good moral character as is now provided by law, be satisfied by competent proof of such person having been honorably discharged from the service of the United States as aforesaid.¹⁸

For almost two decades this statute extended citizenship only to those who served United States Army but Congress passed another act in 1894 to include those serving in the Navy and Marine Corps.¹⁹ During the Civil War, at least twenty percent of Union Soldiers were immigrants, many having just recently arrived in the United States.²⁰ The precedent and codification of offering expedited citizenship for military service would be something Congress returned to repeatedly in the years to come.

World War I

The late 1800s saw another surge of millions of immigrants streaming into the United States. Whereas before the Civil War, most immigrants were from northern and western Europe the pattern changed at the turn of the century with more people coming from southern, central and eastern Europe—Italy, Poland, Russia, and other countries.²¹ Many Americans opposed the flood of immigrants believing

¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Max Boot, "Uncle Sam Wants Tu," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 February 2005, online <http://www.cfr.org/defense-policy-and-budget/uncle-sam-wants-tu/p7861>. Last accessed on 15 March 2011.

²¹ Raymond L. Cohn, "Immigration to the United States," online at <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/cohn.immigration.us>. Last accessed on 17 March 2011. Between 1894 and 1914, immigrants from southern, central, and eastern Europe accounted for 69% of the total. With the onset of World War I in 1914, the sources of U.S. immigration again changed. From 1915 to the present day, a major source of immigrants to the United States has been the Western Hemisphere, accounting for 46% of the total.

the newcomers would never assimilate into American culture. Reflecting this sentiment Congress enacted several laws which set limits on immigration.²²

When war broke out in Europe in August 1914 the United States remained neutral, not wanting to get embroiled in affairs “over there.” While American citizens whose families had been in the United States for generations were content with this stance, new immigrants to the country were more sensitive to the Great War. Most of them had family members either fighting for one of the armies involved in the conflict or directly affected by the fighting.

On 7 May 1915 the British passenger liner, the RMS *Lusitania*, was sunk by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland killing 128 of the 197 Americans on board.²³ For German immigrants to the United States an already difficult situation became more complicated. At the time about 8% (8 million people) of the United States population was either born in Germany or had at least one parent who was born in Germany.²⁴ As war between their native land and their adopted country became more likely they had a choice to make. Which uniform would they don on the European battlefields? The editor of Milwaukee’s *Germania-Herald* summed up the feelings of many: “We are Germans, of course. I was an officer in the German Army, I have one hundred and twenty-five relatives now fighting for Germany. When people ask us, therefore, where we stand in case of war between this country and Germany, it is like asking a man where he would stand in his own household as between his wife and his mother. However, if war ever came between this country and Germany or any other country, we would be American citizens, just as we were in the Civil War.”²⁵ When the United States Congress voted to declare war in April 1917 the size of the United States Army (Regular Army and National Guard) was

²² Davidson, *America: History of Our Nation*, 579.

²³ Laskin, *The Long Road Home*, 98.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 100.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

approximately 208,000 Soldiers.²⁶ This was a miniscule force relative to what would be required to execute a war on the European continent.²⁷ To address this issue the Congress passed the Selective Service Act of 1917 which required that all males residing in the United States, including aliens, register for military service and the first draft since the Civil War was instituted.²⁸ However, the act specified that men born overseas who had not taken out their first citizenship papers were exempt from the draft, as were enemy aliens, that is, non-citizens who had been born in Germany.²⁹ The latter pool of aliens became larger when the United States declared war on Austria-Hungary in December 1917 extending to aliens from that empire.³⁰ There were also questions regarding the status of men born in neutral countries or countries allied with the United States.³¹ The lack of clear guidance meant that those manning the draft boards that were established to execute the registering of individuals into the military lacked the wherewithal to adjudicate cases involving exemption status. Further compounding the problem were rumors and misinformation among the various immigrant populations to the effect that if you signed up to serve in the Army, you automatically became an American citizen.³² Despite the confusion, by the end of National Registration Day on 5 June 1917 ten million men had registered for the draft.³³

²⁶ Richard W. Stewart, *American Military History, Volume II, The United States in a Global Era 1917-2003* (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army), 18, online <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V2/AMH%20V2/chapter1.htm>. Last accessed March 2011.

²⁷ In the General Organization Project of July 1917, the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, General John J. Pershing and his staff called for a field army of about one million to be sent to France before the end of 1918. In June 1918 he requested three million men organized into 66 divisions sent overseas by May 1919. He changed this to 80 divisions in Europe by April 1919 and then changed the request again to 100 divisions by July 1919. By the end of the war, the Army consisted of 62 divisions of which 43 served overseas.

²⁸ Goring, "In Service to America: Naturalization of Undocumented Alien Veterans," 6.

²⁹ Laskin, *The Long Road Home*, 128.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 129.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 126.

On 9 May 1918, in what amounted to a reward for their loyalty to the United States, Congress passed an amendment to the nation's naturalization laws that essentially allowed alien Soldiers serving in the military to immediately become citizens.³⁴ By the end of the war in November 1918 approximately a half-million immigrants born in forty-six countries served in the United States military. At its peak approximately 18 percent of those serving were born in a country other than the United States.³⁵

World War II

The gruesome spectacle of World War I made the thought of another war fought on such a grand scale difficult for most to envision. Following the war Congress directed a prompt reduction in the size of the Regular Army finally settling in 1921 on a figure of 12,000 commissioned officers and 125,000 enlisted men.³⁶ By 1933 the United States Army ranked seventeenth in the world in size.³⁷

Following Hitler's offensives in Europe in 1939 and early 1940 Congress recognized that it needed to act to increase the size of the Army as the specter of American entrance into another war became likely. As it did during the Civil War and World War I, Congress enacted legislation which tapped into the United States' non-citizen population. In terms of demographics the population of the United States in 1940 was different from that just prior to World War I. The large migration to the United States in the early 20th century, which meant that many men who had recently left their native lands returned to them in the uniform of the United States to fight, had stemmed. Nevertheless, by World War II approximately 10,000,000 legal aliens resided in the United States.³⁸

³⁴ Goring, "In Service to America: Naturalization of Undocumented Alien Veterans," 6.

