

# Special Warfare

April - June 2012 | Volume 25 | Issue 2

REVOLUTION TOOLS

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**SOCIAL MEDIA**  
A NEW FORM OF UW



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## Social Media and Unconventional Warfare

Social media, blogs, social-network sites, information aggregators, wikis, livecasting, video sharing – have decisively altered that most extreme of socio-political acts: *Revolution*. The 2011 Arab Spring revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East were engineered through citizen-centric computer and cellular-phone technologies that streamed web-enabled social exchanges. The Arab Spring has profound implications for the U.S. special-operations mission of unconventional warfare.

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**U.S. ARMY JOHN F. KENNEDY  
SPECIAL WARFARE CENTER AND SCHOOL**

**MISSION:** The JFK Special Warfare Center and School invests in the development of human capital to produce Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations and Special Forces Soldiers from recruitment to retirement in order to provide our regiments with a professionally trained and well-educated force.

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Submit graphics, tables and charts with source references in separate files from the manuscript (no embedded graphics). *Special Warfare* may accept high-resolution (300 dpi or greater) digital photos; be sure to include a caption and photographer's credit. Prints and 35 mm transparencies are also acceptable. Photos will be returned, if possible.

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Editor, *Special Warfare*;  
Attn: AOJK-PAO; USAJFKSWCS,  
3004 Ardennes St., Stop A, Fort Bragg, NC 28310  
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**For additional information:**

Contact: *Special Warfare*  
Commercial: (910) 432-5703  
DSN: 239-5703

# Special Warfare

**Commander & Commandant**  
Major General Bennet S. Sacolick

**Editor**  
Janice Burton

**Graphics & Design**  
Jennifer Martin

**Webmaster**  
Dave Chace

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By order of the Secretary of the Army:

**Raymond T. Odierno**  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

Official:

**Joyce E. Morrow**  
Administrative Assistant to the  
Secretary of the Army

102605

Headquarters, Department of the Army



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## FROM THE COMMANDANT



The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School has been providing quality education for special-operations forces for more than 50 years. In December 2011, in recognition of the outstanding training, education and force management that occurs at the school, SWCS was designated as the U.S. Army's Special Operations Center of Excellence.

A center of excellence is an organization that creates the highest standards of achievement in an assigned sphere of expertise by generating synergy through effective and efficient combination and integration of functions while reinforcing unique requirements and capabilities. With the designation of SWCS as the Army's Special Operations Center of Excellence, the Army now has 10 centers of excellence.

What does this mean to you? It means that ARSOF now has a relevant vote when the Army makes decisions concerning how we collectively fight our adversaries and engage our partners in our future operating environment. At this juncture, the Army is establishing doctrine for 2015, developing the Army Learning Concept, revising its Leader Development Strategy and harnessing lessons learned from the past decade of war. More importantly, decisions are being made as to what the 21st century Army will look like. SWCS's designation as a CoE will greatly enhance our ability to contribute to those discussions and to frame the future of our Army.

SWCS has always been able to create great synergy with the other CoEs, but without the designation, we have merely been guests, not a vested partner. We believe that the synergy currently attained between the nine CoEs and the six Warfighting Functions will be dramatically increased with this designation.

SWCS may be the only Department of Defense element that trains and educates a force specifically designed to shape foreign political and military environments in order to prevent war. We do this by building a capability that works with host nations, regional partners and indigenous populations in a culturally attuned manner allowing us to bridge language barriers, open lines of communication and connect with key political and military leaders in a way that is both immediate and enduring. As a CoE, our consistent engagement and collaboration will enable us to be a part of the solutions needed by TRADOC as they develop similar capabilities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Sacolick".

Major General Bennet S. Sacolick

## USAJFKSWCS dedicates Kennedy-Yarborough statue

President John F. Kennedy had a special relationship with the United States Army Special Forces. That relationship was sealed on Oct. 12, 1961, when the President visited Fort Bragg, N.C., to review the troops. At the now-historic meeting between Kennedy and then-Brig. Gen. William Yarborough, Kennedy embraced the iconic Green Beret. That relationship was celebrated with the dedication of the Kennedy-Yarborough statue at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg.

The statue was created and paid for by Ross Perot, a long-time supporter of special operations. Perot is responsible for a number of statues on Fort Bragg, including the Bull Simons statue on the JFK Plaza and the Dick Meadows statue at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command headquarters. These two memorials, both cast in bronze, preserve the memory of two Special Forces trailblazers. The Simons statue was dedicated in 1999. Simons served as a company commander of the 6th Ranger Battalion in the Pacific during World War II. After the war, he had a short break in service, before being recalled to active duty to serve in several special-operations assignments. Some of his assignments included deputy commander and chief of staff of the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center, commander of a Mobile Training Team in Laos from 1961 to 1962, and the first commander of the 8th Special Forces Group. Simons is best remembered as the commander of Operation Ivory Coast, or the Son Tay Raid, to free American prisoners of war in North Vietnam.

The other statue is dedicated to Maj. Richard “Dick” Meadows. After serving as a combat infantryman in Korea, he joined Special Forces in 1953. Meadows was a highly respected team leader in the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group and is also known for his planning and leadership during the Son Tay raid. Meadows was a key member in Operation Eagle Claw, better known as the Iran hostage-rescue mission, which ultimately led to the establishment of today’s special-operations forces.

Perot was first introduced to special operations by long-time friend Col. Arthur “Bull” Simons back during the Vietnam era.

“Bull Simons was a very close friend of mine,” said Perot during a recent telephone interview. “He goes all the way back to World War II, where he fought in the Pacific and then on into Vietnam, where he was very successful.

“I really got to know him during the Vietnam War and worked closely with him over the years at Fort Bragg and with several others there,” said Perot.

In April 2009, Perot was given his own Green Beret when he was inducted as an honorary Green Beret by the members of the Special Forces Regiment.

“I was inducted as an honorary member of the Special Forces, though my friends say I’m an ornery member,” joked Perot. “Either way, I am extremely honored.”

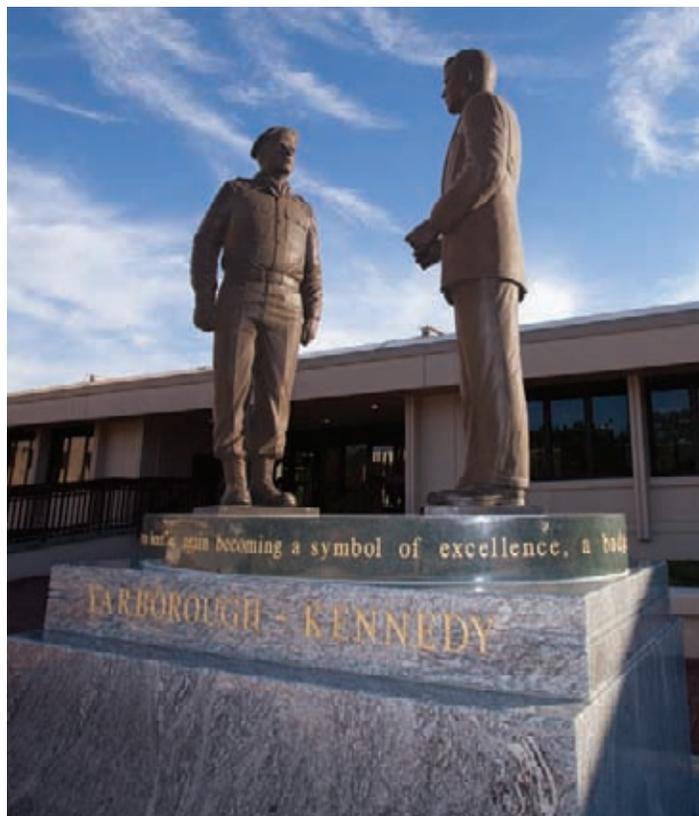
It was while visiting Fort Bragg for the induction into the regiment that the idea for the Kennedy-Yarborough statue began.

“The statue came about from a conversation between a number of people at Fort Bragg,” said Perot. “Some folks were standing right there in that area (where the statue is now located in front of Kennedy Hall) and were talking about the meeting between Kennedy and Yarborough and how it would be nice to commemorate it. That’s how the idea came about and that’s why it is where it is.”

Perot said that once he heard the idea, he decided to have the statue designed and to donate it to the JFK Special Warfare Center and School.

“The idea behind the statue is to honor one of the founders of modern Special Forces — (Lieutenant) General Yarborough — and to honor President John F. Kennedy not only for his presidency, but also for his service in World War II,” explained Perot.

Perot contacted New Mexico-based sculptor Paul Moore and commissioned him to create the statue.



**STUDY IN BRONZE** The Kennedy-Yarborough statue stands in front of Kennedy Hall on the campus of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell L. Klika.

“It was important to find someone who would take great care with the statue and ensure that it is done just right,” said Perot.

A strong believer in the idea that the devil is in the details, Perot, along with Moore and members of the Fort Bragg community worked closely to make sure that the statue was perfect.

“We all worked together on it,” said Perot. “We spent a lot of time with the people at Fort Bragg, and I spent a lot of time here working on it — but most of the work was done by the sculptor. He came up with sketches and then made a small model. We sent the plans to Fort Bragg and made changes as they were needed.

“We’ve worked very hard to make sure it is just right, and that you folks at Fort Bragg agree that it is just right — and that’s what it is — just right,” he said.

Perot said he has the highest respect for the Kennedy and Yarborough families.

“I can’t think of finer people to honor, so it means a lot to me that their families will be at Fort Bragg on this very special day,” he said, referencing attendance at the dedication by members of both families. “I wanted to build this memorial to them out of respect for these men and all the sacrifices they made for our country.”

Perot hopes that people will understand how important the meeting was between Kennedy and Yarborough and what a significant impact it had on the quality of the Special Forces who are sent off “to do missions impossible.”

“General Yarborough had a stellar service record, and was known for his vision to build the capabilities of Special Forces,” said Perot, adding that he also wanted to honor President Kennedy, not only for his relationship with Special Forces, but for his service in World War II and as the president of the United States.

