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**EXPEDITIONARY DIPLOMACY: A SECURITY CHALLENGE**

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by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.

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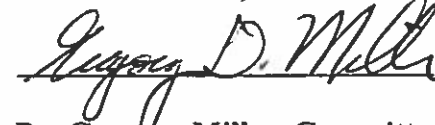
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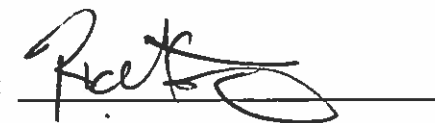
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## ABSTRACT

Providing an adequate level of security for diplomatic personnel operating within austere or dangerous environments is the responsibility of The Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security. There exists, within this endeavor, a fine line between employing enough resources and personnel to mitigate casualties among Foreign Service Officers (FSO) and creating an environment wherein an FSO is no longer able to operate effectively. Recently coined, the term expeditionary or transformational diplomacy describes the method by which diplomatic personnel deploy to increasingly unstable, hostile or austere environments to further US national objectives. This endeavor simultaneously increases the strain placed upon the members of the Diplomatic Security Bureau as they labor to employ commensurate security measures for the operational environment. The rapid pace of expeditionary style diplomacy often outpaces the fundamental security posture that historically protected diplomatic personnel. The resulting seam between the needs of the mission and the ability to deploy an effective security halo, has been exploited to devastating effect, most recently with the attack on the special mission to Benghazi, Libya. The thesis first discusses the basic tenants of expeditionary/transformational diplomacy, then the operational environment faced by the FSO of today. Secondly, it describes how the synthesis between facilities and both Department of State and Department of Defense personnel and programs protect diplomatic missions abroad. Finally, it analyzes current shortfalls between what FSOs do, how they function most effectively, and what the traditional security apparatus can support and how to shore up this gap to minimize casualties amongst US diplomatic personnel in the future.



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

On September 11, 2011, the US Special Mission to Benghazi, Libya underwent a sustained attack by extremists, which resulted in the deaths of four Americans, including Ambassador Chris Stevens. Although this incident was initially considered a reaction to an inflammatory video which led to numerous protests at US Embassies throughout the region, the US government ultimately determined it was a dedicated attack on US personnel stationed there, staged to coincide with the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

This latest aggression, focused upon United States diplomatic personnel and property, serves to remind the United States government and its people how dangerous the environment remains in which diplomats live and work every day. Attacks such as the 1998 coordinated bombings of the Embassies in the East African cities of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya significantly changed the United States' approach to the posturing of its diplomatic missions. So too, will this more recent attack compel members of the United States Department of State and Department of Defense to re-assess current security postures and cooperation between departments. The Department of State's implementation of expeditionary style diplomacy had a detrimental effect upon the Diplomatic Security Service's ability to provide for the safety of diplomatic personnel abroad. This thesis asserts that the efforts to gain advantage through this early engagement and forward deployment of diplomatic personnel largely ignore the supporting security apparatus necessary for success and therefore require additional security measures to maintain an expectation of limited casualties.

As fiscal constraints herald the withdrawal of the United States from its current position upon the world stage, careful consideration needs to be made for those

government installations remaining “forward” deployed in increasingly unstable and potentially hostile regions. Men and women assigned to diplomatic missions overseas are a critical vulnerability for the United States. The diplomatic mission to Benghazi, referred to as a special mission by the Department of State, was not synonymous with a consulate, as it is often mislabeled. Since the compound that came under attack that night was not a consulate, it was not required to meet mandatory security requirements, which would have included a larger security staff and mandatory physical security features. The question then, is does this type of diplomatic mission represent a radical departure from traditional diplomatic operational design? Although the US presence in Benghazi was not consistent with contemporary traditional diplomatic operation procedures, it is indicative of a greater trend in the diplomatic posture adopted by the Department of State. This strategic vision for diplomatic engagement, known as transformational diplomacy, seeks early engagement in developing diplomatic arenas. It is to this end that the US State Department deploys its personnel into more dangerous environments than it historically deemed advisable. These deployments represent a substantial challenge to the Diplomatic Security Service, whose security practices rely heavily upon a multifaceted approach to protecting personnel and property, which are difficult to establish readily to support this style of diplomatic engagement.

To illustrate and defend this assertion, this thesis discusses the current operational environment of United States diplomatic personnel and the threats and challenges they face while living and working abroad. To understand fully what diplomats are asked to do and why, I discuss the evolution of the transformational diplomacy initiative to provide a base understanding of the driving forces changing the face of US diplomatic

engagement. So that the reader may have a greater understanding of what standards and practices have been most successful for the Department of State in the past, a detailed description follows of how the diplomatic security apparatus functions. Most critically, this thesis demonstrates how and why the basic principles behind successful expeditionary or transformational diplomacy, and its operational tempo, largely ignore traditional diplomatic security practices. Through this process, this thesis demonstrates why, absent standardized security standards, it will be difficult to maintain an expectation of limited casualties within US diplomatic ranks.

Providing security for Foreign Service officers (FSO) is a complex undertaking, constantly tempered by the nature of diplomatic engagement. The dilemma of how to protect Foreign Service officers overseas while simultaneously allowing them the operational latitude to do their jobs will dictate the effectiveness of US diplomatic efforts for the near future. Where it may be possible to ensconce Foreign Service officers within a layered defense so complete they may no longer see the light of day, these same efforts sever the freedom of action and personal relationships that are the benchmarks of a successful diplomat. Without this latitude, these officers will not have the same opportunity to meet with individuals who may seek to keep their interactions with US diplomats secret. If an individual, due to security protocols, must travel to the US Embassy to conduct a meeting, they could decide that the inconvenience or exposure is not worth the trouble. If one extrapolates this possibility across US diplomatic missions worldwide, the negative effects upon US diplomatic efforts are clear. Should the events in Benghazi result in radical change to the US diplomatic presence overseas, it will be critical to balance this response against the necessity of FSOs being able to travel

throughout their area of operation, to facilitate and promote US interests within the host nation (HN) or State Department Regional Bureau.

According to a State Department report, the attack on the Benghazi compound began at approximately 1542hrs Eastern Standard Time, about 2142hrs in Benghazi.<sup>1</sup> At this time, a large group of armed individuals stormed the Special Mission Compound (SMC). By 2200hrs local time, the attackers, used fuel canisters they encountered on the SMC to burn the February 17 Martyrs' Brigade's living quarters, some vehicles, and then Villa C where the Ambassador, Information Management Officer (IMO) Sean Smith and one Assistant Regional Security Officer (ARSO) took refuge in the building's safe haven.<sup>2</sup> As the smoke penetrated into the building, the ARSO guarding Smith and Ambassador Stevens attempted to lead them out of the building. As the ARSO crawled on hands and knees toward a window that served as the escape route, he believed that Stevens and Smith followed. When the ARSO made it outside, he realized that they had not followed and re-entered the building. Smoke drove him from the building once again before he could locate either man.<sup>3</sup>

At 2205 while a response vehicle from the mission annex departed en route to the SMC to assist, the additional three ARSOs stationed at the SMC joined the search in Villa C for Smith and Stevens.<sup>4</sup> At this point, the search uncovered Smith who was

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<sup>1</sup> Department of State "Accountability Review Board Report, 2012" <http://www.state.gov/arbreport/> (accessed November 19, 2013), 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

already deceased, apparently due to smoke inhalation.<sup>5</sup> All additional attempts to locate Ambassador Stevens met with failure. At the urging of annex security members and militia, the ARSOs departed the SMC after suffering smoke inhalation and sustaining injuries during the search. The group took small arms fire en route to the mission annex compound. The Annex security team followed shortly after, once additional attempts to find Stevens failed and it appeared that the SMC faced another determined assault.

At 0200, US Embassy Tripoli received a phone call stating that six civilians brought a man matching the Ambassador's description to the Benghazi Medical Center (BMC).<sup>6</sup> These individuals discovered Steven's body in Villa C after the departure of security elements. BMC doctors attempted to resuscitate him for some 45 minutes before declaring him deceased, by apparent smoke inhalation.<sup>7</sup> Ambassador Stevens became the sixth United States Ambassador killed by militants in the line of duty since World War II.<sup>8</sup>

At 0500, a seven-man security team, dispatched from Tripoli to assist with the security situation, reinforced the Annex. Shortly after, the Annex began receiving Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) and mortar rounds. Three of these rounds struck the roof, killing security officers Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Department of State "Accountability Review Board Report, 2012" <http://www.state.gov/arbreport/> (accessed November 19, 2013), 24.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> The US Department of State. "Office of the Historian," <http://history.state.gov/about/faq/ambassadors-and-chiefs-of-mission> (accessed October 14, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Department of State, "Accountability Review Board Report, 2012" <http://www.state.gov/arbreport/> (accessed November 19, 2013), 27.