³⁵ Laskin, *The Long Road Home*, xvi.

³⁶ Stewart, *American Military History, Volume II*, 57, online <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V2/AMH%20V2/chapter1.htm>. Last accessed in March 2011.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁸ Statement of Ernest Fleischman, attorney, New York City, representing the Workers Defense League on 17 February 1942 to the United States Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on Immigration considering an

On 14 October 1940 Congress passed the Nationality Act of 1940 which included a provision that entitled all aliens who were currently enlisted for three years in the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, or if they were honorably discharged from one of these branches to naturalization.³⁹ When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 the size of the Army stood at 1,643,477 men—hardly enough to defeat the Axis powers.⁴⁰ In 1942 Congress reacted to the need for more military manpower by passing an amendment to the 1940 act which provided for expedited naturalization for alien veterans serving during World War II. Aliens who were willing to demonstrate their allegiance to the United States by becoming naturalized citizens increased the available manpower to fight the war. In fact, Congress needed to increase the number of enlisted personnel in the Armed Forces so desperately that it passed another amendment later 1942 which granted almost immediate naturalization for aliens serving in World War II.⁴¹ This amendment provided that any alien enlistee who honorably served in the military forces during World War II was eligible for naturalization regardless of age, satisfaction of residency requirements, English language proficiency, or literacy requirements.⁴²

The United States Congress's codification of laws expediting citizenship for aliens who fought for the United States during World War II provides another example of its willingness to tap into this pool of manpower in times of war or national crisis. With the defeat of the Axis powers in 1945 another drawdown of the military forces ensued. By 30 June 1947 the Army consisted of a volunteer body of

amendment of the Nationality Act of 1940. <http://www.loc.gov/law/find/hearings/pdf/00107800591.pdf>. Last accessed on 13 February 2011.

³⁹ Section 324 of the Nationality Act of 1940. <http://library.uwb.edu/guides/USimmigration/54%20stat%201137.pdf>. Last accessed on 19 March 2011.

⁴⁰ Stewart, *American Military History, Volume II*, 57, online <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V2/AMH%20V2/chapter1.htm>. Last accessed in March 2011.

⁴¹ Goring, "In Service to America: Naturalization of Undocumented Alien Veterans," 8.

⁴² Ibid.

684,000 ground troops and 306,000 airmen.⁴³ However, when the Soviet Union began to flex its muscles in Eastern Europe shortly after the conclusion of World War II, Congress again considered expedited citizenship to raise forces. However, this time the target was not non-citizens living in the United States but foreigners living abroad.

The Cold War, the Lodge Act of 1950 and the Volunteer Freedom Corps

As the conclusion of World War II drew near and the Allies met to divide the spoils of war Soviet Premier Josef Stalin made it clear that he intended to control all of Eastern Europe and to exert an important influence elsewhere in the world.⁴⁴ During meetings with British and United States representatives the Soviets never concealed a determination to protect themselves against future attack by extending their western frontier after the war. Although the other Allies objected, in 1946 and 1947 the Soviet Union established Communist satellites throughout Eastern Europe; the Iron Curtain had been dropped.

Tension between the Soviet Union and United States mounted as all of western Europe seemed in danger of falling into communist hands. There was a food shortage in France and a near famine in occupied Germany. For humane reasons as well as for political advantage the United States felt a responsibility to help these nations regain a semblance of economic stability. The quandary for U.S. policymakers was how to do this without appearing to be expansionist like the Soviets. George Kennan provided an answer in an anonymous article in the July 1947 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." Russian diplomacy, he wrote, "moves inexorably along a prescribed path, like a persistent toy automobile wound up and headed in a given direction, stopping only when it meets with

⁴³Stewart, *American Military History, Volume II*, 201, online <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V2/AMH%20V2/chapter1.htm>.

⁴⁴ Walter LaFeber, *The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company), 413.

some unmoveable force.”⁴⁵ A policy of “long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment” based on the “application of counter-force” was the best means of dealing with Soviet pressures.⁴⁶ The Cold War might be “a duel of infinite duration,” he wrote. It could be won if America maintained its own strength and convinced the communists that it would resist aggression firmly anywhere and everywhere.⁴⁷ A policy of containment was the outgrowth of this and served as the logic for U.S. foreign policy for the next four decades. Hundreds of thousands of anti-communist refugees poured out of Eastern Europe countries in the wake of the Soviet Union’s expansion. During the early years of the Cold War the allies resettled or sent back to their native country most of those who were officially classified as displaced persons.⁴⁸ However, as the Cold War became more contentious, processing became more difficult since many people did not want to return to their country of origin out of fear that they would be killed, imprisoned, or otherwise persecuted by the communist regimes.⁴⁹ As time passed it became more difficult to accommodate this horde of stateless Europeans. In 1947, for example, the United States still had custody of 47,396 displaced persons in Austria alone, of which 90 percent were deemed “irrepatriable” because of the political situation in Eastern Europe.⁵⁰ The growing tension of the Cold War had made it almost impossible to resolve the final status of East Europeans stranded in the West.