“Sadly, he was killed while in office, and that was just a heart-breaking event for our entire nation.”

Perot said that he has been anxiously awaiting the statue dedication.

“I think it will be great for us to finally see everything all in place,” he concluded. — By Janice Burton, *Special Warfare* editor.

# FROM THE USASOC COMMANDER



## To the men and women of Army Special Operations,

Earlier this month, I tasked my staff to conduct a review of policies and procedures relating to behavioral health stigma issues across the command. The purpose of the review was to ensure that there were no existing policies or procedures within the U.S. Army Special Operations Command that inadvertently conflict with our intent that our Soldiers be able to seek behavioral-health assistance without fear of stigma or negative consequence. The review was comprehensive and included focus groups with all of the ARSOF tribes, as well as subject-matter expert input. I appreciate feedback from our tribes as we work to establish an environment that encourages and supports our ARSOF warriors to seek necessary behavioral health services.

There are a few primary lessons I have drawn from the review and feedback (more detail can be found below):

**Behavioral Health Misperception:** We often associate BH with severe psychological problems, mental illness or, in some instances, the place to go when someone wants to complain about things they cannot change. The truth is very different. Behavioral-health support

is similar to physical therapy, physical training, medical treatment, marksmanship training or a variety of other activities we engage in to maintain a high state of health and readiness, as well as enhance our performance. Behavioral health employs a full range of techniques and methods to enhance our mental performance resulting in increased individual performance, relationship improvement and overall effectiveness and quality of life. How we think and talk about this aspect of wellness is important, as it helps shape the way we think about the topic. Therefore, we will increasingly talk about optimized mental performance as the norm.

I have asked each of our tribes to establish programs to educate the force on behavioral health and optimized mental performance. All of our leaders will treat SOF warriors that seek BH services or optimized mental performance with respect and dignity, as we do for those being treated for medical conditions.

**Confidentiality/ Privacy:** There was significant concern expressed about the amount of information shared with unit leadership with respect to behavioral-health treatment. The fear of disclosure and loss of privacy is the single most prevalent factor in reluctance to seek BH care.

It is a leader's responsibility to take care of his or her people and a leader's awareness of their Soldiers that are genuinely at risk is important. However, I have directed that SOF warriors have the ability to access optimized mental-performance services or routine behavioral-health support without fear of being tracked or stigmatized.

**Career Implications:** There is a pervasive concern that seeking BH support will negatively impact a SOF Soldier's career, including their security clearance. In order to address this concern, I directed my G2 to conduct a thorough review of security policies and consulted with subject-matter experts in security-clearance adjudication and behavioral-health policies. The clear message is that the only real negative impact on security clearance or job opportunities is overt severe or chronic maladaptive behavioral or legal issues. In many cases, these can be prevented if a Soldier seeks behavioral health or other support early in the process.

I have issued instructions to all unit commanders to initiate changes to command policies (formal and informal) to ensure no negative repercussions will result from warriors seeking routine behavioral health or optimized mental-performance support. Leaders will lead from the front on this issue.

**Accessibility:** Another very common theme was frustration in seeking care at medical-treatment facilities for a variety of reasons. It is clear to me that our units need accessible providers who truly understand the SOF culture, are willing to work with our warriors on a health-based model rather than a mental illness one, and are embedded in the organizations they serve. I am pursuing several lines of operation, including growth of assigned BH professional staff through the Army's force-design process and the U.S. Special Operations Command's Preservation of the Force and Families effort to increase the number of operational psychologists and other embedded behavioral-health providers for USASOC. Until we can grow our specialty assets, I encourage you to consider the multiple avenues of mental-performance enhancement and BH support that are available, including operational psychologists, unit chaplains, licensed clinical providers, MFLC, Military One Source, TRICARE, TRICARE network providers and our military treatment facilities.

I directed all of the command teams to develop and implement action plans based on internal results from this stigma review. To you, the men and women of the world's finest force, I ask that you, first and foremost, be there to care for the Soldier on your left and right; and secondly, to help us better understand what needs to be done for the force and our families.

**Strength and Honor,**  
LTG John Mulholland

# BREAKING THE STIGMA OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAUL DEAN AND LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEFFREY MCNEIL

LTG Mulholland directed the USASOC Staff to conduct a review of policies and procedures relating to behavioral health (BH) stigma issues across the command. The review was comprehensive and included focus groups from all of the tribes, as well as subject matter expert input. Feedback from across the tribes is critical in developing effective strategies to establish an environment that encourages and supports our ARSOF warriors to seek necessary behavioral health services.

Based on feedback from USASOC Soldiers and our SME's, the primary factors and perceptions related to BH stigma/ barriers to care include: (1) Confidentiality and fear of being labeled, (2) Negative impact on career, (3) Self/ peer perceptions, (4) Accessibility of quality BH care, and (5) Command climate.

The best practices to mitigate BH stigma include several lines of effort. Most importantly, the emphasis needs to be on Warrior Mental Performance Enhancement, rather than the traditional BH model. It is also critical that we increase the number of embedded BH providers, expand BH education/training initiatives, and continue to explore multiple avenues for Soldiers to access quality BH care. Ultimately, USASOC leaders need to both communicate the value of warrior performance enhancement and establish sustainable programs that support the mental health of the force.

## Policies/Procedures

All policies and procedures related to BH treatment were reviewed. There were no identified USASOC, SOCOM, DA or DoD policies that directly contribute to stigmatizing Soldiers for seeking BH treatment. Current DA and DoD policies focus more on privacy for service members who seek treatment. However, some leaders still want programs or procedures that identify high risk individuals. The procedures must balance the command need to know with the importance of privacy and confidentiality. Ultimately, Soldiers that are being seen for routine BH counseling or consultation should not be identified as "high risk."

## Primary Stigma Factors and Barriers to Care

**A. Confidentiality & Fear of Being Labeled.** The single most pervasive concern of our USASOC warriors is that their BH information will not remain confidential and will result in stigmatization. As one USASOC Soldier put it, "Everything in SF Group is based on reputation." Our SOF warriors don't want to stand out negatively or give reasons to doubt their ability, and some Soldiers reported feeling embarrassment and shame for being seen entering a BH clinic or office.

It is a leader's responsibility to take care of his people as well as being aware of risks to mission and risks to the force. We need to ensure that service members have the ability to seek self-improvement, optimize mental performance, and pursue routine behavioral health consultation and counseling without fear of being tracked or stigmatized.

There are also practical steps that can be implemented to address concerns of confidentiality and privacy. The BH clinic or office needs to be in an area that maximizes privacy. Soldiers should be given the flexibility to attend appointments in civilian clothes or take other

reasonable steps to ensure they are comfortable in seeking BH care. BH clinics or offices should be located away from HQ and main work areas, and even separate from other medical clinics to remove stigma and barriers. Another option is the establishment of off-site clinics. Ultimately, it is most important for our SLs to foster a command culture that closely guards confidential medical or BH information.

**B. Negative Impact on Career.** One prominent concern of our warriors is that they will be removed from their team if they seek BH assistance and consequently lose their support system. Respondents cited potential impact on OER/NCOER's, promotions, future military courses, flight status and loss of special duty pay. One officer stated that he thought medical/BH records were reviewed at promotion boards. While this is erroneous, it does contribute to stigma. Some soldiers are convinced leaders unofficially make negative career decisions about Soldiers who have sought BH services or advice.

BH treatment rarely harms soldier's careers; however, the inevitable results of not seeking help - DUI, domestic violence, and disciplinary problems - do damage careers. In many cases, these adverse impacts can be prevented if a Soldier seeks behavioral health or other support earlier in the process. Therefore, our leaders must make realistic and conscious efforts to ensure that 1) Soldiers willing to seek self-improvement through behavioral health resources suffer no negative repercussions, and 2) lead by example by demonstrating willingness to personally seek self-improvement.

There is also a pervasive concern that seeking BH treatment will negatively impact a SOF Soldier's security clearance. USASOC conducted a thorough evaluation of security policies, consulted with senior security clearance adjudicators, and reviewed BH policies. The clear take-away message is the only real negative impact on security clearance or job opportunities is overt maladaptive behavioral or legal issues rather than simply seeking behavioral health services. The belief that seeking BH treatment will result in security clearance revocation continues to be a strong deterrent for BH treatment. In one small poll of SOF Soldiers, only 10% realized there was any change in this policy that allowed individuals not to report counseling related to adjustment from combat. Please see attached G-2 information paper that describes this in detail.

**C. Self/ Peer Perceptions.** Seeking BH treatment is perceived to contradict the cultural norm of self-reliance and may contribute to the stigma that those seeking BH treatment are perceived as "dependent." Across the force there is perception that seeking behavioral health services indicates a personal weakness and that our peers will also see us as less self-reliant.

However, seeking consultation and counseling is actually a sign of resilience, and is a critical part of the self-improvement process for many of our warriors. Just as we seek appropriate medical care for our physical injuries suffered in combat or training, we must also seek behavioral health to maintain and enhance warrior performance. Similarly, we do not consider our weapons "weak" by continually performing preventive maintenance on them or tweak-

ing their performance through careful modifications. Humans are no different. Effective warriors seek self-improvement. Effective leaders support such behavior and lead by example.

**D. Accessibility of Quality BH Care.** Most of the participants reported that they generally trust BH providers and believed that BH treatments can be effective. However, there is a reported lack of “SOF Cultured Providers,” and this can make the SOF Soldier feel misunderstood, disconnected, and less trusting. One very common theme was frustration in seeking care at medical treatment facilities for a variety of reasons. Long delays for appointments and unfamiliar providers present real barriers to care. Soldiers reported they generally are more likely to seek services from someone they are familiar with.