## Chapter 2: Defining Transformational Diplomacy

### Transformational Diplomacy

On January 18, 2006, in a speech at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice outlined the need for a change to US diplomatic engagement so that it more effectively met the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century world.<sup>1</sup> The goal of such diplomacy, dubbed by Secretary Rice “transformational diplomacy” is the support of democracy-promoting activities within countries. Rice in her February 14, 2006 testimony before Senate Foreign Relations Committee, outlined the objective of transformational diplomacy when she stated:

I would define the objective of transformational diplomacy this way: To work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people—and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system... Transformational diplomacy is rooted in partnership, not paternalism—in doing this with other people, not for them. We seek to use America’s diplomatic power to help foreign citizens to better their own lives, and to build their own nations, and to transform their own futures... Now, to advance transformational diplomacy all around the world, we in the State Department must rise to answer a new historic calling. We must begin to lay new diplomatic foundations to secure a future of freedom for all people.<sup>2</sup>

The strong emphasis upon engaging foreign citizens rather than governments suggests that this method of diplomatic engagement will either bypass host nation (HN) government counterparts, thereby inviting HN hostility, or assume they are no longer functioning at the time of engagement. Additionally, the reference to laying new

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<sup>1</sup> Congressional Research Service. *Diplomacy for the 21st Century: Transformational Diplomacy, United States Congress, by the Congressional Research Service, August 2007*. Order Code RL34141. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2007, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Jardine, “The Implications of Transformational Diplomacy for Foreign Service Officers” *The Industrial College of the Armed Forces National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington D.C., AY 2008-2009*, 4.

diplomatic foundations may suppose the installation of a new government in the HN or the current contested state of who may ultimately come to power. To assist the Department of State in preparing for this new form of engagement, Secretary Rice's vision included moving people and positions from Washington, D.C. and Europe to "strategic" countries. Rice also created a new position of Director of Foreign Assistance, modified the tools of diplomacy, and most interestingly, changed the US foreign policy emphasis away from relations among governments to one of supporting changes within countries.<sup>3</sup> In 1999, prior to the Georgetown speech that made transformational diplomacy the new buzz phrase in the halls of the State Department, then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright also broached the need for such an approach when she stated:

The past decade has witnessed a transformation of the world political situation...Challenges such as transnational law enforcement, global terrorism, democracy building, protection of the environment, refugee issues, and access to global markets and energy resources now compete with traditional security and political issues for policymakers' attention. These changes demand we reexamine the nature and basic structure of our overseas presence.<sup>4</sup>

In this statement, Albright posits that the traditional methods by which the State Department conducts business will no longer suffice as the "world political situation" evolves beyond the capacity of the status quo to shape. This statement suggests that the Clinton administration also identified the need for the US to play a larger part in shaping the world environment through innovative applications of the instruments of national power. Early diplomatic engagement in those countries susceptible to influence may

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<sup>3</sup> Congressional Research Service. *Diplomacy for the 21st Century: Transformational Diplomacy, United States Congress, by the Congressional Research Service, August 2007*. Order Code RL34141. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2007, 1.

<sup>4</sup> US Department of State. "Statement announcing the formation of an Overseas Presence Advisory Panel" <http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/statements/1999/990223a.html>, (accessed December 19, 2013).

preclude the need for military intervention in the future. This is especially true when dealing with governments that appear hostile or contrary to US regional concerns.

The Foreign Assistance Framework, developed by the Director of Foreign Assistance (DFA), is the primary office responsible for transformational diplomatic implementation. The DFA coordinates the 18 federal foreign assistance-funding programs and ensures that this assistance aligns with and supports foreign policy objectives.<sup>5</sup> The Foreign Assistance Framework is the tool used by policy makers to distribute funds in pursuit of these objectives. The goal of the framework is “to help build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system.”<sup>6</sup> The five primary transformational diplomacy objectives that form the basis for operations and funding toward this goal are: peace and security; governing justly and democratically; investing in people; economic growth; and humanitarian assistance.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, five country categories correspond to the aforementioned foreign assistance objectives: Rebuilding States - states in, or emerging from, internal or external conflict; Developing States – states with low or lower-middle income, not yet meeting certain economic and political performance criteria; Transforming States – states with low or lower-middle income, meeting certain economic and political performance

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<sup>5</sup> Congressional Research Service. *Diplomacy for the 21st Century: Transformational Diplomacy, United States Congress, by the Congressional Research Service, August 2007*. Order Code RL34141. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2007, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Henrietta H. Fore, Acting Director of Foreign Assistance and Acting Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, Testimony before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Washington, June 12, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

criteria; Sustaining Partnership States – states with upper-middle income or greater for which US support is provided to sustain partnerships, progress and peace; and Restrictive States – those states where the State Department or Congress has determined that serious freedom and human rights issues are of concern.<sup>8</sup>

What is immediately striking about these objectives and country categories is that they predominantly tackle issues or deal with distributing assistance to nations that are undergoing tremendous change, struggling economically or may have a history of human rights abuses. Additionally, the first objective of the framework funding criteria is to address peace and security. It is safe to assume that conditions within a country identified as requiring this type of assistance may not be conducive to a foreign diplomatic presence. The condition of any nation against which the US State Department leverages transformational diplomacy is a critical factor for the diplomatic security service that must protect Foreign Service officers operating within those states.

### **The Next Phase of Transformational Diplomacy and the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review**

Completed in response to guidance from then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) was a new product for the US State Department. Its purpose was to lay out a framework by which diplomatic and development activities, undertaken by both the State Department and USAID, would support the greater National Security Strategy. In its second section of

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<sup>8</sup> Henrietta H. Fore, Acting Director of Foreign Assistance and Acting Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, Testimony before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Washington, June 12, 2007.

Chapter 1 titled “Trends Reshaping the Global Context of US Foreign Policy”, the QDDR identifies seven threats that “transcend regional boundaries and imperil the global community.” These threats are:

- Terrorism and violent extremism;
- Proliferation of nuclear materials;
- Shocks or disruptions to the global economy/marketplace;
- Irreversible climate change;
- Cybersecurity;
- Transnational crime; and
- Pandemics and infectious disease.<sup>9</sup>

The QDDR addressed the need to operate diplomatically within an environment where these threats were omnipresent and often leveled at the US, its citizens and its diplomatic corps. In the fourth section of Chapter 2, titled “Equipping Our People to Carry out All Our Diplomatic Missions”, the Review addresses the issue of USAID and State Department personnel operating in dangerous environments. One sub paragraph states, “in order for State and USAID to fulfill our missions today, a greater level of mitigated risk, commensurate with the expected benefits, must be acceptable.”<sup>10</sup> An overseas risk management review was conducted by the Department of State shortly after the distribution of the QDDR, in an effort to “lead to a comprehensive and responsible construct for managing risk that allows our personnel the flexibility they need to

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<sup>9</sup> US Department of State, *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, US Department of State, US Agency for International Development (Washington D.C., 2010), 11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

complete mission objectives within a country and to establish new platforms for outreach beyond the embassy and capital.”<sup>11</sup> Further, the review developed an approach that sought to balance risk acceptability with risk management. In examining the standards and mechanisms for the development of security restrictions, the review would standardize the “granting of security waivers within a country, particularly those that affect travel and diplomatic platforms outside the embassy.”<sup>12</sup> Waivers of this kind expedite the occupation of an office space that may not adhere to the mandated physical security standards addressed in a subsequent chapter. A detailed report, which outlines any outstanding conditions that do not meet existing security standard criteria, accompanies these applications. Additionally, the QDDR states, “If we ask our personnel to accept a higher level of risk, we must ensure they have the proper skills and training to deal with more dangerous situations.”<sup>13</sup> All personnel subject to Chief of Mission authority at “critical” or “high” threat posts are required to attend the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat (FACT) training. Conducted by the US State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security, this course provides Foreign Service Officers and other personnel with brief yet intensive training in firearms, defensive driving, surveillance detection and general situational awareness prior to forward deployment. Although a robust security program does exist to support diplomatic missions abroad, this additional training

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<sup>11</sup> US Department of State, *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, US Department of State, US Agency for International Development (Washington D.C., 2010), 71.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

illustrates the nature of the perceived threat to diplomatic personnel supporting the transformational diplomacy initiative.

### Chapter 3: The US Diplomatic Environment

There remains an ongoing global repositioning of diplomats in support of stabilization and reconstruction efforts by the US State Department. The Advisory Committee on Transformational Diplomacy, rather than expressing concern about the shift of State personnel to more dangerous environments, saw this as inevitable and necessary for implementing transformational diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> This Advisory Committee stated that:

While the Department has always trained people for service in difficult hardship posts. The challenges of the future demand a qualitatively different approach that will produce new kinds of diplomats able to meet radically different work requirements, for example, service with Provincial Reconstruction Teams as currently exist in Iraq and Afghanistan. The proliferation of hardship tours and unaccompanied assignments may not be compatible with the skills and competencies of many of the Department's current personnel.<sup>2</sup>

This statement makes clear that transformational diplomacy will require the forward deployment of diplomats into the kinds of environments for which they were traditionally unprepared. This does not suggest, however, that previous environments were safe. The 1985 Inman Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, discussing the previous 15 years, noted that:

...while the older forms of abuse continued against American officials as well as those of other nations, newer, more violent tactics and weapons began to appear. Diplomats more and more frequently subjected to kidnapping or murder attempts and not a few lost their lives. The

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Jardine, "The Implications of Transformational Diplomacy for Foreign Service Officers" The Industrial College of the Armed Forces National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington D.C., AY 2008-2009), 23.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

international community sought to restate the traditional maxims concerning the inviolability of internationally protected persons, including diplomats, but with little practical effect.<sup>3</sup>

The report continued to expound upon the challenges by stating:

The prospects for totally preventing such attacks are not good. It important to emphasize that no amount of money can guarantee complete protection against terrorism. If determined, well-trained and funded teams are seeking to do damage, they will eventually succeed. However, there are a number of prudent steps that can be taken to minimize the probability of a successful or damaging terrorist attack, and these are the main themes of the Panel's deliberations.<sup>4</sup>

However, the panel outlined four prudent steps to mitigate the inevitable damage.

These included:

- Motivating governments to reach agreement on actions to isolate and punish the states sponsoring terrorism
- Improving US intelligence collection and dissemination and building effective cooperation on this level with our allies
- Improving the security of US buildings and facilities by expending additional resources
- Changing the attitudes of US personnel to promote constant vigilance. Prudence, protection and preparedness should become automatic with all personnel.<sup>5</sup>

These four steps to mitigate the effectiveness of terrorist attacks laid the groundwork for the operational methodology for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and its national level security programs discussed in chapter 4.

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<sup>3</sup> US Department of State, *The Inman Report: Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel On Overseas Security* (Washington D.C.: Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, 1985), [www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman](http://www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman), (accessed November 11, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

The Accountability Review Board once again addressed the threat environment for Foreign Service personnel in the pages of the January 1999 report on the Embassy Bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, also referred to as the “Crowe Report.” On August 7th the US was reminded how vulnerable its facilities and personnel are, especially in host nations (HN) where US adversaries are afforded general freedom of movement.