It was within this context that the idea of mobilizing Eastern European refugees for the defense of Western Europe was conceived. The chief proponent was Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., a Republican Senator from Massachusetts. As he saw it, who better to defend Western Europe from Soviet domination than the thousands of Eastern Europeans who had been displaced by it? He envisioned the enlistment of

⁴⁵ Mr. X (George F. Kennan), “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs* (July 1947), online <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/23331/x/the-sources-of-soviet-conduct>. Last accessed in March 2011.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Carrano, “Mobilizing Europe’s Stateless: America’s Plan for a Cold War Army,” 1.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

25,000 Eastern European refugees into the United States Army whose purpose would be rescuing their homelands from the grip of Soviet tyranny and preventing the fall of more countries to the Soviet Union.⁵¹ On 30 June 1950 the Lodge Act was passed by the Senate authorizing the enlistment of 2500 aliens in the U.S. Army with a promise of citizenship after five years' service.⁵² The new law limited enlistment to single male aliens between 18 and 35 years of age.⁵³ They would take the enlistment oath in Germany but would go to the United States for basic training and integration into regular Army units.⁵⁴ About a year later the first group was sworn in at Sonthofen, Germany. Under the Department of the Army directive implementing this program, Germans and nationals of countries included in the Mutual Defense Assistance Program or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were specifically excluded.⁵⁵

As far as Lodge was concerned, the passage of the law was a nice start but he had a much more ambitious idea in mind. He exhorted his colleagues to pass legislation authorizing the U.S. Army to enlist up to 250,000 aliens for two years' overseas service as part of a Volunteer Freedom Corps (VFC). As he saw it, "The political and propaganda value of such an army would be incalculably great. Raised by voluntary means, it would truly dramatize the idea of free devotion to a cause. With such an army in existence, the Voice of America would really begin to speak to the enslaved populations of Poland and Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania."⁵⁶ Lodge's was not the only voice in Congress calling for the use of foreign soldiers to "rollback" Soviet expansion. The Mutual Security Act of 1951 authorized

⁵¹ Henry Cabot Lodge, "An Army of the Free," *Life Magazine*, 2 October 1950, 38.

⁵² Time, "National Affairs: Passport to Citizenship" (April 2, 1951), online <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,814485,00.html>. Last accessed on 12 April 2011.

⁵³ Colonel Joe C. Lambert, "These Aliens Also Serve," *Army Information Digest*, November 1951, 39.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Lodge, "An Army of the Free", 38.

military aid to Western European countries.⁵⁷ Included in the Act was the Kersten amendment (named for its sponsor, Congressman Charles Kersten) which authorized the President, whenever he deemed it to be in the national interest, to form military units of Eastern European refugees.⁵⁸

Despite the new legislation, the U.S. military was reluctant to devote much effort to the project. The Joint Chiefs of Staff never finalized a plan to implement the Kersten amendment and the Army did not pursue the recruiting of aliens very aggressively as it lacked the resources in light of demobilization after World War II.⁵⁹ As of 16 July 1951, in all of Europe there were about six thousand applicants, of whom two-thirds were immediately rejected as unqualified by the Army.⁶⁰ By the end of the first year of the program only 400 had been accepted for induction.⁶¹ This lack of qualified recruits made the Army even more lukewarm towards the idea of the Volunteer Freedom Corps as the administration of President S Truman transitioned to the administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in January 1953.

The Eisenhower administration pumped new life into the idea of a Volunteer Freedom Corps. In a memo to the National Security Council (NSC) in early 1953 the new President outlined his vision for the Corps. It would consist of infantry battalions recruited from the “stateless, single, anti-Communist young men, coming from the countries behind the Iron Curtain.”⁶² Each battalion would represent a certain nationality and have its own shoulder patch. After serving for a certain period—perhaps three

⁵⁷ H.W. Brands, “A Cold War Foreign Legion? The Eisenhower Administration and the Volunteer Freedom Corps,” *Military Affairs*, Volume 52, No. 1, (January 1988), 7.

⁵⁸ “Cold War-Rollback,” online <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/cold-war-rollback.htm>. Last accessed in February 2011.

⁵⁹ Carafano, “Mobilizing Europe’s Stateless: America’s Plan for a Cold War Army,” 13.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Brands, “A Cold War Foreign Legion? The Eisenhower Administration and the Volunteer Freedom Corps,” 7. A select group of Eastern European refugees recruited via the Lodge Act were inducted into the United States Army Special Forces eventually serving in the 10th Special Forces unit in West Germany. Among these individuals was Lauri Torni (later known as Larry Thorne) who had fought in the Finnish and German Armies during World War II. An account of his life can be found in *The Soldier Under Three Flags* by H.A. Gill III.

⁶² Ibid.

years—Soldiers in the Corps would become eligible for American citizenship.⁶³ Recruits who developed special aptitudes or skills could serve as interpreters, intelligence specialists, general staff officers, and combat commanders of VFC Soldiers.⁶⁴ Finally, qualified individuals would receive training as specialists in “anti-Communist underground and in political offensive work,” and would be smuggled back into their home countries for clandestine service there.⁶⁵ He acknowledged the lackluster recruiting campaign following passage of the Lodge Act but believed more could be done. The prototype was the British Pioneer Corps, which recruited refugees who had fled Hitler’s Germany and gave them the opportunity to fight against Hitler.⁶⁶ In a nod to Lodge’s plan Eisenhower said that by acting “with a zeal equal to the need,” the United States ought to be able to recruit as many as 250,000 men for the VFC.⁶⁷

The idea of a VFC was gaining traction; a fact made more evident when the NSC approved of the concept in the spring of 1953. On 26 June 1953 President Eisenhower officially endorsed the implementation of a VFC; it being one facet of a larger plan to contain communism in Europe as outlined in a “Report by National Security Council on United States Objectives and Actions To Exploit the Unrest in the Satellite States.” One of the “psychological objectives” summed up the overall goal of the plan: “To convince the free world, particularly Western Europe, that love of liberty and hatred of alien oppression are stronger behind the Iron Curtain than it has been dared to believe and that resistance to totalitarianism is less hopeless than has been imagined.”⁶⁸ Eisenhower and senior U.S. officials even considered sending units of a VFC to Asia, specifically Korea, to stem the tide of communism there.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Carafano, “Mobilizing Europe’s Stateless: America’s Plan for a Cold War Army,” 17.