It is clear that our units need accessible providers that truly understand the SOF culture and are embedded in the organization they serve. CG, USASOC is pursuing several lines of operation (Army TAA 14-18 and SOCOM’s Preservation of the Force and Families effort) to increase the number of Operational Psychologists and other embedded behavioral health providers for USASOC. Until we can grow our specialty assets, you should consider the multiple avenues of BH support that are currently available, including Operational Psychologists, Unit Chaplains, Licensed Clinical Providers, MFLC, Military One Source, TRICARE and our Military Treatment Facilities.

“Genuine long-term change requires strong leadership to establish a command climate that supports our SOF warriors as they seek mental performance enhancement, personal development and behavioral health support.”

A significant number of USASOC Soldiers assume BH providers are quick to prescribe medication or to diagnose severe psychiatric diagnoses such as PTSD resulting in career ending administrative action and embarrassment. The reality is most trusted SOF oriented BH providers understand the impact of severe psychiatric diagnoses and carefully discuss these issues with the Soldiers they see and carefully consider their concerns. Several Soldiers expressed preferences for approaches that emphasize education, skill development, and incorporating social support. The use of embedded providers who better understand the unit’s mission and culture will be able to make comprehensive assessments, provide education on mental health resources and judicious referrals for psychiatric treatment as necessary. Our operational psychologists and embedded providers should continue to monitor the quality of care being received by our Soldiers.

**E. Abuse of the BH System.** There is a common belief that some of our Soldier’s are using mental problems as a get out of jail free card. This real or perceived abuse of the system increases stigma, as BH treatment is associated with escaping responsibility and poor performance. As a result, soldiers with genuine needs may then avoid getting help altogether.

Military discipline is fundamental to the integrity of our BH system. Leaders need to consistently hold Soldiers accountable for their actions, while still ensuring they are afforded all necessary behavioral health services.

**F. Command Climate.** Senior Leaders (SLs) can contribute directly or indirectly to BH stigma. Based on feedback from the tribes, this is certainly the exception, as USASOC leaders are reportedly

providing a supportive environment for their Soldiers seeking BH care. However, there are some examples cited of negative comments concerning Soldiers seeking BH care, a general lack of knowledge of the BH system, and some isolated incidents of Soldiers being removed from teams because they were seeking BH treatment.

A prominent theme across the tribes was the importance of SLs engaging Soldiers to lay the foundation for any BH messaging. SLs should educate Soldiers on the importance of seeking mental performance improvement or BH care early and the risk of waiting until there is real impact on their career related to legal/ethical/moral breaches. It is also critical for leaders to demonstrate to Soldiers that they are invested in their well-being. Across the tribes, this deliberate focus on Soldiers getting the help they need appears to have a positive impact and serves to mitigate BH stigma. The most powerful impact was from SLs discussing personal counseling/BH treatment and how it benefited them. The strongest Leaders lead from the front. One specific recommendation from an NCO was to establish a unit panel of SLs to answer Soldier’s questions and discuss concerns.

Many USASOC Soldiers are unaware of the processes in place to ask for help and many of our SLs do not understand the BH system, especially policies and procedures related to confidentiality and reporting requirements. Operational Psychologists and embedded BH

providers should provide education for leadership on BH policies, limits of confidentiality, recognition of risk indicators, and how to handle Soldiers with BH concerns.

In addition, the issue of planned force reduction should also be addressed by senior leaders. Especially amongst our support Soldiers, there is a fear that seeking BH care may give leadership a reason to cut them as part of the force reduction. Leaders should remind Soldiers that misconduct will continue to negatively impact a soldier’s career, seeking self-improvement will not. Lastly, our CSC/CSU’s need to establish and cultivate legitimate opportunities to reset, and these positions should not in themselves be stigmatizing.

### **Best Practices for Mitigating BH Stigma**

**A. Re-branding Behavioral Health.** We best serve our soldiers by shifting the focus from Behavioral Health to an optimized mental performance model for SOF warriors. It is imperative that we begin to focus on proactive, health focused, optimized mental performance, rather than the medical illness/model. This approach will focus on enhancing the strengths of our warriors, rather than the model of treating illness, which in itself increases stigma. We assess and select our warriors because of their resilience and mental abilities, and our programs need to emphasize the need to maintain and enhance the mental readiness of our warriors to the same dedicated degree we currently work to enhance our combat skills, physical performance and endurance, and MOS skills. With a comprehensive approach, an optimized performance approach offers warriors access to a full range of

physical, psychological, spiritual and family services uniquely shaped to optimize mental performance and attitudes, improve marital and family relationships, and enhance quality of life. How this is applied will depend on each of our tribes' unique culture and mission sets.

Optimized mental performance programs are conducted by operational psychologists and incorporate elements of behavioral science, learning theory, sports psychology, neuropsychology, and personality assessment to improve mental performance. PE may include individual or group training to enhance memory/concentration, situational awareness, mental flexibility, influence and persuasion, operating in ambiguous environment, team interpersonal dynamics, and leadership development. For example, one SF Group Psychologist has initiated performance psychology, leader development, and team dynamics instruction with some ODAs in order to enhance performance, build rapport, and increase familiarity.

Resilience programs are also based on an optimized mental performance model. One SF Group Resiliency Team developed a unique leader based resiliency program comprised of leader training (recognizing resilience vulnerabilities and methods to overcome these vulnerabilities), leader screening tool, and screening procedures. The program is based on the concept that issues are most effectively managed at the lowest level possible where leaders know their Soldiers best. Leaders are in a better position to effectively screen their Soldiers for issues and address those issues with professionals providing tailored and specific consultation and support as needed throughout the process.

**B. Operational Psychology and Embedded BH Providers.** The best practice model for our units includes an Operational Psychologist working as a Special Staff Officer working hand in hand with dedicated BH provider(s) who directly work under the Unit Surgeon. Our organizations that use this model have the least amount of BH stigma and the highest utilization of BH resources.

(1) *Operational Psychologists:* Operational psychologists provide support to a wide range of missions as a deployed asset and in garrison. This support includes A&S, HUMINT support, and SERE. The visibility of the operational psychologist in non-stigmatizing events can provide opportunities for short-term consultation, performance enhancement, or even counseling and is an ideal entry point for Soldiers to seek assistance. Specifically, significant interaction with operational psychologists at A&S and other training venues was cited by our SOF warriors as mitigating stigma. Also, operational psychologists routinely provide performance feedback on strengths and vulnerabilities based on A&S packets, and this creates an excellent venue to de-stigmatize and encourage self-improvement in the soldier.

(2) *Embedded SOF BH Providers:* Embedded providers have better understanding of cultural context, organizational pressures and resources and have habitual relationships with unit members. This can be a dedicated medical provider serving in medical clinic or an off-site clinic serving Soldiers. Placing uniform providers in civilian clothes while providing care can also decrease apprehension to seek BH care.

**C. Chaplain Partnership with BH.** Unit Chaplains are seen as well integrated and respected across USASOC. They continue to serve as the most prevalent point of entry for behavioral health concerns and counseling for many Soldiers. Cross training between group psychologist and chaplains can increase chaplain BH referral skills and enhance psychologist's access to Soldiers. Marital counseling and retreats provided by Chaplains are seen as excellent resources, and the inclusion of embedded BH providers can enhance these already successful programs.

**D. BH Education Initiatives.** Operational psychologists and embedded BH providers should develop innovative approaches to educating soldiers about performance enhancement, BH resources and accessing care. These resources can reside on the portal for BH FAQ's or in a library with informational and self-help resources. All of these programs need to address the SOF warrior's need for professional and personal development. In crafting these programs, developers need to keep in mind the strong dislike for approaches that seemed canned, programmatic, or "Big Army."

Operational psychologists and BH providers can also provide BH training to serve as force multipliers. For example, integration of BH topics into 18D non-trauma modules has been an effective way to enhance existing support systems for ARSOF warriors.

**E. Mandatory Assessments and Briefings.** Mandatory briefings and assessments can be good opportunities for SOF warriors to seek BH assistance. While these programs initially may meet resistance, the feedback from the tribes is that they are beneficial because they serve as "cover" for those Soldiers that would not otherwise engage an operational psychologist or BH provider. At one of our CSU's, a 3 year re-look program is generally seen positively and has the positive effect of operational psychologists increased visibility and encourages personal development through psychological assessment feedback and performance enhancement.

**F. Providing Multiple Avenues for BH Assistance.** There are several sources of BH support, including embedded BH providers, MFLC, Army One Source, MTF's and Tricare network providers.

## Conclusion

Across the tribes there are many factors contributing to BH stigma and significant barriers to care. There are changes that can be made in the short-term to mitigate stigma, such as increased resources, accessibility and optimized mental performance programs. However, genuine long-term change requires strong leadership to establish a command climate that supports our SOF warriors as they seek mental performance enhancement, personal development and behavioral health support.

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*Lt. Col. Paul Dean is the director of Psychological Applications and the command psychologist for USASOC. He also serves as the operational psychology consultant to the U.S. Army Surgeon General. He has spent more than 10 years in special operations, including his last assignment as the command psychologist at the Joint Special Operations Command. He has deployed multiple times in support of a variety of joint special-operations task forces. Dean holds bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi.*

*Lt. Col. Jeffrey McNeil is the deputy command psychologist for USASOC. In his previous assignments, he has spent more than 10 years as an operational psychologist for special-operations units. He has participated in several deployment operations with various joint special-operations task forces. McNeil's most recent assignments have been the chief psychologist, Combat Applications Group and the regiment psychologist for 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Michigan State University, a master's in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College and a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Western Michigan University.*



# Q&A

## ADMIRAL WILLIAM H. McRAVEN COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

**SW:** During testimony to Congress in September 2010, you noted that you have two top priorities as the commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, the first of which is to win the current fight and the second is maintain the health of the force. Can you expound on those priorities?

**McRaven:** The first priority — win the current fight — means implementing a plan that supports the President's National Military Strategy. This clearly includes a heavy emphasis on Afghanistan, but in today's global fight, U.S. special-operations forces will continue to degrade al-Qaeda and its affiliates around the world. As al-Qaeda attempts to franchise its ideology and violence globally, SOF will utilize both direct and indirect approaches to deny, degrade and deter violent extremist organizations for the foreseeable future. I often remind people that while the direct approach captures everyone's attention, we must not forget that these operations only buy time and space for the indirect and broader governmental approaches to take effect. Enduring success is achieved by proper application of indirect operations, with an emphasis in building partner-nation capacity and mitigating the conditions that make populations susceptible to extremist ideologies.