In its introduction, the report warns:

The renewed appearance of large bomb attacks against US embassies and the emergence of sophisticated and global terrorist networks aimed at US interests abroad have dramatically changed the threat environment. In addition, terrorists may in the future use new methods of attack of even greater destructive capacity, including biological or chemical weapons. Old assumptions are no longer valid. Today, USG employees from many departments and agencies work in our embassies overseas. They work and live in harm's way, just as military people do. We must acknowledge this and remind Congress and our citizenry of this reality of Foreign Service life. In turn, the nation must make greater efforts to provide for their safety. Service abroad can never be made completely safe, but we can reduce some of the risks to the survival and security of our personnel. This will require a much greater effort in terms of national commitment, resources, and procedures than in the past.<sup>6</sup>

The report goes on to admit that:

We understand that there will never be enough money to do all that should be done. We will have to live with partial solutions and, in turn, a high level of threat and vulnerability for quite some time. As we work to upgrade the physical security of our missions, we should also consider reducing the size and number of our embassies through the use of modern technology and by moving,

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<sup>6</sup> US Department of State, *Report of the Accountability Review Boards: Bombings of the Us Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania On August 7, 1998* (Washington D.C.: Accountability Review Boards, 1999), [http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/regions/africa/accountability\\_report.html](http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/regions/africa/accountability_report.html), (accessed November 11, 2013).

in some cases, to regional posts in less threatened and vulnerable countries.<sup>7</sup>

The 2012 edition of the publication “Political Violence: Against Americans” provides a more recent commentary on the state of the diplomatic security environment. Produced yearly, this publication is a thorough report and assessment of worldwide attacks targeting US interests, facilities and personnel during the previous calendar year. This publication’s statistical overview reports that 98 incidents involving US interests or citizens took place during 2012. It reports, that of this total, 91 directly targeted Americans.<sup>8</sup> The other, seven incidents resulted in the injury or death of US citizens.<sup>9</sup> 6 members of the Foreign Service were killed and 2 were wounded in these incidents.<sup>10</sup> The chart located in Appendix A demonstrates the dispersion of attacks throughout the six State Department Regional Bureaus and describes the nature of the incidents.

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<sup>7</sup> US Department of State, *Report of the Accountability Review Boards: Bombings of the Us Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania On August 7, 1998* (Washington D.C.: Accountability Review Boards, 1999), [http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/regions/africa/accountability\\_report.html](http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/regions/africa/accountability_report.html), (accessed November 11, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> US Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security, *Political Violence Against Americans: 2012* (Washington D.C.: Directorate of Threat Investigations and Analysis, 2013), 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*,

## Chapter 4: Diplomatic Security

### Physical Security Standards

The construction standards for diplomatic facilities overseas greatly contribute to the overall security umbrella designed to provide the safest possible working environment. Unlike other US Government organizations, those that handle foreign affairs are required by the nature of their mission to locate their facilities in overseas environments over which the US can exercise only limited control.<sup>1</sup> The inability to control the operational environment creates a vulnerability to a wide array of potential threats. To complicate matters, these facilities must be accessible to Non-Americans who require access to transact the types of legitimate business that encompasses the full spectrum of US foreign policy interests.<sup>2</sup> This need for access limits the options as far as identifying suitable locations, and providing access to, Foreign Service facilities abroad.<sup>3</sup>

The bombing of the US Marine Corps barracks in Beirut October 23, 1983, saw the use of large-scale vehicle borne explosives to attack a fixed complex. The resulting casualties, 241 American Service men, were staggering.

In response to the vulnerability this type of attack exposed, the US State

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of State, *The Inman Report: Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel On Overseas Security* (Washington D.C.: Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, 1985), [www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman](http://www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman), (accessed November 11, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Department commissioned the Inman Report to the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel on Overseas Security. The report identified a number of key issues common amongst facilities occupied by the State Department that if left unaddressed exposed State Department personnel to the same manner threat used to attack the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut. From these issues, the reporting panel members derived recommendations necessary to negate the effects of large-scale vehicle borne explosives and other threats to US facilities. These recommendations were:

- The United States must control the buildings in which it does business overseas.
- Location is the paramount consideration in the avoidance of assault and penetration of every kind. Being on the busiest or most fashionable street or corner may have been an asset in earlier days; today it is a liability.
- Co-location with occupants whom the United States neither chooses nor controls presents a substantial risk for assault and penetration.
- Proximity is a vital concern when other buildings abut or are so close that modern electronic and audio techniques can make it extremely difficult to safeguard national security information.
- Age, architecture, and design are crucial to the ability to defend against penetration and assault. Many buildings simply cannot be upgraded to the standards that are necessary today.
- Adequate funding and new approach to overseas construction are essential. The old, business-as-usual approach cannot meet the new requirements.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> US Department of State, *The Inman Report: Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel On Overseas Security* (Washington D.C.: Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, 1985), [www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman](http://www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman), (accessed November 11, 2013).

The panel identified that “there is no prescription that will guarantee the safety and integrity of every workplace overseas, but it is possible to reduce known and foreseen risks by embarking on a deliberate effort to modify those buildings that do meet the location criteria, and by relocating and moving from those buildings that do not.”<sup>5</sup> At this time, the panel identified 126 posts that it believed were vulnerable to terrorist and/or hostile intelligence operations using the following criteria:

- it did not meet the Department's current minimum physical security standards for construction quality and distance from the external perimeter barriers
- it shared a 'common wall' with adjacent structures
- Department shared the structure with other non-US Government tenants, and thus did not completely control the building.<sup>6</sup>

After establishing these criteria, the panel recommended that, “the Department of State embarks on this long-range plan to renovate or replace its office buildings at those 126 listed posts in order to minimize the potential for future security-related incidents that could lead to significant damage, loss of life, or compromise of national security information.”<sup>7</sup>

This building initiative resulted in the creation of the New Embassy Compound (NEC), a concept in design and site selection that sought to mitigate

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<sup>5</sup> US Department of State, *The Inman Report: Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel On Overseas Security* (Washington D.C.: Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, 1985), [www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman](http://www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman), (accessed November 11, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

the vulnerability of a diplomatic facility to terrorist and/or hostile intelligence initiatives. These newly designed buildings and compounds sought to meet stringent physical security standards while maintaining, to the greatest extent possible, access to host country nationals seeking access for consular and travel matters, business and commercial affairs, cultural and information exchange, and foreign assistance programs.

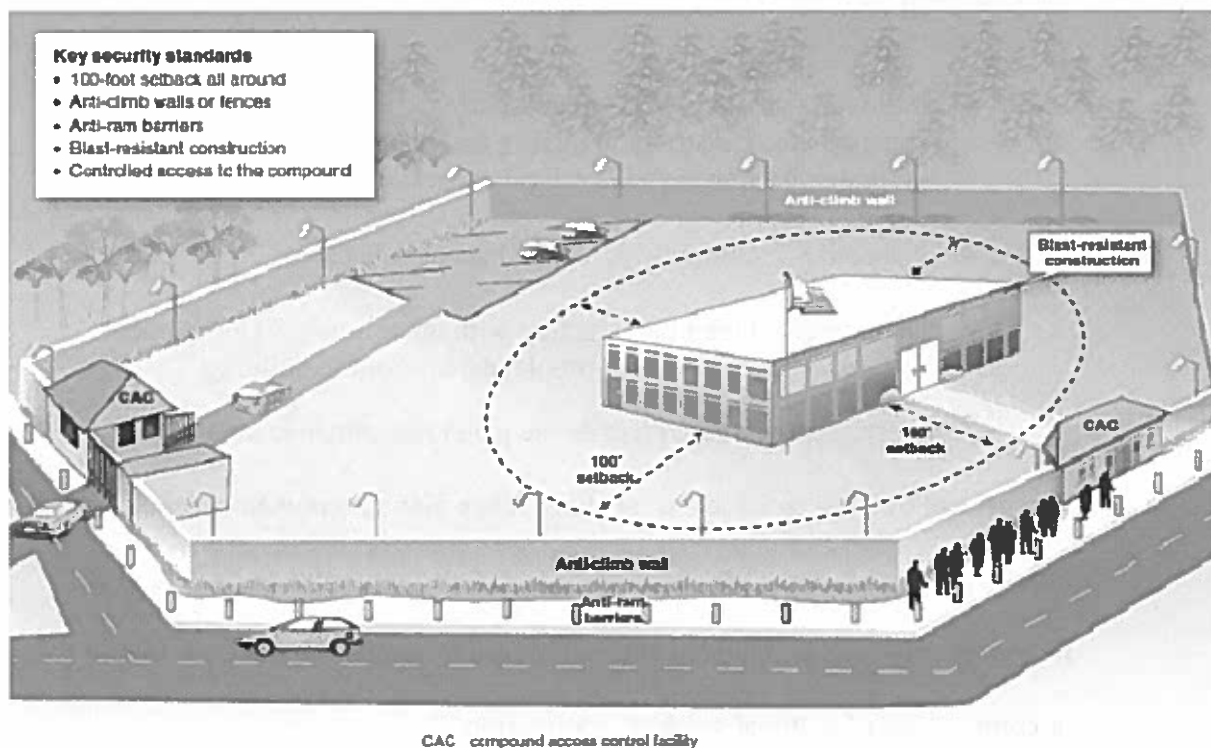


Image 1: NEC Compound<sup>8</sup>

The New Embassy Compounds (Image 1) are superior to previous buildings in several critical ways. First, the sites selected for the NEC, when practicable, are

<sup>8</sup> US Government Accountability Office, International Affairs and Trade, *Embassy Security: Upgrades Have Enhanced Security, but Site Conditions Prevent Full Adherence to Standards* (Washington, DC: US Government Accountability Office, 2008), 7.