⁶⁸ Document No. 74: NSC 158, “United States Objectives and Actions to Exploit the Unrest in Satellite States,” 29 June 1953, online http://www.wilsoncenter.org/coldwarfiles/files/Documents/19530629_NSC158.pdf. Last accessed in February 2011.

The NSC report proved to be the nexus for the idea of a Volunteer Freedom Corps. A litany of issues surfaced which contributed to Eisenhower's eventual drift away from the VFC plan. From the military perspective, the plan was too costly and the Corps would be open to easy infiltration by Soviet operatives; the State Department worried that European allies would see the initiative as too imperialistic and believed the idea ran counter to the European Defense Community initiative which proposed an integrated European army.⁶⁹ Eisenhower himself was concerned about the Soviet response to such an aggressive plan.⁷⁰ The administration adopted, particularly after Eisenhower's reelection in 1956, an approach of restrained determination especially toward the Soviet Union. Hopes of pushing back the Soviet Union with clever initiatives faded. As a former Soldier, who had seen the ravages of war, Eisenhower, like former general and president Ulysses Grant, exercised restraint in every crisis. Just prior to leaving the White House, the VFC plan was officially rescinded by the National Security Council.

The Lodge Act of 1950 represented another instance of Congress enacting legislation which promised expedited citizenship for aliens in exchange for their military service. It differed, however, from the legislation passed during the Civil War and the World Wars. In those cases the purpose of legislation was to expand the pool of recruits within the United States in order to maximize the size of the military. In light of the threat posed to the free world by communism after World War II, Lodge, Eisenhower and others viewed the formation of the Volunteer Freedom Corps to be in the U.S.'s national interest and thereby promised expedited citizenship as a way to recruit a specific demographic; in this case displaced Eastern European refugees. The idea of the VFC and its tenets, that is, leveraging the language skills and cultural expertise of non-citizens in order to enable the cause of the United States

⁶⁹ Brands, "A Cold War Foreign Legion? The Eisenhower Administration and the Volunteer Freedom Corps," 9.

⁷⁰ Carafano, "Mobilizing Europe's Stateless: America's Plan for a Cold War Army," 33. Also, regarding European allies attitudes towards the VFC Carafano cites a State Department Memorandum dated 28 October 1954 which read that in light of the "overriding importance of the European defense problem and the sensitivity of European public opinion," the proposal for a Corps should be deferred indefinitely.

Army, represents the closest historical precedent to the utilization of MAVNI Soldiers proposed in this paper.

The Korean War, Vietnam War, and the Gulf War

In 1952, Congress repealed the Nationality Act of 1940 which was passed to grow the size of the military in order to fight World War II and replaced it with the Nationality Act of 1952.⁷¹ This legislation greatly expanded the number of individuals eligible for naturalization through military service and its provisions serve as the foundation for statutes in effect today.⁷² The legislation was buttressed by Presidential Executive Order Numbers 12081 and 12939 signed, respectively, by Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton which granted, albeit after the fact, expedited naturalization for alien veterans who served on active duty during the Vietnam War and Gulf War.⁷³ When the current conflicts began in the aftermath of 9/11 existing legislation allowed non-citizens to enlist in the United States Army. Volunteers for military service must meet numerous requirements but just as immigrants and non-citizens have done since the Civil War they are eligible for expedited citizenship as a result of their service to their country. The next section will focus on the current conflicts and the conception of the MAVNI program.

⁷¹ Goring. "In Service to America: Naturalization of Undocumented Alien Veterans," 9.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 10.

SECTION 3

THE MILITARY ACCESSIONS VITAL TO NATIONAL INTEREST (MAVNI) PROGRAM

I know that I am going to be an asset if I get picked up for Special Forces. I know the culture and the people in Africa, and that would help the team when they have to travel to those countries.

PFC Edmond Kiptum, a native of Kenya, enlisted in the Army under the MAVNI program.⁷⁴

Shortly after the Army deployed forces to Afghanistan to fight Al-Qaeda in the aftermath of the attacks on 9/11 there were several policy changes which expedited the citizenship process for immigrants in the armed forces.⁷⁵ The most important of these was President George W. Bush's executive order allowing non-citizens to apply for citizenship after only one day of active-duty military service.⁷⁶ Other policy changes were made to enhance benefits for non-citizens serving in the military.

By 2005 the Army and Marines were having troubles reaching their recruiting quotas.⁷⁷ As a result, in January 2006 Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 which substantially changed the military enlistment statutes.⁷⁸ Enlistment was now authorized for: a national of the United States; an alien who was lawfully admitted for permanent residence (green card); a person enlisting in the military under one of three Compacts of Free Association (either between the U.S. and the Federated States of Micronesia, the U.S. and the Republic of the Marshall Islands or the U.S. and

⁷⁴ SFC Michael R. Noggle, "MAVNI Soldiers Look to Join Special Operations Forces Elite," *Tip of the Spear* (December 2010), 16.

⁷⁵ Margaret D. Stock, "Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Five Years After 9/11," *Immigration Policy Center* (November 2006), online http://www.nlgmltf.org/pdfs/infocus_11206.pdf. Last accessed in January 2011.