In reference to the health of the force, we cannot win the current fight without preserving the force and its families. We've been at war for more than 10 years; and while the SOF community is resilient by nature and remains steadfast to its mission, the cumulative physical and emotional strain requires careful attention and

action. To combat this problem, I have appointed a brigadier general and my command sergeant major to lead the Preservation of the Force and Families Task Force, which is an interdisciplinary team empowered to build and implement innovative solutions across SOCOM components to improve the well-being of our force and families. Many SOF-specific support programs and organizations currently exist and are addressing some of the challenges we face. Resiliency programs are facilitating early identification of underlying SOF issues relating to physical, mental and spiritual well-being. The USSOCOM Care Coalition program provides outstanding support to wounded SOF warriors and their families and is a model for patient advocacy within the Department of Defense.

However, it will take more than resiliency programs and rehabilitative services to get us where we need to be. We are striving to increase predictability through the various levels of our organizations by mandating minimum "head-on-pillow" time for our force. Predictability is a key element of long-term performance and resiliency. Secondly, we will engender a leadership culture that views PERSTEMPO as an important element of operational readiness.

Finally, preparing our force and families to meet the demands of the future means providing resourced counseling, medical, psychological and rehabilitative care to our SOF warriors and their families. It also means working with the services and with Congress to ensure the force obtains the support it needs. I am happy to report that both are supportive of this endeavor.

Our people are our most valuable asset and I am committed to doing everything I can to ensure our outstanding SOF warriors and their families are taken care of — now — and for years to come.

**SW:** The third priority is to expand SOF's capabilities by working with the combatant commands and interagency and allied special-operations partners to establish a global SOF network, which is able to react more rapidly and effectively to enemy action. Can you expound on this priority and tell our readers how this will impact Army special-operations forces?

**McRaven:** This is a natural extension of what we have been doing for decades. Expanding the SOF network is about increasing and strengthening our partnerships throughout the global SOF enterprise. With current fiscal constraints, not only in the U.S. but worldwide, we have to find new solutions to effectively operate in the current strategic environment. In the U.S., particularly over the last 10 years, the nation has recognized the value of SOF in this ambiguous operating environment. I want to assist in building other nations' SOF capabilities to help deal with the myriad of emerging threats. All of these initiatives will be worked through the Joint Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Department of State and the geographic combatant commanders. There is a clear recognition that developing enduring partnerships is a key component of our long-term military strategy.

The genesis of this idea comes from my days as the Special Operations Command Europe

commander and the establishment of the NATO SOF Coordination Cell, which is today's NATO-SOF headquarters. This construct has paid dividends by giving our NATO SOF partners a vehicle for SOF-related issues and an opportunity for increased training. In Afghanistan, the NATO SOF HQ has shown great success as it has strengthened coalition partnerships and has increased overall partnering efforts with NATO SOF units, which has expanded SOF capabilities throughout the International Security Assistance Force.

The impact to ARSOF, as well as to the rest of the SOCOM components, is that we will focus more effort on security-force assistance to build capabilities and capacities within our allied and partnered SOF elements. Additionally, it will cause all of us to relook at how we share information, which will ultimately be the key to attracting new partners into this network.

Critical to this, and all of our current initiatives, is that we improve our leader development and education. To that end, we are developing programs designed to train, educate and manage the career paths of our SOF leaders. These programs will result in a tailored SOF professional military education plan and the provision of training opportunities that will provide leaders with the tools necessary to effectively operate in today's complex environment. We are working with the services to effectively manage career progression of SOF leaders, including assignments to key combined, joint and interagency assignments. To be clear, the future success of SOF depends on the qualities and experiences gained by our force while working in diverse circumstances, not just diverse conditions and theaters. We must resist the temptation to read our own press and rest on our laurels. We must remain adaptive and relevant. In the 25 years since SOCOM was created, we have adapted and performed beyond expectations — but times are changing and our enemies are on the move.

**SW: SOF are trained for both direct and indirect roles — do you see one as more important? And if so why?**

**McRaven:** As I mentioned earlier, the direct approach is exceedingly important. When the Commander-in-Chief calls upon us to conduct a no-notice mission of national importance, we cannot and will not fail. However, everyone in SOF understands that to build an enduring solution to violent extremism you must use a whole-of-government approach centered around many of our SOF core competencies like foreign internal defense, SFA, military information support, civil affairs as well as unconventional warfare and counterinsurgency when required.

**SW: To operate in the indirect realm, does the force need some unique skills? What do you think are the most important skills for ARSOF to possess?**

**McRaven:** Overall, I would argue that we need ARSOF to be problem solvers first and foremost. By excelling in this area, we are better armed to make the right decisions, apply the right approach or mixture of approaches with the right balance.

Clearly, we need to continue to improve our understanding and respect for other cultures, improve our language capability and cultivate our ability to build relationships — but these skills are simply the tools we use to help us define and develop solutions to the problem.

**SW: How is the OPEMPO affecting the overall skills of SOF and what can be done to ensure that important skills do not atrophy?**

**McRaven:** I think our combat skills are at an all-time high due to 10 years of multiple rotations in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, I am concerned about our engagement skills — especially in language and cultural awareness. These skills are more critical to those units that are designed to operate along the indirect approach like many of the capabilities found in ARSOF. With our intense focus in the Central Command area of operations over the past decade, we have seen some degradation in our language skills and cultural awareness because the units are simply not spending time in their traditional AORs. So, yes, OPEMPO and out-of-theater deployments are atrophying some of our skills. To counter this atrophy, we are applying more resources, particularly pay incentives. However, this is only a short-term solution. The long-term solution will come when the forces are re-balanced from being CENTCOM-focused, to a more traditional regionally oriented posture. We likely won't see that re-balancing for some time, so until then, it is incumbent upon our NCOs and officers to use the resources at hand — such as language labs and computer-based learning to fill the gap.

**SW: There has been a lot of talk about declining budgets and decreasing the sizes of our armed forces — are there any sacred cows when it comes to cutting the budget?**

**McRaven:** There are no sacred cows. That being said, I think SOF is in a particularly good position as our collective capabilities offer the nation comparative advantages against many of the today's threats, and those that may potentially emerge. This advantage is particularly valuable when you realize that SOF constitutes only 1.7 percent of the DoD budget. We are an exceedingly cost-effective and combat-effective investment. While we have experienced cuts, they have

been relatively small in nature compared to the level of cuts the services are facing. I trust the decision makers who are required to make hard, but necessary choices in this tight fiscal environment, to take that into consideration. As we go forward, we must remain closely aligned with the services as they provide a vast amount of our support, especially with enablers and service provided capabilities. We need to be cognizant of not only the effect on our budgets, but also how the services are impacted and how that affects their level of support to SOF.

**SW: You also noted in another interview that the U.S. cannot “kill its way to victory” but rather that the armed forces must buy space and time for the rest of the government to work? Is that happening in Afghanistan?**

**McRaven:** Yes. The preponderance of SOF's efforts in Afghanistan is currently applied towards protecting the population and increasing local capacity through village-stability operations and developing the Afghan Local Police. This includes training Afghan security forces to protect the population and the improvements that have been made in the villages. VSO/ALP also serves as a bridge from villages to district and provincial governance. In short, it ties security, governance and development into one effort designed to help Afghans help themselves. However, I would also add that our direct lethal operations are valuable and complementary to our VSO/ALP efforts as they create chaos within the enemy's network. This chaos buys the space and time you mentioned to support the expansion of VSO/ALP in Afghanistan.

**SW: As Afghanistan winds down, where do you project SOF will be needed next?**

**McRaven:** There is a consistent high demand for SOF all over the world. Much of this demand has been suppressed over the last decade because of our CENTCOM focus. Currently about 85 percent of our deployed force is in the CENTCOM AOR. As we anticipate a re-balancing of demand at some point, I am confident that the GCCs will request SOF assets and we will be positioned to fulfill that need. There will be no shortage of requirements, and that is largely due to the tremendous reputation our force has built. Regardless of where we are needed, I am confident that SOF will be ready to answer our nation's call and I am proud to lead this magnificent command. Thank you for your continued great service to our nation! **SW**



**comment here**



**TAKE DOWN** Romanian special-operations Soldiers along with their American counterparts prepare to enter a building. *U.S. Army photo*



# SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND EUROPE

## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS FOR GLOBAL SECURITY

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL BUCK DELLINGER

United States European Command's area of operations is endowed with a resilient alliance, major partners with whom we have historical and cultural connections and an emerging group of up-and-coming states that share our interests.<sup>1</sup> These states recognize that capable special-operations forces provide a cost efficient means to strengthen their national security and increase their international reputation as they deploy in support of international security efforts. Foreign internal defense or military assistance<sup>2</sup> (in NATO terminology) training within the EUCOM AOR with European partners is a wise and sound investment for U.S. SOF that is producing immediate returns in support of the U.S. and our European partners' national-security interests within EUCOM's border and beyond.

Maj. Gen. Bennett Sacolick, commander, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, noted in an article in *Special Warfare* that the objectives of FID

is to influence various audiences, shape the environment, prevent the growth of insurgencies and ultimately deter conflict. In the EUCOM AOR, where institutions and governments are generally stable, some conclude that FID or MA has little application. Contrary to that belief is the fact either assisting or training our partners to conduct FID/MA where our combined national interests intersect has been successful and is a sound use of high-demand U.S. SOF elements. Engagements of Special Forces operational detachments, U.S. Special Operations Command command visits with European partner-nation SOF are strengthening our partners' abilities to deploy to regions beyond the EUCOM Unified Command Plan borders. In short, the U.S. SOF enterprise expands through and with our allies and partners. Working together, we are more capable.