outside of large urban centers. The need for the missions to be accessible to the host nation population hampers this effort. However, where and when it can be done NECs are constructed away from other buildings or thoroughfares. Should a site under negotiation be located close to a road that poses vulnerability, the US government will request the host nation block the road or emplace additional security elements to monitor vehicular/pedestrian traffic. Setback is also a key attribute of the NEC. Current physical security standards require that there be a minimum 100 feet distance from the inside protected face of the perimeter barrier and a compound building's exterior.<sup>9</sup> This setback distance provides significant abatement of blast effects, as explosive effects will decay over distance.<sup>10</sup> The perimeter wall also needs to meet physical security standards. These standards stipulate that the wall must be a minimum of 9 feet tall, measured on the attack side, and without footholds/handholds. The wall provides anti-ram protection to all areas that are approachable by vehicles.<sup>11</sup> Access to the compound is through the Compound Access Control (CAC). The CAC will use sally ports to conduct inspections of vehicles entering the compound and is reinforced with anti-ram barriers, known as bollards, to prevent forced entry of vehicles into the compound beyond. Additionally, the CAC uses mantraps, which are a series of gates that open sequentially as opposed to simultaneously. The mantraps, as the name would indicate, prevent pedestrians from exploiting a vehicle entry to

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<sup>9</sup> US Department of State Office of Physical Security Programs, *12-fah-5 Appendix I Physical Security Standards Matrix*, in the Foreign Affairs Handbook, <http://arpsdir.a.state.gov/fam/12fah05/12fah050000apL.html>, (accessed October 15, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

gain access to the NEC without processing through the pedestrian screening process. Once a vehicle successfully transits the CAC, parking on the NEC is strictly enforced. Standards dictate that 20 feet separates the parking lots or parking structures and the other buildings on compound.<sup>12</sup> Current construction standards absolutely preclude the incorporation of underground parking garages into planning. Again, these initiatives, to the extent possible, mitigate the effects of vehicle borne explosive devices.

The buildings within the NEC also have unique characteristics that distinguish them from their predecessors. These characteristics serve two purposes. First, is to provide for survivability of the building against a large explosive device. Most fatalities associated with the use of vehicle borne explosives against buildings are the result of building collapse, so the construction of NEC buildings are consistent with best survivability standards.<sup>13</sup> The second requirement for NEC buildings is their ability to withstand forced entry by concerted effort or mob violence for a determined period. This time window accomplishes two things. First, for those employees within the building, it buys time for them to retreat deeper within the building, behind additional rings of forced entry protection and/or to the building safe haven. This period also allows host nation security forces to respond and counter the demonstration or concerted attack effort. Each uniquely designed NEC is different, they are not a one-size fits all solution, but all design planning is consistent, in that it

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<sup>12</sup> US Department of State Office of Physical Security Programs, *12-fah-5 Appendix I Physical Security Standards Matrix*, in the Foreign Affairs Handbook, <http://arpsdir.a.state.gov/fam/12fah05/12fah050000apL.html>, (accessed October 15, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

meets the requirements above as well as many more. The development and construction of the NECs marks a vast improvement in the overall ability to protect diplomatic personnel abroad. For a fixed diplomatic mission there is no substitute for the physical security standards of an NEC.

### **The Bureau of Diplomatic Security: Roles and Responsibilities**

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) is a unique organization that plays an essential role within the US Department of State. The Bureau's personnel--who include special agents, engineers, diplomatic couriers, Civil Service specialists, and contractors--work together as a team to ensure that the State Department can carry out its foreign policy missions safely and securely.<sup>14</sup> Diplomatic Security has a broad scope of global responsibilities, with the protection of people, information, and property as its top priority. Overseas, DS develops and implements effective security programs to safeguard all personnel who work in every US diplomatic mission around the world. In the United States, the Bureau protects the Secretary of State, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, and foreign dignitaries below the head-of-state level who visit the United States. DS develops and implements security programs to protect the more than 100 domestic State Department facilities as well as the residence of the Secretary of State.<sup>15</sup> DS investigates passport and visa fraud, conducts personnel security investigations, and issues security clearances. The Bureau

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<sup>14</sup> US Department of State, *The Inman Report: Report of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel On Overseas Security* (Washington D.C.: Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, 1985), [www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman](http://www/fas.org/irp/threat/inman), (accessed November 11, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

also assists foreign embassies and consulates in the United States with the security for their missions and personnel.<sup>16</sup> The approximately 2000 Special Agents of DS are sworn federal law enforcement officers with arrest authority. Diplomatic Security Agents are members of the United States Foreign Service and are located in more foreign countries than any other law enforcement or security organization.

### **United States Embassy Security Program**

The security apparatus of a United States Embassy is both robust and multifaceted. However, the benefits derived from its operation are only fully realized when all aspects of the program are present and operational as originally designed. Not to suggest that the program itself is fragile, and that the loss of a single security program will cripple the effectiveness of those remaining. In fact, before certain programs are begun, the host nation must be made aware of their presence and give its permission for their continued operation. Should the HN not approve, the contested program does not operate. The security program for any US Embassy can accept the loss of a certain number of its subordinate programs without sustaining a significant detrimental impact to its efficacy. However, whenever possible the full, mutually supportive suite of operations provides for the safety of diplomatic personnel. The best possible fixed security environment results from this totality of programs safeguarding the embassy and the personnel living and working in the HN.

The Regional Security Officer (RSO) or Regional Security Office at post is the focal point for all security operations in support of the mission. The security situation in the host nation will affect the composition of a RSO Office. If for example, civil unrest,

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<sup>16</sup> US State Department, "Bureau of Diplomatic Security," DS NET, <https://intranet.ds.state.sbu/DS/default.aspx>, (accessed September 10, 2013).

crime or terrorism are an issue in a country then the required number of Regional Security Officers will be greater in that country. The overall diplomatic importance of the host nation to the United States also influences the RSO office, since the Embassy will undoubtedly experience a high number of visits by The President of the United States (POTUS), the Secretary of State and various Congressional Delegations (CODELS). This operational tempo requires a Regional Security Office scaled to match.

Under the authority of the RSO are a number of interrelated security programs. These programs are scalable to the security environment and the permissions granted by the host nation. The focus of the RSO is to orchestrate the daily operations of these various programs to positively impact operations at the embassy while providing the most secure living and operational environment. The RSO conducts these operations with the guidance of the 12 series of the Department of State Foreign Affairs Manuals (FAMS) and Foreign Affairs Handbooks (FAHS).

The highest rung of assets afforded an RSO are the subordinate Assistant Regional Security Officers (ARSO), Foreign Service National Investigators (FSNI), the detachment of Marine Security Guards (MSG) and the Security Engineer Office (SEO). As previously mentioned, the importance of the HN and/or security environment dictates the number of ARSOs present at any given Embassy. The FSNI program is comprised of local nationals who through their previous work experience, typically law enforcement, qualify them to conduct background investigations upon local nationals applying for jobs at the Embassy. The FSNI also assists the RSO/ARSO in liaison efforts with host country military, police or security forces. Similar to the RSO office, the number of United States Marines assigned to any one embassy is dependent upon the environment.

The subsequent chapter on Department of Defense capabilities outlines the operations of the Marine Security Guard Program (MSG). The Security Engineering Office's primary mission at post is to support the security posture by installing and maintaining all necessary physical security implements, such as cameras or anti-ram vehicle barriers.

The RSO has six additional programs that he or she must implement and supervise. These are the Protection, Investigation, Residential Security, Local Guard, Nuclear Biological Chemical (NBC) readiness and Surveillance Detection Programs. The Protection program empowers the RSO/ARSO to act as a liaison to protective details traveling to the host nation. The RSO/ARSO will support these missions by meeting with members of the detail's advance team and briefing them on the threat environment, introducing them to contacts, and if applicable orchestrating their entry to the Embassy. Certain high-level visits, such as POTUS or the Secretary of State, necessitate a greater degree of involvement by members of the RSO office. The RSO/ARSO also conducts investigations while assigned to an embassy. These investigations range from background investigations for issuance of a security clearance to domestic violence or counter intelligence investigations. The Residential Security Program at post is also a sizable contributor to the RSO/ARSO's portfolio. Responsibility for the safety of US personnel assigned to the embassy falls to the RSO, who must ensure that appropriate physical security measures match the security environment, and are in place for every household. Additionally, under the umbrella of the Local Guard program, he/she must manage the personnel requirements for protecting American housing compounds. In terms of numbers, the Local Guard Force (LGF) program represents the greatest capacity at the disposal of the RSO. There are two types of guard programs. PSA (Personnel

Services Agreement) and contract guard services. PSA indicates the guards are direct hire employees of the embassy, and Contract indicates a private company hires and trains the guards in accordance with criteria specified within their contract with the Department of State. The size of this guard force is directly proportional to the size of the embassy compound and the number of employee housing compounds that require a security presence. The LGF comprise the first RSO controlled layer of defense against intrusion or attack upon an embassy compound. Depending upon the security environment and permission of the host nation, these guards can range from carrying firearms, to batons, to standing post completely unarmed.

The term “local” guard force can be misleading, as is the case with the contract guard force for US Embassy Baghdad. The security environment in Baghdad at the time the contract for guard services was awarded, necessitated that the contract winner employ guards from Peru, as sufficient vetting did not exist within Iraq to ensure local hires could be trusted. As conditions improved more and more Iraqi nationals found their way into this program as well as the Protection program. The LGF inspects incoming shipments and vehicles as well as visitors to the embassy. Their initial training is extensive, and they undergo refresher training throughout the year as well as being involved in all embassy wide drills. The LGF can, depending upon host country permissions, be broken down into three further subcategories. In less permissive security environments, a special contingent of the LGF who have undergone additional training in the United States, serve as the Ambassador’s protective detail. In certain countries, portions of the LGF stand guard at embassy housing compounds. Finally, most embassies throughout the world maintain a Surveillance Detection (SD) program. Comprised of local nationals, this

program only operates with the express permission of the host nation and within environments that do not place their activities under excessive threat. The primary mission of an SD team is to provide early warning of an impending attack, or to report the presence of surveillance by clandestinely monitoring activity around the embassy or consulate.