⁷⁶ Statement of The Honorable David S.C. Chu, 10 July 2006.

⁷⁷ Max Boot, "Uncle Sam Wants Tu," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 February 2005, online <http://www.cfr.org/defense-policy-and-budget/uncle-sam-wants-tu/p7861>. Last accessed in March 2011.

⁷⁸ Statement of The Honorable David S.C. Chu, 10 July 2006.

Palau).⁷⁹ The most notable change was a new statute which gave the Secretaries of the separate services authority to enlist a person, other than one listed in the above categories, if they determine “that such enlistment is vital to national interest.”⁸⁰ In addition, recognizing that immigrants could provide special assistance to the Armed Forces as translators, the new legislation provided for up to fifty immigrant visas per year for translators serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁸¹

In 2007 the Army was still having problems meeting its recruiting requirements and was researching methods to increase the recruitment numbers.⁸² While attending a conference in the Washington D.C. area on the subject of methods to increase accessions, LTC Margaret Stock, an Army Reservist and a Harvard Law School trained immigration lawyer, recommended targeting non-citizens who were legally residing in the United States—something she noted the United States routinely did in previous wars. Although Congress and the president had amended military-related enlistment and naturalization rules there was no formal recruiting program aimed at this demographic.⁸³ LTC Stock received authority from the Army to start working on a program in January 2008 and received the Secretary of Army’s endorsement for the completed concept in May 2008.⁸⁴ Shortly thereafter the Office of the Secretary of Defense decided to apply it to all the services and in November 2008 Secretary of Defense Robert Gates authorized a new pilot program titled “Military Accessions Vital to National Interest” (MAVNI).⁸⁵ Under the pilot program up to 1,000 legal non-citizens with critical skills (licensed

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Stock, “Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Five Years After 9/11”, 4.

⁸¹ Ibid., 1.

⁸² Author’s interview with LTC(ret.) Margaret Stock in January 2011. LTC(ret.) Stock is an attorney admitted to the bar in Alaska and specializes in immigration law. LTC(ret.) was instrumental in the conception of the MAVNI program. She retired from the United States Army Reserves in 2010.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

health care professionals or people fluent in one of thirty-five strategic languages) were be allowed to join the U.S. Armed Forces.⁸⁶

The MAVNI program is not open to unauthorized or undocumented immigrants.⁸⁷ The Army has not accepted undocumented immigrants for enlistment since the Vietnam War.⁸⁸ Although one occasionally reads that an undocumented immigrant has managed to enlist in the military these are isolated cases that have involved mistake, false documentation, or fraud.⁸⁹ In the past few years, the Army has put in place measures (such as checking a recruit's immigration status with the Department of Homeland Security) to prevent undocumented immigrants from enlisting. In addition to barring undocumented immigrants from enlisting under its auspices, the MAVNI program does not allow the enlistment of visa overstayers or persons who have fallen out of status. Furthermore, no one with a criminal record is eligible under this program; Army MAVNI recruits are not permitted to apply for the "conduct waivers" that are sometimes available to US citizens and some Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) recruits who have criminal records.⁹⁰ Under the Army's rules, all MAVNI recruits must pass an English test and score 50 or higher on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT).⁹¹ Thus, Army MAVNI recruits are required to meet higher standards than U.S. citizen Army recruits. Those MAVNI recruits who seek to enlist on the basis of their foreign language proficiency are tested on that proficiency. The Office of the Secretary of Defense directed that MAVNI language recruits must enlist for a minimum

⁸⁶ Margaret D. Stock, "Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Eight Years After 9/11", *Immigration Policy Center*, (November 2009), online http://www.nlgmtf.org/pdfs/infocus_11206.pdf . Last accessed in March 2011.

⁸⁷ Margaret D. Stock and Kristan K. Exnar, *Immigration Issues Relating to Military Service: Practical Problems and Solutions*, Immigration and Nationality Law Handbook, 3.

⁸⁸ Margaret D. Stock, "Ten Things That Immigration Lawyers Should Know About the Army's New Non-Citizen Recruiting Program," online <http://www.scribd.com/doc/12866758/Margaret-Stock>. Last accessed in February 2011.

⁸⁹ Stock, "Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Five Years After 9/11 ", 6.

⁹⁰ Alvarez, Lizette. "Army Giving More Waivers in Recruiting," *N.Y. Times*, February 14, 2007.

⁹¹ Stock, "Ten Things That Immigration Lawyers Should Know About the Army's New Non-Citizen Recruiting Program", 5.

four-year contractual active duty tour, but health care professionals have a choice of a three-year contractual active duty tour, or six years in the Selected Reserve. Health Care professionals who seek the three-year active duty tour or service in the Selected Reserve must enlist specifically as doctors or nurses; they need not have any specialized language skills, but they must meet the Army's stringent credentialing requirements for doctors and nurses.

Enlisted Army Soldiers contract with the Army to serve in particular MOSs. While US citizens are eligible to enlist in any MOS for which they are qualified, non-citizens are not permitted to enlist in an MOS that requires a security clearance.⁹² Under the MAVNI program, some eighty-three of the Army's MOSs are available. The available specialties include Interpreter/Translator Aide; Infantry; Cavalry Scout; many Combat Engineer jobs such as Construction Equipment Operator, Plumber, and Firefighter; and numerous medical jobs, such as Operating Room Specialist, Dental Specialist, Pharmacy Specialist, and Preventive Medicine Specialist.⁹³ Once a MAVNI enlistee becomes a US citizen, he or she can apply to re-classify into a different military specialty, including one that requires a security clearance. He or she can also apply to become an officer upon obtaining US citizenship.⁹⁴

The end date for the pilot program was December 31, 2009. The Secretary of Defense approved extension of the program two times and it is currently open until December 2011.⁹⁵ According to the new MAVNI recruiting quotas, the Army is authorized a total of 1000 new language/culture recruits and Health Care Professionals. As of 12 August 2010, a total of 795 Soldiers had joined the Army through the MAVNI program.⁹⁶ On 30 June 2009, there were 114,601 foreign-born individuals

⁹² Ibid., 4.