At the practitioner level, SOCEUR and USSOCOM efforts are formed to fit the

specific requirements of each partner nation to strengthen their ability to deploy and succeed in various political environments. Tasks the partner-nation SOF are executing strongly resemble FID tasks in a counterinsurgency environment. Resources committed vary with respect to the requirements of the partner-nation SOF command. The range of activities scales from a single liaison officer up to and including frequent episodic development opportunities, i.e. joint-combined exercise-training partnership-development program events and staff-assistance visits. For our highly-developed partners, a mature SOF operator who provides strategic assistance, coordination and communication is sufficient. For our advancing partners who are committed to the current multi-national contingency efforts, ODA- and ODB-development engagements prepare their equivalents to deploy to Afghanistan or various locations in Africa. Depending on the situation and the relevant authorities, U.S.

SOF may or may not deploy alongside their partner-nation SOF. The affect of a small U.S. investment has an exponential positive effect for U.S. interests.

In Afghanistan, U.S. SOF and U.S. general-purpose forces provide various levels of assistance for the participating partner nations; SOCEUR elements are partnered with Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Romanian, Czech, Slovakian and Hungarian SOF. We anticipate that Estonian SOF will join this list. U.S. SOF partnering affiliation with these elements ranges from joint partnership and advisory teams to complete U.S. ODB- and ODA-level partnering. In all cases, the relationship did not start in the deployed region, but in the EUCOM AOR with years of engagement, strengthening assistance, training and other confidence-building measures. Nearly all these events would fall into the FID bin of activities. For the purposes of further description, U.S. SOF support to Polish SOF, Romanian SOF and Czech SOF are instructive as examples of various models for U.S. SOF strengthening a partner-nation military-assistance effort. The common FID/MA task for all three of these PN examples is to prepare provincial response company capability within their particular provinces in Afghanistan. In addition, all three elements began as part of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom before transitioning to a more self-sufficient role within NATO's International Security Assistance Force where each operates at the company or task-group level.

### **Polish SOF**

Poland has consistently been a staunch ally to the U.S. in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Polish Special Operations Command has two special-operations task groups (company-level task forces) committed to ISAF. U.S. SOF partners with POLSOCOM at every level: from the strategic relationship of USSOCOM and SOCEUR senior-leader engagements down to JPATs assisting with critical enabling capabilities in Afghanistan.

To reinforce mutual security cooperation, USSOCOM has placed a permanent special-operations liaison officer<sup>3</sup> in POLSOCOM headquarters. Further, USSOCOM invests in two large staff visits to POLSOCOM each year. SOCEUR conducts habitual staff visits across each directorate several times per

quarter, focusing on all aspects of the operational-level staff. Because of the opportunity for mutually beneficial training prospects at the tactical level, SOCEUR and CONUS-based forces will conduct multiple JCETs, and other activities with POLSOCOM in FY12, culminating in SOCEUR's perennial combined joint-force special-operations component-command exercise, Jackal Stone. All of these activities support POLSOCOM's ability to project full spectrum special-operations tasks at all levels. In Afghanistan, two U.S. SOF joint-planning assistance teams have evolved since 2008, when they first began their assignment with two Polish SOTGs. The SOCEUR model of a JPAT consists of between four and six SOF operators (some combination of operations, communications, medical and intelligence specialists, depending on the situation). The purpose of this element is to assist the partner-nation SOF to operate at its full capacity given the assets available and the large range of actors in service in the region. Seamless execution of SOF missions enabled by required resources is the end state. Together, the U.S. JPATs partnered with Polish SOTGs are having significant successes training their Afghan National Police PRCs and building their capability to operate and stabilize their province in Afghanistan.

### **Romanian SOF**

Like Poland, Romania has been a tremendous ally to the United States. Romania was able to transition from U.S. command in OEF to ISAF SOF in 2007. This commitment has grown from a single special-operations task unit (ODA equivalent in NATO terms) to a SOTG with three SOTUs, more than a 300 percent increase in commitment and responsibility. As with POLSOCOM, partnering with ROMSOFCOM occurs at every level. Due to the fact that ROMSOFCOM are not collocated with general-purpose forces from their home country as in the Polish model, ROMSOFCOM in Afghanistan require a slightly larger partnering element from U.S. SOF.

SOCEUR has positioned a SOF representative in Romania to coordinate and integrate U.S. and Romanian SOF advancement tasks. In FY12, SOCEUR and CONUS forces will conduct more than a dozen mutually beneficial activities. One activity occurred in February and March 2011 when a U.S. SOF ODB and ODA partnered with a ROMSOFCOM

company and two SOTUs. This engagement culminated with a Joint Maneuver Readiness Center rotation in Hohenfels, Germany, which included partner operations with the U.S. Infantry Brigade Combat Team that the Romanians would eventually work with in Afghanistan. The Romanians will also participate in Exercise Jackal Stone 2012.

In Afghanistan, as ROMSOFCOM has expanded its deployed formations, U.S. SOF partnering has evolved to assist in maintaining full operational opportunities to assets in country. With each rotation of forces, U.S. SOF-partnered elements have evolved to assist ROMSOFCOM's growth. Many variables drive the command decision from the size and capability of the U.S. SOF partnership elements with the ROMSOFCOM elements. The dominant variables are the enemy, relocations on the battlefield and growth of Romanian enabling capabilities. ROMSOFCOM are proving to be exceptionally skilled and valued partners in training their PRCs to effectively operate in a COIN environment.

### **Czech SOF**

Czech forces have continued to assist in Afghanistan. In 2011, the nature of their commitment changed as they deployed a SOTG to operate as a task force assigned to ISAF SOF. Unique to this deployment was the fact that this SOTG operated within its own command and support structure. To date, USSOCOM and SOCEUR have not assigned a SOLO or SOFREP to provide persistent institutional-level assistance with Czech SOF but high-level engagements occur regularly.

Due to the size of Czech SOF, bilateral SOF-training opportunities in Europe are limited. Nevertheless, SOCEUR-assigned and CONUS SOF conduct between six to eight formal events per year. Our most intense effort is supporting the development of a Czech rotary-wing capability to support the Czech special-operations formations while deployed. The development of this special-operations aviation task unit will significantly increase the aggregate Czech SOF capacity.

In Afghanistan, Czech SOF have proven extraordinarily effective. Because of their extensive experience operating in various places over the past years in OEF, they were uniquely positioned to excel in a more independent role. As expected, U.S.



**ROOM CLEARING** Romanian SOF pause during a room-clearing exercise. *U.S. Army photo*



SOF partnering has drawn down as Czech SOF established relationships and operational networks that require little U.S. assistance. Through thorough planning, pre-mission training and reconnaissance, Czech SOF have demonstrated a mastery of FID/MA in a relatively short time with their PRC in Afghanistan.

These three case studies illustrate the effects of a small investment of U.S. SOF engagement from the strategic to the tactical level in terms of strengthening interoperability and exporting a FID/MA capability. In the course of engagement, our alliance is strengthening and our aggregate capabilities are expanding.

### Advanced Initiatives

In discussion with our partners, several advanced capabilities are desired to expand current inherent capabilities to conduct a broad range of SOF tasks — among those are FID/MA. These initiatives to strengthen our partners can fall into three categories: individual, collective and enabling.

**Individual.** To be operationally self-supporting and conduct FID/MA in a deployed environment, some of our partner nations desire advanced specialized individual intelligence, medical and communications qualifications. During the last 10 years, U.S. SOF have developed an effective system to

understand the various networks that support an active or nascent insurgency. Our partners desire the transferable aspects of this capability. As we become more interdependent with our partners, intelligence sharing and exchanging techniques are paramount to our operational effectiveness while building partnerships based on trust.

U.S. SOF possess advanced organic medical capabilities, which are taught at SWCS's Joint Special Operations Medical Training Facility. Developing operators to possess a similar capability is essential for our partners given they support similar operations. As we contemplate the post-Afghanistan era and consider FID/MA in other environments, distances to significant medical support will lengthen and require a greater organic medical capability in the deployed SOF formations.

Communications expertise and networks have advanced through multiple technological generations. During the last decade, we have become more dependent on bandwidth, data and video teleconferencing. The ability to set up, maintain and troubleshoot these systems while remaining up to date on new equipment is evolving into a full-time training endeavor. U.S. SOF communicators are positioned with industry to remain current. In all environments and for all tasks, including FID/MA, senior political and

military leadership will require robust and responsive communications.

**Collective.** From a collective-task perspective, SOF elements are evolving to conduct full spectrum SOF within larger and more diverse multi-lateral command and control elements; ISAF SOF in Afghanistan is a perfect example. For NATO partners and members of the NATO Special Operations Headquarters, the deployable building block for SOF is the SOTG. These building blocks must be commanded and controlled by a multi-lateral headquarters. Thus, the development of functioning SOTGs and rehearsing a range of tactical-, operational- and strategic-level C2 structure is necessary.

Over many decades, U.S. SOF engagement at the ODA level has created a great number of highly qualified shooters. But only in the last few years, has it been extended to the SOTG-level of training and higher echelons been able to advance our partners' capability and willingness to take on FID/MA missions. Continued focus on SOTG and special operation task-force development is vital to creating self-sustaining formations that can deploy to conduct long-term FID/MA.

Jackal Stone, a significant multinational exercise, combines a joint-forces special-operations command at the operational level



**MEDEVAC** Romanian SOF prepare to move a simulated casualty onto an MH-47. U.S. Army photos

of war. Regularly attended by between 10 to 15 partner nations, this exercise is based on FID/MA in a COIN environment and exercises a multi-lateral CJFSOCC. Partner-nation SOF staff officers outnumber their U.S. counterparts by at least 3 to 1 across every staff section and working group.

While the training objective of Jackal Stone is to rehearse a CJFSOCC, some of the best training is experienced at the SOTG level. Emphasis at this level of engagement for JCETs, pre-mission training and JMRC rotations has significantly expanded the potential mission set for our partner nations. Moreover, focus at this level of command has resulted in capable leaders and staffs who are able to sustain lengthy commitments.