### **Emergency Action Planning**

The Secretary of State is the president's principal foreign policy advisor and is responsible for the formulation of foreign policy and execution of approved policy.<sup>17</sup> The Secretary has authority and responsibility permitted by law for the overall direction, coordination and supervision of interdepartmental activities abroad, including the planning and handling of emergencies and crises. Diplomatic Security's Office of Special Programs and Coordination (DS/IP/SPC) Emergency Planning staff has responsibility for the formulation of policy and guidance given to posts to assist them in emergency action planning.<sup>18</sup> This guidance, found in the 12 FAH-1 (Foreign Affairs Handbook): outlines the US Government and post organizational structures for emergency management; identifies and defines emergency management responsibilities; highlights relevant information necessary for emergency planning; and provides guidance for developing action-oriented checklist that the post develops to ensure rapid, clear and complete response in an emergency.<sup>19</sup> The result is the preparation and maintenance of a

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<sup>17</sup> US State Department, "Authority and Legal Responsibilities," 12 FAM 1, <https://fam.a.state.gov/fam/12fam/0010.html>, (accessed October 11, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

comprehensive, effective and readily usable plan, referenced during an emergency. This plan, known as the Emergency Action Plan (EAP), not only provides procedures for response to foreseeable contingencies, but also identifies those pre-emptive measures that a post can take to mitigate and manage the consequences of a crisis. The Regional Security Office orchestrates its yearly-required update, but it is ultimately the responsibility of all post personnel to contribute to its revision. Certain portions of the EAP, most notably the section on Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), are joint efforts between different sections of the mission. For example, the Defense Attaches Office and the Regional Security Office collaborate on the NEO section of the EAP.

In addition to planning, and to some extent more importantly, the RSO is tasked with conducting periodic drills in an effort to instill awareness in post personnel as to the emergency action procedures they are to undertake in a given scenario or real world event. The Department of State and DS both approach this training in two ways. Primarily, post personnel indoctrinate into post specific security procedures through the periodic drills conducted by the RSO. Requirements on how often drills are conducted at post are specific to the threat from any particular contingency that post may face, i.e. indirect fire. However, an average mission can expect to run at least one drill per month. These drills include; fire drills, chemical-biological response, duck and cover or intruder drills. Prior to conducting drills the RSO/ARSO responsible for this training will circulate throughout post conducting relevant training to post personnel so that when a drill is conducted, or a real world incident occurs, they will be prepared to respond predictably. In an effort to force multiply, an RSO will also identify “section wardens”, who in an emergency will report to the RSO. These individuals assume additional

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responsibility by accounting for their section's personnel during an evacuation or orchestrating a search of their respective sections during a bomb threat. These individuals receive additional training from the RSO as to their responsibilities and reporting procedures. Additionally, the RSO maintains a cadre of "first responders" at post. These individuals receive additional first aid training as well as training in chemical-biological response and decontamination. Should the embassy be subject to an attack using chemical weapons, it is the job of these first responders to assist in the decontamination of affected personnel. This frees the RSO to focus upon the security of the aftermath and response. In addition to the drills run and managed at post, the Crisis Management Training (CMT) division also conducts a crisis management exercise (CME) at post every two years. Designed to include all the members of the Emergency Action Committee (EAC), this exercise puts them through a rigorous one-day round table exercise, where participants are required to work their way through a notional crisis management scenario.

### **International Programs and Shaping**

To influence the security environment in which our diplomats live and work, the Diplomatic Security Service runs a series of national level programs. The function of these programs is to shape conditions to create a safer environment for the diplomatic mission and to respond to increased threats to an established embassy or consulate. The four primary programs within this category are the Anti-terrorism assistance program (ATA), the Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis (ITA), the Office of Mobile Security Deployments, and the Rewards for Justice Program.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Joseph Howard, "The Security Strategy of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security" (Master's thesis, US Army Command and Staff College, AY 2010-2011), 34.

The Anti-terrorism Assistance Program, created by the 1983 inclusion by Congress of chapter 8 to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, is by far the most beneficial instrument at the disposal of DS in shaping the international security environment.<sup>21</sup> This program came about because of escalating terrorist acts around the world targeting the United States, the most famous of which was the seizure of the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979. The ATA program started as a small pilot program with a limited budget. However, it expanded, as American lives were lost in a series of terrorist attacks: the 1983 in Beirut, Lebanon against the US Embassy in April and the Marine Barracks in October; the bombings of the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998; and the September 11, 2001 attacks.<sup>22</sup> The annual budget for ATA has increased from a FY 2001 budget of \$38m to \$200m as of FY 2012. The legislation authorized the President to “provide assistance to foreign countries to deter terrorists and terrorist groups from engaging in international terrorist acts such as bombing, kidnapping, assassination, hostage taking, and hijacking” in the form of “training, commodities and equipment that would help to detect, deter and prevent acts of terrorism and manage such incidents if they occur.”<sup>23</sup> The result of this legislation was 50 ATA courses, taught in 64 partner nations, to over 8000 students, and deliveries (of training and equipment) to over 11,500 participants in FY 2012.<sup>24</sup> ATA projects that it will deliver a course to its 100,000<sup>th</sup> student during the current fiscal year.

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<sup>21</sup> “Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program (ATA),” <http://2011-2009.state.gov/s/ct/about/c16885.html> (accessed November 22, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

The ATA program seeks to leverage host country capabilities as a “force multiplier” in a concerted, coordinated effort to provide a greater security umbrella from which to operate overseas. At an operational level, the first step of the process requires a Diplomatic Security team to assess a prospective host or “student” nation’s current capabilities to identify areas of improvement. Once the needs of the host nation are identified, this same ATA assessment team then works in concert with the US Embassy located within that country to develop a curriculum, which more often than not, includes training for bomb detection, crime scene investigation, airport and building security procedures, maritime/port protection and Personal Security Details (PSD).<sup>25</sup> The training can take place in the US, the host country, or a training area located within another nation.<sup>26</sup> Although managed by Diplomatic Security, companies specializing in the relevant curriculums conduct the training. Trainers can come from other federal, state and local law enforcement, or private security firms and consultants.<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, students from this program return to their country trained and equipped to counter terrorist threats leveled against the diplomatic missions there. In addition, they are prepared to respond to and mitigate the impact of terrorist attacks that occur against targets with in their nations as well. Hence the ATA program serves as a win-win scenario for both the US and participant nations.

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<sup>25</sup> “Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program (ATA),” <http://2011-2009.state.gov/s/ct/about/c16885.html> (accessed November 22, 2013).

<sup>26</sup> Joseph Howard, “The Security Strategy of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security” (master’s thesis, US Army Command and Staff College, AY 2010-2011), 35.

<sup>27</sup> “Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program (ATA),” <http://2011-2009.state.gov/s/ct/about/c16885.htm> (accessed November 22, 2013).

The second program to discuss is the Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis (ITA). ITA acts as the interface between DS and the US Intelligence Community, to ensure DS Bureau decision makers and DS officers, domestically and overseas, have timely access to intelligence information.<sup>28</sup> Divided into six regions of responsibility; Africa (AF), East Asia Pacific (EAP), Europe (EUR), Near East Asia (NEA), South and Central Asia (SCA), and Western Hemisphere (WHA), the office also has special details focused upon Iraq and Afghanistan. It is important to note here that there are currently no such teams detailed to the nations of Libya and Yemen. ITA's mission is to provide threat information for a host of customers. As the interface with US Intelligence Community (IC), ITA does not maintain independent collection assets and must rely upon the intelligence collected by the Inter-Agency members of the IC. ITA does not receive tailored intelligence products from the IC, pertaining to the particular needs of the Diplomatic Security Service. As a result, ITA monitors and analyzes all source intelligence on terrorist activities and threats directed against Americans and US diplomatic and consular personnel and facilities overseas.<sup>29</sup> Disseminated through specialized communication channels, the information contained within these intelligence products informs the security posture, both domestically and at US diplomatic facilities worldwide.

Additionally, ITA monitors threats against the Secretary of State, senior US officials, visiting foreign dignitaries, resident foreign diplomats, and foreign missions in

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<sup>28</sup> "Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis," Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis, <https://intranet.ds.state.sbu/DS/DSS/TIA/ITA/default.aspx>, (accessed November 22, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

the United States for whom DS has a security responsibility.<sup>30</sup> ITA administers the Security Environment Threat List (SETL), which reflects four categories of security threat, including political violence and crime, at all US missions overseas. The Regional Security Officer for each diplomatic mission abroad submits a SETL questionnaire annually. ITA takes the information gleaned from this report and uses it as tool by which DS management decides how to allocate overseas security resources and programs.<sup>31</sup> Upon request, ITA provides consultations and briefings to senior State Department officials, White House staff, Congressional delegations, and other intelligence organizations. Analysts also brief corporate security directors and CEOs, US law enforcement, and American business audience in the United States and throughout the world.<sup>32</sup>

The Rewards for Justice Program is yet another DS administered program designed to remove threats on an international scale. In broad strokes, this program allows the Secretary of State to offer rewards for information that leads to the arrest or conviction of anyone who plans, commits, or attempts international terrorist acts against US persons or property. It also includes information that prevents such acts from occurring in the first place, a lead to the location of a key terrorist leader, or that disrupts terrorism financing.<sup>33</sup> Established by the 1984 Act to Combat International terrorism, the

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<sup>30</sup> "Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis," Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis, <https://intranet.ds.state.sbu/DS/DSS/TIA/ITA/default.aspx>, (accessed November 22, 2013).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> "Rewards for Justice," <http://www.rewardsforjustice.net/>, (accessed November 22, 2013).

Diplomatic Security Service administers this program.<sup>34</sup> Individuals that seek to pass information of this nature can do so through this program, a US embassy/consulate, the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the US military.

The Rewards for Justice Program has been effective. Since its inception in 1984, the US has paid more than \$125 million to over 80 people who provided credible information, leading to the arrest of a terrorist and/or the prevention of international acts of terrorism.<sup>35</sup> The program played a significant role in the arrest of international terrorist Ramzi Yousef, who was responsible for the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center.