⁹³ Ibid., 6.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ United States Army Recruiting (USAREC) Message 10-191, Subject: Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) Recruitment Pilot, dated 10 September 2010.

⁹⁶ United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Fact Sheet, SUBJECT: Military Accessions Vital to National Interest Program Vignette, dated 20 August 2010.

serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, representing 7.91 percent of the 1.4 million military personnel on active duty.⁹⁷ Roughly 81 percent of foreign-born service members were naturalized U.S. citizens, while 13 percent were not.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Stock, “Essential to the Fight: Immigrants in the Military, Eight Years After 9/11,” 8.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

SECTION 4

THE CASE FOR A REVAMPED MAVNI PROGRAM AND DOTMLPF

The degree of understanding necessary for successful operations against enemy organizations in complex environments will require not only the employment of technology and systems analysis, but also access to relevant expertise, physical reconnaissance, and the development of intelligence in close contact with the enemy in civilian populations.

General Martin E. Dempsey, Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command ⁹⁹

This section details a suggested concept, using the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities framework (DOTMLPF) for making the MAVNI program relevant to current and future operations. The basic premise is that this will not take place until there is greater awareness in the Army and interagency community of the importance of a cultural engagement resource embedded in the Army formation. That is, future full spectrum operations--to include counterinsurgency--demands an adaptable Soldier who is aware of cultural nuances and armed with a skill set to operate effectively in an uncertain and complex environment with the ultimate goal of enhancing the commander's understanding of the environment. With this in mind, the proposed concept would simultaneously seek to increase awareness while re-organizing the MAVNI program.

The conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the lesser known one in the Philippines have highlighted the importance of understanding culture in the context of counterinsurgency. Current doctrine emphasizes the importance of commanders understanding the operational environment. Joint doctrine defines the operational environment as, "a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander."¹⁰⁰ This understanding

⁹⁹ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0; The Army Capstone Concept, Operational Adaptability: Operating under Conditions of Uncertainty and Complexity in an Era of Persistent Conflict, 2016-2028*, (Headquarters, United States Army, Training and Doctrine Command, 2009), 18.

¹⁰⁰ Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. (8 November 2010 (As Amended Through 31 January 2011)), 270.

underlies the Army's "Visualize, Describe, and Direct" model of Mission Command and is a critical component for the development of a viable operational approach.

The Army's Counterinsurgency field manual devotes an entire chapter to the subject of intelligence in counterinsurgency.¹⁰¹ Given the traditional technological superiority of the United States over rivals, the Army, indeed the U.S. military writ large, has relied to a large measure on gathering intelligence about physical facts of the environment through the use of information gathering technology. As a result, the information gathered tends to describe the operational environment rather than explain why the environment is the way that it is. Effective counterinsurgency requires a comprehensive understanding of alien cultures, societies, religions, and languages that can only come with an immersion into the environment/culture itself. The following statement from a Defense Science Board report testifies to this reality:

The current conflict suggests much about the challenges the American military will confront in the twenty-first century. It involves cultural, tribal, and religious divides within [a society]. It has placed demands on Soldiers and Marines similar to the "three-block war" posited in the mid 1990s by General Chuck Krulak, Commandant of the Marine Corps at the time. Above all, such wars will require intelligence based on the understanding of foreign societies, their cultures, their languages, and their histories. At present America's intelligence agencies emphasize none of these attributes. But knowledge of those human and cultural factors must also reside outside the intelligence community.¹⁰²

However, it is almost impossible for even the most culturally astute outsider to truly understand the dynamics and intricacies of any culture. Thus, there has been a tendency in the past for the Army to default to its core competency—conventional warfare—when a richer understanding of the environment would have dictated a different operational approach which yielded more effective results. The fact that the concept of Design is now part of Army doctrine is proof of the widespread recognition of this condition. In this context, the utilization of MAVNI Soldiers, that is, individuals who are from a

¹⁰¹ United States Army, *Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, (Washington D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 3-1.

¹⁰² U.S. Department of Defense, *Defense Science Board Summer Study on Transformation Panel on Force Capability Evolution* (Washington: Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, August 2005), 25.

particular society and, therefore, possess a deep understanding of the culture and speak the indigenous language, in a counterinsurgency setting will enable the commander to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the environment.

The adoption of the Human Terrain Teams (HTT) concept by the Army is acknowledgement that understanding a culture requires a degree of sophistication. These five- to nine-person teams “support field commanders by filling their cultural knowledge gap in the current operating environment and providing cultural interpretations of events occurring within their area of operations.”¹⁰³ The teams are comprised primarily of Soldiers from the Civil Affairs branch and civilian social scientists who specialize in a particular culture.¹⁰⁴ The shortcoming of these team members is that in almost every instance they are not actually from that particular culture. While their immersion in a culture yields invaluable insight there exist knowledge gaps due to their inherent “outsider” status. A MAVNI Soldier is thus a more valuable resource in aiding the understanding of the environment due to his “insider” perspective. He has the advantage over the Human Terrain Team member by virtue of the fact that he is actually from that culture.