**Essential.** The U.S. military possesses certain assets, some essential to full-spectrum FID/MA, which are not easily replicable by our partner nations. These assets can be prohibitively expensive for most of our partners when economies of scale are not attained.

Among these assets are communications networks, fixed- and rotary-wing aviation and intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance systems. While certain countries are programming to acquire some of these capabilities, it is more likely that coordination across the entire SOF community to procure compatible systems will be the most affordable course of action. In this way, SOF

operates more as a system of coordinating parts. Multilateral headquarters, extensive use of liaisons and partnering elements, i.e. JPATs, are just a few of the mitigating efforts that can integrate full-spectrum SOF efforts. Efforts from USSOCOM, NATO Special Operations Headquarters and SOCEUR are attempting to incorporate the European SOF enterprise at all levels to realize the full potential of an integrated SOF approach to achieving mutual national interests.

## Conclusion

Partnering with and strengthening our European allied SOF to perform FID/MA in places where our mutual interests intersect is a worthy investment of resources. Preparing and advising our partners at all levels of command strengthens their ability and expands the aggregate capacity of the SOF enterprise to perform SOF tasks. Persistent and episodic engagements with our European SOF partners will continue to further the objectives of shaping the political and military environment, preventing insurgencies, deterring conflict and influencing foreign attitudes within and beyond EUCOM's boundaries. **SW**



*comment here*

**Col. Buck Dellinger** is the director of operations (J3), Special Operations Command Europe based at Patch Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany.

As a Special Forces officer he served as a detachment commander in the 10th SF Group (Airborne); commander of the Military Free-fall School; director of operations (S3), 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne); director of operations (J3) for CJSOTF-Arabian Peninsula in Iraq, and a battalion commander in the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division. In the summer of 2012, he will take command of Fort Campbell, Ky..

## Notes

1. In Afghanistan today, of the 40,000 non-U.S. troops on the ground – more than 37,600, or roughly 94 percent – come from America's allies and partners in Europe. The preceding fact was reported in *The New Atlanticist*, [http://www.acus.org/new\\_atlanticist](http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist), on 12 January 2012 in John R. Deni, "Interoperability in an Age of Austerity."

2. Allied Joint Publication 3.5 defines military assistance as, "A broad spectrum of measures in support of Allied forces in peace, crisis and conflict. Military assistance can be conducted by, with or through indigenous or surrogate forces that are trained, equipped, supported or employed in varying degrees by special-operations forces."

3. Staff work is underway at USSOCOM to determine the best title for the special-operations liaison officers who are assigned around the world with critical partners. This title may be replaced with another title such as special-operations forces representative.



# CA FORCES IN CENTCOM

**BUILDING THE SOF ENTERPRISE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS**

BY MAJOR ARNEL P. DAVID, CAPTAIN WESLEY STRONG AND CAPTAIN LUCAS OVERSTREET

## Executive Summary

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, Delta Company, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne) creatively utilized limited resources and access to reshape Civil Affairs efforts in the Central Command area of operation. The accelerated growth of new active-duty CA units and ongoing requirements abroad have compounded the challenges that CA leaders face as we prepare, train and deploy elements overseas. These constraints generated essential planning to determine the adequate density of CA forces for proper application against required mission sets. CA elements, which fall under the auspices of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, serve as a catalyst for effective action on a scale disproportionately large relative to their small numbers. The key ingredient for success in 2011 was our ability to partner with host-nation forces, both military and civilian. Teams from Company D, 96th CA Bn., pioneered critical relationships that will significantly increase the effects and impact of our operations. The volatile and ambiguous regions in which our teams operate have pushed us to take on a holistic approach that not only integrates the whole-of-government but rather a whole-of-nations methodology, garnering multilateral support for operations that protect our nation and its vital interests. With the regional order shifting, and programmed drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, the necessity to build regional partners is amplified. Simultaneously, the incremental growth through our persistent presence contributes to our ability to construct a friendly network that will establish stability mechanisms to address regional instability and support legitimate governance. The capture, confinement or killing of threat targets alone will not achieve lasting host-nation peace. In the continuum of operations, CA forces and their ability to grow beyond unilateral action will be an integral component of any theater strategy. Admiral Eric Olson, former commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, published an article on irregular warfare in *Joint Forces Quarterly*, which emphasized that U.S. special-operations forces will be “called upon to succeed where others would fail, to solve crises by working through and with others rather

than unilaterally committing American lives.” Building and nurturing key relationships will be paramount as we foster the credibility and influence of legitimate authorities among pertinent populations. CA elements will need to embrace the concept of partnering to be relevant and effective in their operations and activities.

## The Theater Civil Military Support Element

From Aug. 1 2011 to March 15, Company D, 96th CA Battalion headquarters and civil-military operations center formed the nucleus of the theater civil-military support element, which supports the theater special-operations command and U.S. embassy teams by employ-

ing small, four to six, Soldier elements as civil military-support element teams. With limited access and manpower these teams are regionally aligned to focus targeted support to theater priorities. Prior to deployment, the rapidly changing environment pushed us to remain flexible and adopt a training strategy that would hone our fundamental shoot, move, communicate and survive skills, while enhancing our team’s ability to partner and build rapport. The company completed an intensive five-month pre-mission training cycle that integrated contractors to support training and utilized range facilities that rapidly prepared and validated all CA teams for operational employment in the CENTCOM AOR. The ability to evaluate the teams’ efforts to partner was tested consistently at company collective-training exercises and at the final battalion culmination exercise. The company had a unique opportunity to spend time in the Washington, D.C., area to

### Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) Commander’s Vision:

Shape the cognitive domain... employ the full spectrum of SOF capability to affect individuals, organizations and societies in the physical and cognitive realm in order to ensure that behaviors and attitudes are consistent with U.S. government interests... ideally, our partners are willing and able to maintain stability, our enemies are unable to disrupt civil society of our partners and allies and the indigenous population pursues goals compatible with U.S. interests.

meet other government partners and develop relationships that have benefited teams as they deploy forward. As we exercise an interagency unity of effort we’ve discovered that our interests and programs foster a symbiotic relationship that allows us to expend resources wisely across the theater. Influence and rapport is an intangible element built on personal relationships and various factors. However, with the stringent entry requirements for CA Soldiers processing through the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School’s CA pipeline, the quality



**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS** Civil Affairs leaders conduct a Key Leader Engagement with Jordanian Special Operations leadership in Zarqa, Jordan. *U.S. Army Photo*

of CA Soldiers has improved dramatically. These improvements in our force coupled with realistic and challenging training allow us to employ CMSE teams into austere environments that require mature and culturally savvy operators who work to impact all levels: tactical, operational and strategic.

## Mobile Fusion Team Concept

In support of our CMSE teams and theater requirements the TCMSE developed a mobile-fusion team concept to displace modular elements to support specific requirements and objectives. The MFT integrated sister-service components from SOCCENT, Army Central Command, Naval Forces Central Command and the Joint Information Support Task Force to form platforms that bring to bear an economy of force within theater. MFT missions ranged from partner training events to executive-level leader engagements in various countries. The TCMSE conducted prudent planning to determine the required level of leadership and capability to conduct these activities. In 2011, the TCMSE's MFT was successful in accomplishing the following challenging tasks:

1. Worked on U.S. embassy chief of mission approval for mutually supporting programs and activities desired by SOCCENT.
2. Negotiated with non-government organizations and inter-agency partners to solve difficult challenges that resulted in mutually beneficial solutions.
3. Trained partner forces on critical skills to plug capability gaps that were identified on prior MFT engagements.
4. Extended the reach of U.S. embassies in select countries to access contested areas.
5. Formed new relationships and created a vital network of influence of which U.S. forces can take advantage.

Using the proper level of leadership was essential to accomplishing these tasks. Within our ranks there is a plethora of diversity and experience that has been harvested over many deployments and rotations. This operational maturity and experience has yielded

positive results for our team. The TCMSE did its best to capture all of our elements efforts by aggregating reports and fused them into products that help our leadership understand the environment, and refine strategies to employ the proper resources which increases the effectiveness of our forces. Our talented NCOs and officers leveraged technological platforms (ArcGIS, which is a mapping system, Combined Information Data Network Exchange, Flash and Google Earth) to produce some valuable products:

1. Civil Common Operational Picture. This product was well received by SOCCENT leadership as it depicted both historical and current information for the region. Our civil-information management NCOIC created a multimedia Flash presentation that was simple and easy to use for any audience.
2. Human Terrain Map. Integrating the 95th CA Brigade key-leader engagement worksheets and our team's collection of biographical data from civil-reconnaissance missions, our CMSE teams created a product that geospatially depicts key and influential leaders on a map.
3. CA Framework for Engagement. This construct explains the relevance and employment of CA forces into a particular region. Over time, this methodology creates a baseline of data that will be measurable to gauge our efforts and their impact.
4. Storyboards. These snapshots of CA activities briefly provide a picture and overview of our CMSE efforts in the various regions. Our team's photography and Photoshop training during PMT greatly enhanced the quality of these reports. The TCMSE has regularly received accolades from senior leadership on these storyboards.

Given the CA team's increased access, they must do their best to understand and influence the perceptions of the population. More importantly, they have to garner support from the host-nation partner to gain their buy-in and ensure sustainability of our programs. Again, partnering is the key to success with any given activity that is supported or executed. It's only through partnerships that we can operate more freely in the sovereign nations that we support.



**PARTNERSHIP** CA Team members observe a medical practical exercise with the Jordanian SOF Civil Military Company. *U.S. Army Photo*

## CMSE 642 in the Central Asian States

Historically the CMSE Central Asian States (CAS) has not focused on partnering and developing relationships with HN security elements. The CMSE established relationships with local governmental leadership within our project focus areas but, have had limited engagements with our military partners. During our rotation we've shifted our effort to develop relationships with HN security elements to get them involved with civil-military operations that will magnify the effects of our programs and projects.