Finally, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security maintains the Office of Mobile Security Deployments (MSD). The Office itself is comprised of upwards of ten, six man teams. These teams deploy individually, or in addition to other teams, to conduct a number of different missions wholly dependent upon the needs of the State Department. In one capacity, an MSD team serves as a Security Support Team. Under this mission, the team's job is to augment and enhance security at US Embassies and Consulates faced with civil unrest, hostile hosts or any other threat. Secondly, an MSD team may serve as a Tactical Support Team, to deliver counter-assault capability in high-threat protective details both overseas and in the US. MSD can deploy its members as Mobile Training Teams (MTT), to provide training courses to security personnel as well as direct hire personnel at Embassies and Consulates. An MTT will rotate a team into country based upon a predetermined rotational schedule or by direct invitation of the Regional Security Officer of the hosting diplomatic mission. Courses taught include personal security

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<sup>34</sup> "Rewards for Justice," <http://www.rewardsforjustice.net/>, (accessed November 22, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

awareness, counterterrorism techniques, defensive driving, firearms training, surveillance detection, rape awareness, unarmed defensive techniques and carjacking avoidance.<sup>36</sup> Predominantly, MSD conducts MTTs in conjunction with members of the diplomatic mission's security apparatus. The Marine Security Guards and Local Guard Force typically benefit the most from the types of training programs MSD prepares and delivers. Especially in small or understaffed posts, this training is of great assistance to the Regional Security Office, which is constantly juggling the responsibilities associated with the numerous programs under its authority, and relies upon MSD to assist with hands on training.

What is evident from the programs above is that the Diplomatic Security Service enacts as many programs as possible to maximize its ability to shape the international security environment. ATA assists in the training of HN security forces so that they may in turn provide the best possible security for resident US diplomatic missions. As a byproduct of their training, they will likely become more effective at countering terrorism within their own borders and create a safer environment for everyone. ITA addresses the need for analyzing critical threat information and ensuring its distribution to consumers who have a critical need for threat intelligence. This information provides RSOs with a critical early warning that provides time to flex the security apparatus as necessary to address the nature of the threat. The Rewards for Justice Program provides an incentive for predominantly law-abiding citizens throughout the world to assist in the worldwide struggle against terrorism and its perpetrators. By removing terrorists from their operational environments and disrupting terrorist attacks before they happen, the effects

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<sup>36</sup>Joseph Howard, "The Security Strategy of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security" (Master's thesis, US Army Command and Staff College, AY 2010-2011), 40.

of this program radiate throughout the security environment. The Office of Mobile Security Deployments lends its weight in a number of ways. By continuing to train the LGF, MSG, and embassy personnel, it helps to shape the security environment by ensuring these various entities utilize best practices to counter the terrorism threat. MSD also provides a readily identifiable deterrent to organizations that may target US personnel or facilities through their presence as SST or TSTs. As robust and as effective as these programs are, they are only effective under controlled circumstances. ATA training requires lead-time before the effects of the training mature within an HN. Further circumstances within failed states or those undergoing a regime change, may preclude cooperation with HN security forces. The intelligence products provided by ITAs relationship with the IC depend wholly on the ability to collect in country. The Rewards for Justice Program can take a substantial amount of time to bear fruit, especially when there is an expectation for it to function within countries evolving out of recent civil wars. Finally, although an MSD team may prove to be a significant deterrent for a terrorist organization operating within a functional nation state, a few lightly armed federal agents will not dissuade the concerted efforts of heavily armed assaults bearing the firepower evident in the attacks of September 11, 2012

## **Chapter 5: Department of Defense: Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Marine Security Guard Program: Myths vs. Realities**

The United States Marine Corps maintains a proud tradition of being widely recognized as the “911” force for the United States. One of the most romanticized and least understood missions the Marine Corps undertakes is that of the Marine Security Guard (MSG) program in conjunction with the US State Department. The US Marine Corps has participated in the internal security and protection of US embassies and consulates on a formal basis with the Department of State since 1948.<sup>1</sup> The program has grown from an initial 300 Marines to its current strength of more than 1300 officers and enlisted Marines assigned to the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group (MCESG) at Quantico, Virginia, and to MCESG Regional Command and MSG detachments located at approximately 149 US missions abroad.<sup>2</sup>

The MSG program has two key missions. The primary mission of Marine Security Guards is to provide internal security services at designated US diplomatic and consular facilities to prevent the compromise of classified information and equipment vital to the national security of the United States. The secondary mission of MSGs is to provide protection for US citizens and US Government property located within designated US diplomatic and consular premises during exigent circumstances (urgent temporary circumstances that require immediate aid or action). The Chief of Mission (COM) authorized by the most recent Memorandum of Agreement, directs the MSGs to

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of State "Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Marine Corps." U.S. Department of State. [www.state.gov/documents/organization/88396.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/88396.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

execute plans for the protection of the respective mission and its personnel. The reference to exigent circumstance is of note as it addresses those criticisms following the attack in Benghazi suggesting that the presence of US Marines on the compound would have blunted the assault. It is true that the US Marine Corps is ready to deploy in support of US diplomatic missions in various guises. Whether it is in the form of a Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST) or a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) conducting a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO), the US Marine Corps can project to provide security assistance to diplomatic missions or US citizens in duress. The purpose of subsequent sections is to address the specifics of these capabilities. In the days and weeks following the Benghazi attack, it was apparent that there is a distinct impression that the Marines assigned to a diplomatic mission under the auspices of the MSG program are in effect a Quick React Force (QRF), and as such can readily engage any threat despite its nature or scope. In reality, the Memorandum of Agreement strictly defines the operational flexibility of the MSG and can preclude certain types of operations. Reinforced under Annex I of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), these guidelines are titled Exigent Circumstances:

- Exigent circumstances cannot be clearly defined due to varying threats to diplomatic facilities abroad; however, MSG capabilities during exigent circumstance can be defined and are very limited. The overarching reason for this is because MSG training is focused on internal defense and response to events inside the chancery. MSGS are not trained in offensive operations to include tactical maneuvers outside the chancery and rescue missions. The parameters for the MSG mission are defensive.
- The most likely deployment scenarios in which MSGs are well suited and prepared to execute are defensive in nature, such as: static protection at sites other than the chancery/consulate if a catastrophic event makes the chancery/consulate untenable; external defensive positions if the chancery/consulate cannot be entered due to destruction; and engaging an

on-compound threat from the chancery by direction of the COM, PO, or RSO.

- MSGs will not be employed to conduct rescue missions off compound using direct action, raids, or similar actions to apprehend terrorists or other suspects, nor clearing housing compounds (on or off-compound). MSGS will limit their actions to those that are defensive in nature and will ensure the security of classified material contained within post.
- Such exigent duties shall not contravene established policies and common sense or unduly jeopardize the safety or well-being of the MSGs. As soon as possible following the exigent circumstances, the Department of State (DS/IP/SPS/MSG and DS/DSS/IP), MCESG Regional Commander, and MSCESG HQs should be notified, as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

As clearly defined in the excerpt from the MOA's Annex I above, the operational limits for Marines assigned to the MSG program are relatively restrictive when measured against the common misconception that the Marines guarding a diplomatic mission abroad have broad operational latitude.

The Marine Security Program provides a traditional US embassy or consulate with a critical capability. That is, members provide around the clock protection of the classified information contained within the building, the building itself and all Chief of Mission personnel. This mission is critical to the successful operation of any diplomatic mission. It is, however, largely dependent upon the necessary support structure, typical of a fully operational diplomatic missions. The Special Mission to Benghazi, due to the limit of its scope did not have the necessary infrastructure and support necessitated by the State Department/Marine Corps MOA. At the time of the attack, there was no MSG program in place. Further, it is evident from the excerpt from the MOA, that even if present, the Marine Security Guards would have been limited in how they were trained and equipped to respond to a threat that was initiated and sustained from outside the

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<sup>3</sup> US Department of State "Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Marine Corps." U.S. Department of State. [www.state.gov/documents/organization/88396.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/88396.pdf)

compound. If the MOA between the Department of State and the US Marine Corps is not changed to incorporate all diplomatic fixed installations regardless of their intended duration, they will continue to operate without the benefit of the MSG program.

### **Noncombatant Evacuation Operations**

The Department of Defense maintains and plans for the probability and necessity that it may be required to conduct operations in support of US diplomatic missions abroad. In addition to the MSG program, the Department of Defense traditionally supports the Department of State with two additional capabilities. These assets, known as Noncombatant Evacuation Operations and the deployment of Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Teams assisted in the protection of US citizens and diplomatic personnel and facilities on numerous occasions.

The DOD is prepared to conduct Noncombatant Evacuation Operations to assist the Department of State in evacuating, to an appropriate safe haven, US citizens, Department of Defense civilian personnel, and designated host nation (HN) and third country nationals whose lives are in danger from locations within a foreign nation.<sup>4</sup> These operations, while considered primarily a response to hostile action, may deal with threats from civil unrest or disasters, manmade or natural.<sup>5</sup> Characterized by uncertainty, evacuation operations are directed without warning due to sudden changes in a country's government; reoriented diplomatic or military relationships with the United States, a sudden hostile threat to US citizens from a force within or external to a HN, or a

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<sup>4</sup> US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, Joint Publication 3-68 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, September 30, 1997), ix.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

devastating natural or manmade disaster.<sup>6</sup> Since the decision to evacuate is political, the US Ambassador to the affected HN is responsible for making the decision to evacuate.