In the context of counterinsurgency operations, the contemporary Army commander must be particularly sensitive to the culture in which he operates and become adept at cultivating information which informs his understanding. The employment of MAVNI Soldiers can be a force multiplier by supplying information, and more importantly, more accurately analyzing a situation so that civilian and military decision makers can leverage circumstances to their advantage. This approach will help to ensure the proper application of lethal and non-lethal efforts is achieved in order to achieve the objectives. Without utilizing this potentially powerful human resource, a commander and staff’s comprehensive understanding of the operational environment will not be realized.

¹⁰³ CPT Nathan Finney, *Human Terrain Team Handbook*, (Fort Leavenworth KS: Human Terrain System, 2008), 2.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

DOTMLPF

The proposed construct is closely modeled and inspired by interviews with a number of individuals who suggested the formulation of the MAVNI program and interact daily with MAVNI Soldiers.¹⁰⁵ This is by no means a mature proposal and is only intended to generate discussion as to how the MAVNI program can have as positive an impact as possible.

Vision

The effective utilization of Soldiers recruited through the MAVNI program must be guided by a larger vision of how their language skills and cultural expertise should be applied for the benefit of the military community writ large. With this in mind the following vision statement is proposed as a logical starting point:

By virtue of their language skills and cultural expertise, MAVNI Soldiers will provide relevant, reliable and precise information enabling a commander in the development of a deeper understanding of the operational environment.

Doctrine

1. Review and revise current Service and Joint doctrine on Counterinsurgency to include the use of MAVNI Soldiers. One example would be to include a portion in Chapter 3 of the Army's Counterinsurgency field manual.
2. Establish a military working group to develop/revise regulations which govern the MAVNI program and develop doctrine for the utilization of Soldiers recruited through the program.
3. The current list of Warfighting Functions should be revised to include an Engagement function which emphasizes tasks associated with developing an understanding of an environment. This

¹⁰⁵ These individuals include LTC(ret.) Margaret Stock, COL Francis Beaudette (Commander, 1st SFG(A)), LTC Rory Crooks (Deputy Commander, 1st SFG(A)), and MSG Mark Saichompoo (NCOIC of the MAVNI Soldiers at 1st SFG(A)).

would not only formalize and institutionalize what, in many cases, already is occurring but it would also emphasize the need for language and cultural experts as part of an Army formation.

Organization

1. Stand up a Military Accessions Vital to National Interest experimental organization. The purpose of this organization would be to develop a plan for integration of MAVNI Soldiers into the Army and their proper employment on the modern day battlefield. Members would include representatives from the Special Operations community as well as other branches such as Civil Affairs, MISO, and Intelligence among others.

2. Establish a Center of Excellence for Cultural Engagement with linkages to military, interagency, and academic institutions involved in liaising with the militaries and other pertinent agencies in other countries.

Training

1. Train Soldiers recruited into the Army via the MAVNI program in Military Occupational Specialties/branches (Translators, Civil Affairs, Military Intelligence, Foreign Area, Strategy, MISO) that leverage their language skills and cultural expertise. In addition, personnel enlisted under the MAVNI program should be vetted for training in special operations and special operations support career fields eligibility and given assignment priority to such a unit.

2. Integrate MAVNI soldiers into training that enables them to cultivate their language skills and offers them the opportunity to learn what information is important to enhancing a commander's understanding of the environment.

Materiel

1. Establish and optimize funding sources that allow an expansion of the MAVNI program in terms of recruiting numbers.

2. Ensure TOEs/MTOEs include the equipment/resources required for MAVNI Soldiers who join an organization.

Leadership and Education

1. Provide opportunities for senior leaders to receive orientation on the MAVNI program so they understand the program and the unique capabilities these Soldiers have to offer.
2. As the program matures, place MAVNI Soldiers who have demonstrated leadership potential in command and control of MAVNI formations.

Personnel

1. Expand the current quotas to allow more MAVNI Soldiers into the Army.
2. Develop an education/assignment/utilization process which leverages a MAVNI Soldier's language skills and cultural knowledge.

Facilities

1. As the program matures, create infrastructure, such as language labs where MAVNI Soldiers can teach their native language to other Soldiers, across the Army which facilitates incorporation of the MAVNI skills into a unit.
2. Define standards for support requirements across existing and projected training facilities.

SECTION 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Understanding the effect of operations as seen through the lens of the [local] culture and psyche is the foremost planning consideration for every operation.

LTG Peter Chiarelli, Commanding General, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, 2006-2007¹⁰⁶

Background

Throughout United States history certain non-citizens have served honorably in the military. Almost half of Army enlistees in the 1840s were immigrants (non-citizens) and more than 660,000 military veterans became citizens through naturalization between 1862 and 2000.¹⁰⁷ The Lodge Act of 1950 permitted non-citizen Eastern Europeans to enlist between 1950 and 1959. This practice is made manifest today in the form of the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) program. The use of MAVNI Soldiers in a manner which leverages their language skills and cultural capabilities would exponentially increase the potential for a richer and more precise understanding of the operational environment. While information gleaned from technological data gathering is important, the nature of the recent and ongoing fights puts a premium on information regarding the cultural, religious, and human aspects of the operating environment. Gathering this type of information requires a Soldier with unique insight into the fabric of the society, one who understands the “web of meaning”, that is, the culture.¹⁰⁸

After a discussion of the history of non-citizens serving in the military and the MAVNI program as it currently exists, this monograph provides a framework for determining the value of using MAVNI Soldiers as a resource for enhanced understanding of the current and potential battlefield environments. Recent experience shows that, despite achieving a significant measure of success on the

¹⁰⁶ Finney, *Human Terrain Team Handbook*, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Statement of the Honorable David S.C. Chu, 10 July 2006.