One example of our HN military partnering is the relationship built with the Tajik Border Guards. The Tajikistan Border Guard is an HN security element that operates within our focus area along the Afghan border. In August, CMSE CAS provided medical assistance to six border guard outposts in the Shurobad District of Tajikistan. During the medical engagement we treated 90 border guards for ailments ranging from malnutrition to injuries sustained while patrolling. The medical assistance helped develop key relationships with the border-guard leadership. It also complemented the U.S. embassy's objectives by increasing the HN security elements ability to defend against violent-extremist organizations and drug smuggling.

A major shortfall identified through our interactions with the border guards operating within our focus area is a need for medical training. While conducting senior-level key-leader engagements with a Tajik general and his staff, we learned that several border guards were

wounded during an attack. The inability of the guard's to treat their wounded comrades resulted in the loss of life. To avoid similar situations, the CA element developed a plan to provide tactical combat-casualty care training to the border guards. The TCCC training will increase their ability to deliver self and buddy aid for injuries received while under fire. By providing TCCC to the border guards, we will increase their survivability and their ability to defend their soil from violent extremists. Additionally, this new skill will help with their confidence to conduct combat operations along the border.

The next step in developing our relationship with the border guards is to provide them training on how to conduct CMO and get them involved with our projects. This will serve to operationalize them in key areas and legitimize them with the populace. For example, we plan on providing them training on how to conduct limited medical engagements and have them plan and execute medical engagements in the communities they wish to affect. This will increase the local populace's support for their mission and foster trust. The goal is to have them take a leading role in conducting CMO while we fulfill a supporting role.

CMSE CAS is currently developing a partnership with the Khalton Province Committee for Emergency Services. The Khalton Province is located in southwest Tajikistan and covers many of our focus areas. The CES is a branch of the Tajikistan military and is the first responder to any natural disaster. The members of the CES are also responsible for conducting disaster preparedness training and projects. The chief of the Khalton Province CES invited us to attend periodic meetings that he holds with his subordinates to discuss issues throughout the region. CMSE CAS is coordinating with the Khalton Province chief of CES to develop a partnership in preparation for the upcoming spring glacier melt that historically causes severe flooding in the province. The development of disaster-response networks also ties into and supports the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. embassy's objectives.

We have established relationships with leaders at the provincial and local levels in our focus areas. We maintain contact with these leaders to stay informed of any issues occurring in and to keep them involved with our projects. When we conduct opening ceremonies for our projects we encourage the local leadership to participate and put them in front during the ceremony to help legitimize them to the populace. This directly complements the U.S. embassy's objective of improving governance at the local level. Our projects also serve to expand the reach and influence of the embassy country team. The majority of these programs complement U.S. objectives of increasing Tajikistan's ability to provide education and healthcare. Our team always attempts to involve the appropriate host-nation entity from the government to help and participate in our programs. Recently, the team was successful in coordinating with the ministry of education to provide furniture and project additions to school refurbishments completed in critical focus areas.

In today's fight, CA teams need to continue to expand our reach and maximize the positive effects of our projects and programs. We need to get the host nation as involved as possible and continue to look for opportunities to partner and further our objectives.

## Mobile Fusion Team 644 in the Levant Region

CAT 644 from the theater civil-military support element worked to partner CA forces with host-nation militaries in the Levant region during its rotation from July 2011 to March 2012. The CAT divided its time between the Lebanese Armed Forces and Jordanian Armed Forces, increasing the U.S. Government's relationship with those nations and

their respective militaries while deployed. While American CA teams have not typically focused on partnering with host-nation forces in the region, the importance of doing so is now more important than ever.

**Jordan.** Over the course of the deployment, the CA team conducted episodic engagements with the Jordanian Special Operations Forces Civil Military Company. The CIMIC is an approximate equivalent unit to a company from the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, with embedded Psychological Operations elements. It is a new unit in the Jordanian Army, and one of the first civil-military units in modern Middle Eastern armies. Despite there being little precedence for this, it showed itself eager to train, and quite capable of conducting diverse civil-military operations.

These multiple engagements led to the CA team conducting two TCCC training classes led by the CA team medic and the 96th CA Bn. surgeon. Having a doctor included in the training enhanced the team's medical capacity and legitimacy. Meanwhile, the team sergeant and team leader provided support as assistant instructors, and the CA team divided itself into two pairs of primary and assistant instructors during practical exercises.

The course was conducted at the CIMIC's location, and fostered a strong working relationship between the two partnered units. Cooperation between the Jordanian CIMIC and American CA team formed easily due to the professional leadership and strong sense of hospitality innate to the Jordanian CIMIC. As such, the American Soldiers were able to dive into their training plan, and provide tough, realistic training to their counterparts.

Further enhancing the collaboration were the CIMIC's own senior lieutenants who supervised and translated training during classroom instruction and practical exercises. In an adaptation of the train-the-trainer methodology, these officers simultaneously learned and taught, all while lending their own credibility and expertise to the course. With the Jordanian soldiers' own leadership providing direct instruction and supervision, the American trainers were able to maximize their time and efforts on the day's tasks.

The training was successful, and culminated with a two-day round-robin TCCC squad-training exercise. The CA team took the role of evaluators, while the CIMIC officers and NCOs performed their regular duties as platoon, squad and team leaders. The exercise tested the students' ability to execute the three phases of TCCC, including small, but important tasks, like packing their first-aid bags, receiving a fragmentary order and evacuating patients to safety.

**Lebanon:** In between engagements with the Jordanian CIMIC, the same CA Team made several trips to Lebanon in support of Special Operations Command (FWD) Lebanon. The SOC (FWD) Lebanon command is partnering with the Lebanese Special Operations Forces to conduct multiple civil-military projects around the country team, enhancing the relationships between the U.S., the Lebanese Military and the populace.

One of the first projects completed in support of LSOF's civil-military program was the Hamat Community Center. This is a good example of the types of partnering the TCMSE has been focusing on recently, as it is based on cooperation from the local government, community volunteers and the nearby Lebanese Armed Forces Special Operations School. As the community center is finished, it will be utilized for various seminars, workshops and continuing-education programs led by local community volunteers and with assistance from the nearby LSOF units. Likewise, the center functions as a disaster shelter to serve the surrounding population in an

area that is at high risk during natural and man-made disasters. The LSOF units at the neighboring base will have more daily interaction with the citizens that they protect, and the citizens have the added benefit of receiving extra training and security in case of any future civil disturbances.

Additionally, the CA team tapped in to the diverse experience of SOCCENT's CA engineer to plan future humanitarian-assistance projects around Lebanon. Utilizing the CA engineer's extensive background working on construction projects throughout CENTCOM, the CA team partnered with USAID's Office of Democracy, Governance and Education to conduct surveys of public schools and clinics that are in need of external support. Based off the extensive research and analysis conducted, the CA team helped identify schools that needed assistance, but were out of USAID's immediate reach. While the CA team's LSOF partners provided extra security in higher-risk areas, the CA team was able to lay the groundwork for future assistance programs that reach the common goals of the U.S. Combatant Command, USAID, Lebanese Armed Forces and the ministry of education.

## Conclusion

CA elements are an essential SOF instrument of force that projects small teams to areas of interest and achieve disproportionately large results. The enemy is evolving and the traditional hierarchies of a state and its institutions are faced with numerous challenges. As related earlier, small projects, like teaching Tajik Border Guards TCCC remedied a capability shortfall with their partners that helped save lives by allowing the border guards to defend their area from violent extremists. The United States is not alone in these regional conflicts and irregular warfare. These conditions of warfare require a comprehensive approach. Success will require that all resources available get pooled together to bring to bear against an elusive and ever-changing enemy. To defeat this enemy, U.S. elements must aggressively erode the conditions that foster extremist activity. CA forces provide the surest means of shaping an environment to achieve consensus over coercion with a populace. A proactive and holistic approach aimed to influence populations will set favorable conditions for both the U.S. and host-nation governments. By partnering with host-nation forces, CA teams gain increased access and maximized effects with a limited and low profile U.S. presence.

Taken in sum, CA teams must embrace the partnering concept to maximize the effects of CAO in the CENTCOM AOR. The continued success of our CMSE teams will cultivate trust and respect amongst U.S. agencies and other SOF units. CA has evolved and our Soldiers will continue to meet global challenges that face our nation. By working in developing states and troubled regions, CA forces with their partners will collaborate to defeat an enemy before there is any loss of life or conflict. An old idiom by Benjamin Franklin, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", can characterize the instrument of force that CA Soldiers provide for the nation in areas of strategic interest. The persistent presence and long-lasting relationships with partner forces will illuminate capability shortfalls that allow us, over time, to build on a cumulative joint-training strategy that improves training. This progression and precision in partnering will provide valuable dividends. *SW*

*This article was authored by Maj. Arnel P. David with inserts provided by Cpt. Wesley Strong & Cpt. Lucas Overstreet.*



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**COVER  
STORY**

SOCIAL



MEDIA

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL BRIAN PETIT

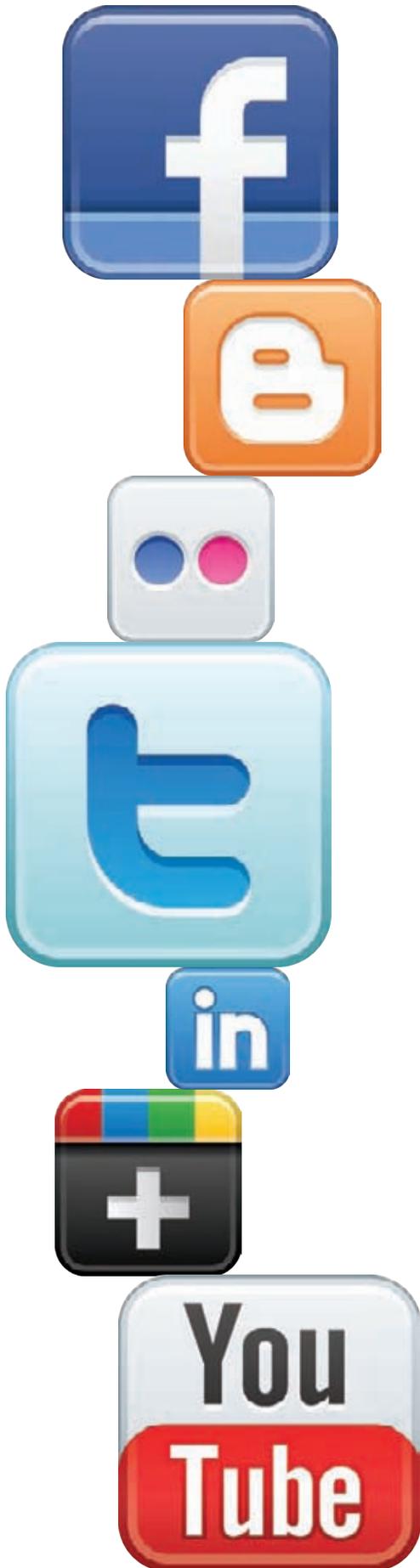
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**Unconventional warfare, meet social media.**