During NEOs, the US Ambassador, not the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) or subordinate joint force commander (JFC), is the senior United States Government authority for the evacuation and, as such, is ultimately responsible for the successful completion of the NEO and the safety of the evacuees.<sup>7</sup> While the ambassador cannot order the departure of private US citizens and other designated persons, the ambassador can offer them the USG evacuation assistance.<sup>8</sup> Subject to the overall authority of the ambassador, responsibility for the conduct of military operations in support of an evacuation and security of personnel, equipment, and installations within the designated operation are the responsibility of the JFC or GCC.<sup>9</sup> This is not to suggest that the sole responsibility belongs to the GCC. Every US embassy and consulate throughout the world prepares and maintains an Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Within each of these plans is a chapter dedicated to the NEO. Both the Regional Security Office and the Consul General, who helps to coordinate the evacuation of US citizens in country, compile this chapter. The EAP, updated yearly, does not serve as an operational plan, but rather a compilation of reference materials used to support the formulation of an operation plan.<sup>10</sup> Normal NEOs begin in accordance with the embassy's (EAP) when

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<sup>6</sup> US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, Joint Publication 3-68 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, September 30, 1997),x.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, x.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

conditions in the HN meet predetermined thresholds. Ideally, evacuations use airlines, chartered flights, surface transportation or a combination of the three. The Department of Defense becomes involved in these operations only under irregular circumstances. In some instances, the HN does not authorize the involvement of the DOD. In this event, the full responsibility for the NEO falls to the embassy to plan for and conduct.

### **Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Teams (FAST)**

Marine Corps Fleet Antiterrorism Security Teams (FAST) are deployed around the globe with the mission to provide limited duration expeditionary antiterrorism and security forces in support of designated component and geographic combatant commanders to protect vital naval and national assets.<sup>11</sup> The primary mission of a FAST company is the reinforcement or recapture of critical US infrastructure in their specified area of operations.<sup>12</sup> FAST companies conduct specialized training to include non-combatant evacuation operations, close quarters battle, military operations in urban terrain, convoy operations, shipboard operations and specialized security operations.<sup>13</sup> The forward deployment capability of FAST companies to Bahrain, Spain, and Japan make for an excellent expeditionary anti-terrorism asset. FAST supported the diplomatic mission to Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom where it augmented the embassy's security apparatus. FAST pulled out from this mission in 2008. In response to the 2012

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<sup>11</sup> DVIDS, *Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (Fast)*, in the Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System, <http://www.dvidshub.net/feature/FAST#.UtA3vLFOnIV>, (accessed November 19, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

attack on the US mission to Benghazi, FAST deployed from forward basing in Spain.<sup>14</sup>

A FAST platoon can provide critical firepower to the defense of a US installation overseas. In addition, a preemptive deployment of a platoon to a HN where the security environment is unstable or deteriorating could through its very presence, deter an attack.

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<sup>14</sup> "Http: //www.military.com/special-operations/marine-fleet-antiterrorism-security-team.html," Military.com, <http://www.military.com/special-operations/marine-fleet-antiterrorism-security-team.html>, (accessed December 2, 2103).

## **Chapter 6: Analysis**

Despite the increased loss of life amongst US diplomatic personnel in recent years, it is unlikely that these casualties will result in a shift in operational policy for the US State Department. It is widely accepted that early diplomatic engagement by the US in collapsing or emerging nations pays greater dividends for stability and regional security than waiting until these struggling nations find the resources and or solutions to solve their internal issues. Consequently, the US will continue to engage early so that it may avoid the necessity of nation building operations on the scale recently undertaken in both Iraq and Afghanistan. To this effect, US diplomatic personnel will continue to undertake increasingly dangerous assignments in support of this initiative. If this then is the assumption, the dilemma becomes how the United States provides the commensurate level of security for these personnel.

With the events of Benghazi, a number of key diplomatic security features, if emplaced, would have been instrumental in either blunting the attack or thwarting it all together. The ability to detect indicators suggesting an attack of some fashion was eminent would have given the compound a greater window to prepare and make notifications. Traditionally, this responsibility lay in the hands of the surveillance detection teams, which operate outside the Embassy or consulate walls, monitoring for signs of hostile action against the facility. Once it becomes evident that something on the scale of what befell the compound in Benghazi was brewing, the surveillance team would have notified an RSO/ARSO. When taken, this action along with the early warning provided to the ARSO will provide the time necessary to notify the HN security assets

augmenting the compound's rings of security. Since neither a surveillance team, nor a disciplined HN provided security force was present in Benghazi, the attacking forces were able to gain access to the compound without having to go first unobserved as they rallied, and then fight their way inside the compound. Additionally, if the compound had adhered to physical security standards commensurate with new NEC construction, it would have further delayed the perimeter breach. The ARSOs within the compound could have used this precious time to rally their numbers to protect the compound. Coupled with an MSG detachment, which was also absent in Benghazi, they would have proven far more formidable a defense force. The NEC construction standards would also demand the inclusion of fire suppression system as well as an HVAC system, which is capable of venting smoke from within the buildings on compound. Finally, Diplomatic Security currently prohibits having a single diplomatic presence dispersed amongst a number of different compounds or buildings. The idea behind this being the economy of scale, and in Benghazi, where it was not adhered to, it separated the security personnel at the annex from those at the main compound. This separation necessitated movement by security personnel through the streets by vehicle to mount a rescue effort. Had all security personnel available been posted to the main compound they would have proven a better match for the attacking force and consequently prevented the need to move through the streets of Benghazi under fire.

An increase in casualties is an inherent cost to the types of operations currently undertaken by the Department of State. Throughout the last decade, diplomatic personnel have lived and worked side by side with active duty military personnel in the United States' warzones. Although the US government expends considerable resources to

safeguard these individuals, it is irrational to conclude that there exist foolproof measures to guarantee safety in a situation as chaotic as war. The culture of the diplomatic corps is changing to reflect the new realities of the operational environment. Part of accepting the risk inherent to these types of operations, is the acceptance of security limitations.

Security personnel need to be successful all the time, whereas an attacker need only be successful once. A full time diplomatic presence will afford an adversary with the time necessary to plan an attack that factors in everything that is observable to planners during the assessment phase. This allows attackers the ability to look for weaknesses and strike that weakness at a time and place of their choosing. Should the attacker have access to automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, and explosives, the chance of launching a successful attack increases dramatically.

Additionally, the complex problem includes the nature of the environment in which the attacker will move through prior to launching an attack upon a US diplomatic mission. In the case of developing or failed states, the HN is typically without the resources necessary to combat terrorism within its borders. More to the point, elements of the HN government may be sympathetic to the attacker's cause and facilitate their ability to operate. When taken into consideration as a whole picture, the choice to operate under these conditions as a diplomatic mission must come with an understanding of the inherent increased risk and the acceptance of greater casualties.

A legitimate HN government is essential to providing a secure environment from which to operate. Article 22 of the Geneva Convention stipulates that an HN, which has established diplomatic missions within its borders, be obligated to provide for the protection of those missions. This obligation is wholly dependent upon the HN's

capability to provide such security. Traditionally, HNs provide security through the tasking of law enforcement or military components. The apportionment of this security is dependent upon the threat condition within the country and the negotiated agreements between the HN and the hosted nation. Absent this first ring of security, the HN population is free to approach a diplomatic mission and protest or conduct surveillance. The personnel within the mission itself do not have the assets or the authorities to substantively effect conditions beyond the walls and gates of their compound.

These compounds however are equally essential to the protection of US diplomatic personnel as well as necessary classified material. Without strict adherence to the physical security standards subsequently addressed there is nothing preventing an organized attack or demonstration from gaining ready access to an Embassy, consulate, or in the case of Benghazi, a Special Mission's interior. These physical security standards do not represent a viable solution to every conceivable threat scenario. They work in concert with interior defense protocols enacted by the mission's security personnel, as well as the security response of the HN's security. Only in this layered approach to providing security and blunting attacks does physical security prove its worth.

As mentioned previously, physical security compliments additional aspects of the security apparatus that provides for the safety and security of US diplomatic personnel and information abroad. To exploit the benefits of the New Embassy Compound, Diplomatic Security personnel conduct a robust training program within its walls. Designed to prepare mission employees to react to any nature of threat, man-made or natural disaster, against the mission, this training is essential for the successful defense of

life and facilities. Only when conducted thoroughly and with proper equipment, do the benefits of this mission wide training manifest. This training requires permanent presence personnel and a significant number of training iterations to achieve its desired effect. If neglected, due perhaps to the nature of the mission, personnel rotation, or the absence of necessary infrastructure and equipment, a significant seam will develop in the security posture for that mission. Such was the case in Benghazi, where not only was a reasonably trained HN provided security presence not in place, but the physical security standards of the occupied compound were easily overcome. These conditions have the potential to be replicated anywhere the US determines an expeditionary diplomatic mission will serve diplomatic objectives.

The internal defense training at post is, under normal circumstances, conducted by the RSO in concert with the MSG detachment. The MSG, when present, lends capability to the greater security posture for the mission. The Marines of this program will protect classified material and destroy it if the potential for its compromise is imminent. Additionally, through thoroughly negotiated and rehearsed contingency plans, they may employ kinetic solutions to mission intrusions. The MSG program represents a tremendous asset to the RSO but is only available under certain conditions. It typically takes a tremendous amount of negotiation and planning to expand the MSG program to include an additional diplomatic compound. The lead-time for this type of planning and the infrastructure necessary to support an MSG presence is not conducive to diplomacy of the transformational or expeditionary ilk due to the necessary speed and which this type of deployment must take place. Therefore one may assume that this critical security

capability will be absent from a diplomatic footprint until a normalized diplomatic mission is established.

A normalized diplomatic mission and relations are also essential to employ the national levels of security environment shaping programs that the Diplomatic Security Service conducts. Especially true of developing or failed nations, the Leahy Law may preclude training assistance for HN security or military forces. The Leahy Law or Amendment precludes US aid to countries when there is credible evidence of human rights abuses. This provision may prevent Anti-Terrorism Assistance program from offering training to HN security or military forces. Likewise, the nation states that are the focus of transformational diplomacy do not possess the necessary political infrastructure to assist with the conduct of the Reward for Justice Program or any intelligence collection efforts. This infrastructure is necessary if the benefits of these programs are to be effective at improving security conditions for diplomatic operations.