¹⁰⁸ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 3-6.

battlefield, the Armed Forces of the United States face continuing challenges in adapting to the requirements of the long-term global struggle against uncompromising adversaries. Our nation and its leadership expect our forces to be successful in a variety of operations; ranging from combating Islamic extremists in Iraq and Afghanistan to providing civil support after a natural disaster within our borders and assisting in humanitarian relief efforts abroad.¹⁰⁹ Our forces are expected to accomplish this while at the same time developing and maintaining the capabilities for dealing with potential future conflicts.

Operational Context

Our forces continue to be engaged in Afghanistan and Iraq fighting what has been termed the Long War. Even after withdrawal from those countries, the United States military will deploy to a number of places around the world for various reasons continuing to operate in diverse, complex environments. As the recent conflicts have shown, success in these operations will depend on an appreciation of the impact of a complex mixture of factors that go well beyond the traditional military realm.¹¹⁰ Despite the overwhelming technological superiority, strength, and flexibility of our military the current fights have highlighted the criticality of understanding the indigenous cultures in order to leverage the diverse multilateral elements at the operational and tactical level in order to attain strategic objectives. Issues that need to be addressed which are political, economic, and diplomatic in nature, that is, outside of conventional military tasks, are now within that institution's purview. In light of this, the military must evolve in order to meet this challenge. TRADOC Pam 525-3-0 makes this point explicit: "...challenges

¹⁰⁹United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1; The United States Army Operating Construct, 2016-2028*, (Headquarters, United States Army, Training and Doctrine Command, 2010), 8.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 9. Among these factors are demographic trends "such as urbanization, youth bulges, and migration...", environmental changes, globalization and the decreasing cost of technology.

for the future [will] have implications for force structure, organization, operations, training, leader development, and Soldier attributes.”¹¹¹

The environments in which our forces operate have been characterized as complex, open systems. Seemingly random events that are totally disconnected to the unenculturated individual may, in fact, be the manifestation of an interconnected network of information exchanges between indigenous entities. Given this contemporary operational environment, the Army’s Military Decision Making Process and the Joint Operational Planning Process may be inadequate tending to lead to a linear approach based on simple views of cause and effect. Open, complex systems display synergistic, non-linear qualities and are comprised of an aggregate of entities that are themselves affected by other systems making them difficult to understand. The concept of Design offers a distinct method of enhancing situational understanding of open, complex environments. It seeks to avoid the trap of assuming that a system will react in a predictable manner and that a solution set that may have been effective in one environment will be as effective in another. It recognizes that initial conditions are just that—a snapshot in time; the system is perpetually changing and planning and execution must take this into account.

How the MAVNI Program Can Inform Design

The practice of operational art cannot commence until the commander gains, at the very least, an elementary understanding of the environment. As discussed, technology plays a vital role in the collection of information which can be used by the commander to aid his understanding of the environment. However, technology cannot explain the culture of an environment; human capital is required for this. The optimal form of this resource is a Soldier who comes from the culture and speaks the language. By leveraging the potential of the MAVNI program, Soldiers with these abilities will be a part of every Army organization that deploys and will supplement the traditional understanding of the

¹¹¹ Ibid., 10.

physical terrain with synthesis of the social, cultural and economic factors that form the human terrain. The present HTT concept represents the acknowledgement that culture matters. However, the HTT concept can be strengthened by adding Soldiers to the Army whose understanding of an environment is informed by having actually “lived and breathed” the environment. The baseline MAVNI program is a start but it needs to evolve in order to truly be of worth.

Conclusion

The challenges of the current conflicts and the specter of those in the future require a capability within the Army formation which translates the likely ambiguity of operational environments into understanding. Without leveraging the human capital required for effectively collecting and analyzing information from an indigenous population our future efforts will fall short of achieving the strategic objectives. Non-citizens have made an impact in our country’s wars and can continue to do so. But our current and future conflicts will require more than just the manpower that non-citizens have supplied in the past wars. The complex nature of the adversaries and challenges we face require the application of innovative approaches. By adopting the framework outlined above, we may gain a critical advantage for our forces.

Appendix A - 1st SFG(A) Memorandum For Record

Appendix B

Current list of languages allowed by the MAVNI Program:

Albanian (AB) Amharic (AC) Arabic Algerian (DH)
Arabic Modern Standard (AD) Arabic Iraqi (DG) Arabic Egyptian (AE)
Arabic Jordanian (AK) Arabic Levantine (AP) Arabic Libyan (AL)
Arabic Maghrebi (AM) (note 1) Arabic Syrian (AP) Arabic Palestinian (AP)
Arabic Lebanese (AP) Arabic Sudanese (AV) Arabic Moroccan (BS)
Arabic Tunisian (BW) Arabic Yemeni (AU) Azerbaijani (AX)
Bengali (BN) Burmese (BY) Cambodian-Khmer (CA)
Cebuano (VB) Chinese Cantonese (CC) Chinese Mandarin (CM)
Czech (CX) French (FR) (note 2) Georgian (GG)
Haitian-Creole (HC) Hausa (HS) Hindi (HJ)
Igbo (JB) Indonesian (JN) Korean (KP)
Kurdish-Kurmanje (XK) Kurdish-Sorani (XS) Lao (LC)
Malay (ML) Malayalam (MN) Moro (MH)
Nepalese (NE) Pashto-Afghan (PV) Persian Dari (PG)
Persian Farsi (PF) Portuguese Brazilian (PQ) Portuguese European (PT)
Punjabi (PJ) Russian (RU) Serbo-Croatian (SC)
Sindhi (SD) Sinhalese (SJ) Somali (SM)
Swahili (SW) Tagalog (TA) Tadjik (TB)
Tamil (TC) Thai (TH) (note 4) Turkish (TU)
Turkmen (UB) Urdu (UR) Uzbek (UX)
Yoruba (YQ)

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