Expeditionary diplomacy seeks to extract maximum benefit for the US through early diplomatic engagement with transitional or failed nation states. Through this early engagement, the US government can influence nation-building efforts and ideally assist in the establishment of a nation with a stable government and an open economic system that views the US as a preferred partner nation. For all its benefits, the significant drawback of transformational diplomacy is the relatively unsecure position in which it places the men and women of the US diplomatic corps. The early engagement it espouses demands the forward deployment of diplomatic personnel well before the establishment of normal and effective security measures, required to support their efforts. This thesis has sought to detail the mammoth effort that is necessary to protect US

diplomats worldwide, and describe under what conditions these efforts are the most successful. The current operational tempo of expeditionary or transformational diplomacy does not allow for the necessary employment of traditional Diplomatic Security standard operating procedures. Consequently, the Foreign Service has witnessed increased casualties as a byproduct of assuming this risk. If diplomatic personnel are to continue to deploy to increasingly dangerous environments in direct contradiction of prior policies and procedures, changes are necessary to provide best possible security under these conditions.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

As long as the Department of State continues to promote expeditionary diplomacy as its standard for diplomatic engagement, the increased risk to US diplomatic personnel will remain constant. However, there are a number of steps that, when taken, will prevent our Foreign Service Officers and their supporting staff from being as vulnerable to hostile action as they have been when operating in unconventional circumstances.

To combat this increased risk associated with stationing personnel abroad, there remains the option to preclude a full time presence within a HN, whether it is in the capital city or outlying areas. An element of providing security exploited by security professionals is remaining unpredictable as to the time and place of their movements. It is far more difficult for an adversary to target specific personnel if they are constantly on the move and they keep their patterns unpredictable. If it is necessary to operate within a specific nation or particular area of that nation, there remains to some degree the option to travel to and from that location from an operational home base, which meets security standards. In this instance, it would be possible to stage in a neighboring country and travel into the country of interest to attend meetings, etc. By operating in this fashion, the adversary has a smaller, unpredictable window of opportunity to work with. Frustrating their planning efforts in this manner, could result in a decision by the adversary to expend their energy and ordinance on another target. Augmenting what security there is by using speed as an asset, is one method by which an overmatched security mechanism or team can operate in a non-permissive environment.

The US State Department in its diplomatic endeavors in Somalia currently uses this remote basing tactic. All diplomatic personnel responsible for relations with Somalia travel from Kenya to Somalia when requirements dictate. To mitigate the risk to personnel, they do not maintain a permanent presence on the ground in Somalia. If, however, a diplomatic mission establishes itself within that same non-permissive environment and uses predictable travel patterns, the risk to diplomatic personnel increases dramatically. This is especially true if the buildings and compound of that mission do not meet physical security standards and the HN security forces are not present or cannot be counting on in an emergency.

For as long as the US continues to employ early engagement in developing or failed nation states, its diplomats and their families will remain at great risk. Security conditions that once necessitated the removal of US diplomats from their postings abroad are, under expeditionary diplomacy, a precursor and in most scenarios the reason for the diplomatic mission. A second option for combatting the rise in Foreign Service casualties would be the comprehensive review of the current overseas posture. This review would be comprised of a series of national level criteria. Each nation under review would need to meet certain standards to remain a viable diplomatic partner with the United States. The Department of State could then exercise a withdrawal from an HN that did not meet the necessary criteria to warrant a continued diplomatic presence. In some instances, this withdrawal may only result in a number of consulate closures vice the full diplomatic withdrawal of closing an embassy. The employment of this extreme a measure would signal a departure from traditional expeditionary/transformational diplomacy directives. However, the events in Benghazi demonstrated that US personnel

are vulnerable. This vulnerability necessitates the US government balancing continued diplomatic presence in volatile regions throughout the world against the potential gains derived from this engagement. The resulting safety of our personnel, coupled with the possible savings in building costs is a powerful incentive to pursue this course of action. If a continued presence is necessary to meet greater strategic objectives, then additional capabilities to provide security or to respond to a diplomatic mission in crisis must come on line.

Although pre-positioned throughout the world, the events in Benghazi demonstrated that under those security conditions the response time of DOD assets might not be fast enough. Unless the Department of Defense has the capacity within the HN to come to the aid of the diplomatic mission in jeopardy, as a rule, any reaction force, called in once an attack has commenced, would not be able to react swiftly enough to mitigate entirely the threat of casualties. This is especially true in those nation states where small arms are relatively easy to acquire, as was the case in Libya. However, in light of the nature of diplomatic missions, coupled with the criticism leveled at the imposing, fortress like appearance of US embassies and consulates, a permanent military presence, associated with a diplomatic mission is at once, detrimental to the nature of diplomacy and impractical in light of current budgetary and manpower constraints upon the DOD. Furthermore, most HNs would likely protest the permanent presence of foreign combat ready troops within their capital cities.

To mitigate the risk posed by expeditionary diplomacy the Department of Defense has taken steps to increase its capability to respond to an emergency that threatens violence against US diplomatic personnel and property. Much as the DOD is prepared to

assist the Department of State with Non-combatant Evacuation Operations, the DOD is planning for the inevitability of future attacks against diplomatic missions abroad. As has been discussed, the security posture of any given embassy buys time for HN security forces to respond to an attack. However, in states that do not have the capacity to engage and defeat such an aggressor, US military power needs to arrive and engage as quickly as possible to spare greater property damage or loss of life. To address the need for such a capability, Army Chief of Staff General Odierno ordered the six Army Component Commanders to establish contingency response forces for each Geographical Combatant Commander in order to have forces available to assist a US diplomatic mission in duress.<sup>1</sup> These forces will have the capacity to respond to places where the host nation security forces are functioning and able to assist, or to semi-permissive environments such as Benghazi where there was no direct resistance to the introduction of military personnel into the area.<sup>2</sup> These response forces are predominantly company-size units that are scalable to flex to meet the needs of the Combatant Commander in an emergency. These units are to be operational by the first quarter of 2014 and will provide a much needed niche capability to address security shortfalls for US Embassies and Consulates.<sup>3</sup>

Although the State Department has, since the Inman Report, begun and continued the construction of the NECs they too are not a cure all. The construction of an NEC is time consuming and usually requires a great deal of negotiation with the HN prior to

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<sup>1</sup> Michelle Tan, "Army Quick-Response Forces Stood up Around the World," *Army Times*, November 10, 2013. <http://www.armytimes.com/article/20131110/NEWS/311100002/Army-quick-response-forces-stood-up-around-world>, (accessed December 20, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

breaking ground. The HN must agree not only to the size of a new embassy but also to its location. Since the Inman report suggested that the NECs have not only setback from the nearest street but also from heavily trafficked areas of the host city, identifying and securing a compliant piece of property for the new compound can be a trial in its own right. Further, to negotiate for an NEC within the HN, there must be a legitimate government in place. For those diplomatic missions deployed to developing or failed states there may be no legitimate government entity with whom to negotiate. The result is stopgap measures, akin to what existed in Benghazi. The best possible location, selected from what was available, and the best possible security measures were undertaken to reinforce an already existing compound. Due to time constraints, these measures did not meet those standards necessary for NECs throughout the rest of the world, pointedly, not those required in nations with a far less dangerous security environment.

In the instance of Benghazi, the US deemed it paramount to engage prior to the dust settling after the removal of Muammar Kaddafi's regime. Similar types of engagement deemed necessary in Afghanistan and Iraq, placed US diplomatic personnel in harm's way. Foreign Service personnel sustained casualties in these instances as well. This in spite of the presence of overwhelming Department of Defense combat power, some of which was dedicated to the protection of the diplomatic missions throughout these two nations. Therefore, a response by the US military will not preclude casualties entirely, but may prevent further escalation of the situation.

US diplomats and the diplomatic missions themselves continue to provide tempting targets to US adversaries. By continuing to deploy them into more challenging

security environments, the expectation of low casualties requires reassessment. Although the QDDR aptly delineates the reasons for, and gains of, the deployment of US diplomatic personnel into unstable operational environments, it does not take into account the mechanism that protects diplomatic personnel and missions. Policy makers must now face this oversight, and a tough dilemma. The mechanism by which the Diplomatic Security Service operates requires time and resources to be effective. If the US determines that the use of expeditionary diplomacy best serves US national strategy objectives, there are a limited number of choices available. First, expand the resources of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and re-energize the NEC construction program. Only when the appropriate resources are within the HN and synchronized with capable HN security forces will DS have the advantage over an adversary. In doing so, it is important to understand that this scale of a security posture will negatively affect a diplomat's ability to function effectively. A second option will be to continue to deploy in a fashion similar to the direction of the Transformational Diplomacy initiative, and in doing so accept the fact that the gains made through early engagement may be traded for Foreign Service personnel casualties. Finally, there is the option to provide for a strong DOD response to hostile action, which targets US diplomatic missions and personnel. Since research for this thesis began, the DOD has taken steps to this effect. The creation of GCC dedicated Army units capable of rapid response to diplomatic missions in crisis are evidence of movement toward a whole of government answer to this dilemma.

Foreign Service Officers live and work in austere challenging environments to shape the world environment to meet US strategic objectives. By design, the nature of this work will place them in harm's way. The events of September

11, 2012 once again reminded the American people of the sacrifice these individuals are prepared to make in the service of their country. If deemed unacceptable that these same diplomatic personnel should be placed in danger to fulfil their mission then the nature of how they are deployed and protected must be adapted to meet mitigate the risk as much as possible while continuing to allow for effective diplomatic engagement.

APPENDIX A

POLITICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST AMERICANS-2012

Attack Type	NEA	SCA	EAP	AF	EUR	WHA	Total
Armed Attack	3	2					5
Assassination	2						2
Assault	1		1				2
Attempted Firebombing				1			1
Attempted Kidnapping				1			1
Beating				1			1
Bomb	1						1
Firebomb	1						1
Grenade	1						1
Harassment	2						2
Indirect Fire	42	2					44
Incendiary Device					1		1
Kidnapping	2						2
Shooting	1		8				9
Small Arms Fire		1		1		1	3
Suicide Bomber		2					2
VBIED		1					1
Violent Demonstration	5	6	4	3	1		19
Total	61	14	13	7	2	1	98

Source: US Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security, *Political Violence Against Americans: 2012* (Washington D.C.: Directorate of Threat Investigations and Analysis, 2013)

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## VITA

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