Future mission success could depend on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google+, or iReporting. To pervert Leon Trotsky's axiom on war,

*"You may not be interested in social media,  
but social media is very interested in you."*



**Social media** – blogs, social-network sites, information aggregators, wikis, livecasting, video sharing – has decisively altered that most extreme of socio-political acts: *revolution*. The 2011 Arab Spring revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East were engineered through citizen-centric computer and cellular-phone technologies that streamed web-enabled social exchanges. The Arab Spring has profound implications for the U.S. special-operations mission of unconventional warfare. This article posits that the study, practice and successful execution of future UW must deliberately account for and incorporate social media.

This article first examines the role of social media during the Arab Spring revolutions and uprisings. Next, social media's profound political effects are woven to the historical and doctrinal practice of UW. Three areas of UW are analyzed: social mobilization, the digital underground and the weapon of the narrative. This article concludes with an appeal for the focused study of the nexus between social media and UW to include the practice of and experimentation with the use of social media enabled by handheld technologies.

### The Arab Spring

Labeled alternately the Arab Spring or the Twitter Revolution, the spring of 2011 witnessed uprisings and revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Bahrain, with revolution-inspired, violent demonstrations following in multiple Middle Eastern, North African and European nations. The uprisings were sparked by the Dec. 17, 2011, self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi, a frustrated Tunisian fruit-and-vegetable street vendor (with a computer science degree).<sup>1</sup> Public outrage followed, led by viral social-media postings. Months later, across the Middle East and North Africa, social media achieved another innovative milestone: a decentralized community of web-based activists rapidly coalesced into politically powerful, loosely organized insurgents who produced not just riots, but astonishing revolutionary change.

The uprisings represented a true “starfish”<sup>2</sup> moment: peer-to-peer relationships generated a collaborative will that sparked defiant acts of resistance spanning two continents. Social media proliferated compelling images and stories that resonated with all classes of citizens, worldwide, inspiring a mix of activism and outrage that ignited revolutionary sentiment.

It is said that revolutions “come, they are not made.”<sup>3</sup> Despite the unpredictability of revolutions, the Arab Spring uprisings demonstrated that the medium is as important as — or more important than — the message. Handheld technologies and social media connectivity aggregated small acts of resistance that produced frenzied revolutionary momentum. The lack of a cohesive revolutionary ideology was less significant than the collective thrill of millions of like-minded, networked citizens expressing dissent.

Even if revolution was not the aim, it was the outcome. Social-media collaboration generated accidental revolutionaries. The connected masses forged rapid, digital alliances too dynamic to be ignored and too unpredictable to be countered. In a remarkably short time span, social-media communities viewed their collective action in historical terms, generating the key ingredient required for revolutionary momentum: inevitability.

The pervasive and resilient character of web-based social media enabled rapid social

organization that circumvented regimes and inspired bold and effective acts of resistance. Social media demonstrated that it is effective in sparking revolutions. It also showed some proficiency in managing the tactics and flexibility required to sustain spirited, if disorganized, revolutionary momentum. Even the state-sponsored physical violence, media control and comprehensive counterrevolutionary measures could not effectively thwart the uprising.

The inspiring, liberating spirit of the Arab Spring has given way to a long year of discord, civil war and state-on-citizen violence. We are reminded that revolutions are messy, violent affairs, whether delivered by cell phone or pitchfork. Outcomes notwithstanding, the Arab Spring confirms that the digital networks that promulgate social-media content present *both* an environment and a communication-based weapon system.

## UW Background

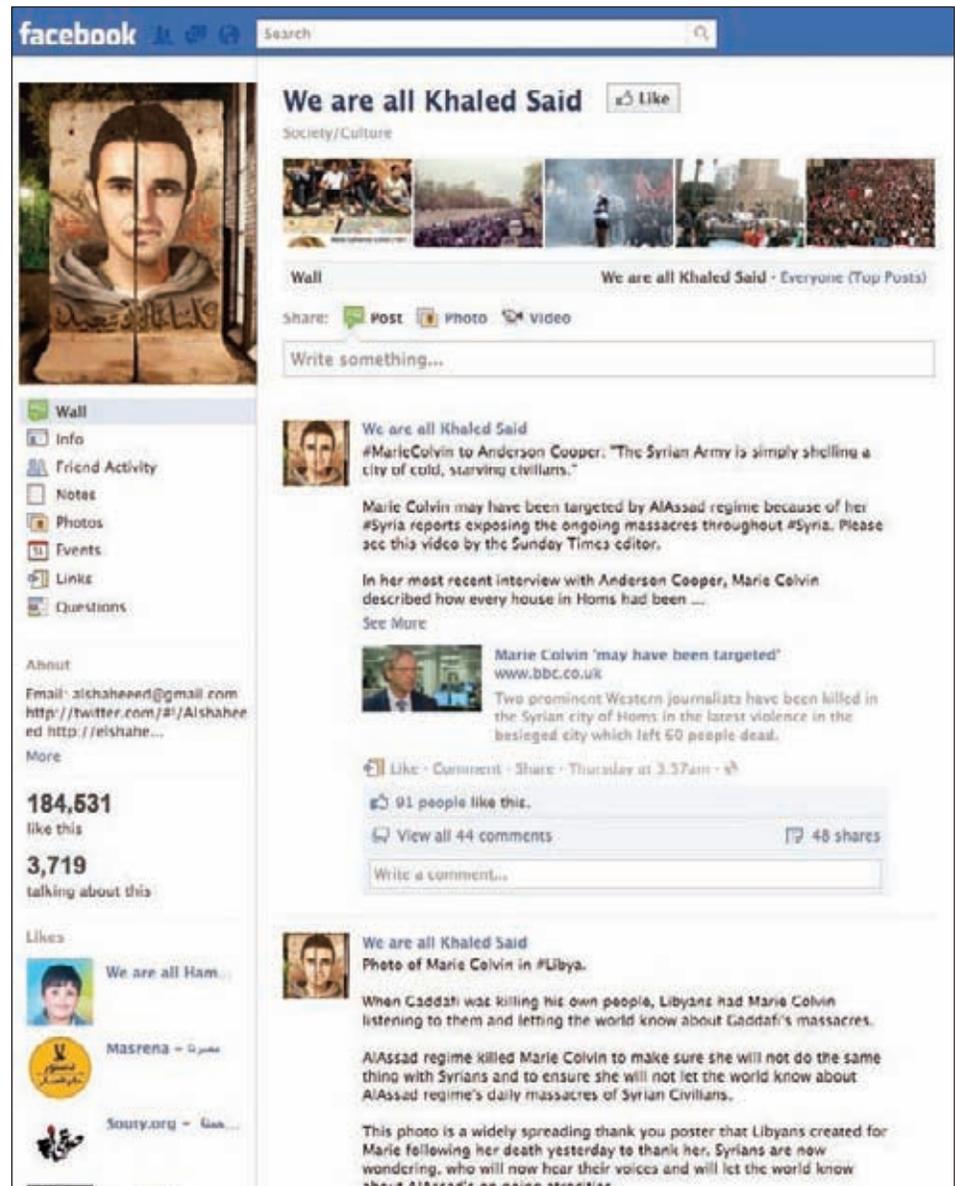
To place social media within UW, it is helpful to review the definition of UW, address special-operations responsibilities for the conduct of UW and give examples of UW campaigns.

UW is defined as “activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary and guerrilla force in a denied area.”<sup>4</sup> UW is not a mechanism for creating revolutionary conditions — rather, it seizes on and supports existing political, military and social infrastructure to accelerate, stimulate and support decisive action based on calculated political gain and U.S. national interests.

U.S. Army Special Forces are the Department of Defense’s only military unit designed to conduct UW, and are specially trained to operate in politically sensitive, denied areas that characterize UW environments.

UW is inherently an interagency activity, which combines the military component of the U.S. Army Special Forces with the U.S. government agencies that possess the requisite authorities and capabilities to support a UW campaign.

The principle components of an insurgent or resistance movement are the



**GOING VIRAL** The revolution in Egypt was stimulated by this Facebook page, dedicated to a slain Egyptian businessman. The page continues to serve as a hub for information on events around the world. <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk>

underground, the auxiliary and the guerrilla force. UW pairs Special Forces with resistance groups, insurgents, revolutionaries, tribes or other cohesive indigenous social groups that qualify as a legitimate threat to an existing power. The insurgent forces must be determined to be a suitable partner, both militarily and politically, for the conduct of operations in support of U.S. national interests.

The two major U.S. wars of this decade — Afghanistan and Iraq — were initiated with successful Special Forces-supported UW campaigns.<sup>5</sup> Strategically, UW offers a rapid,

flexible option where large-scale conventional forces are not suitable or advisable. UW and its nearly polar opposite, foreign internal defense, remain the principal mission for the Fort Bragg, N.C.-based United States Army Special Forces Command (Airborne).

## Linking the Arab Spring and UW

To clarify, the Arab Spring revolutions are not case studies of UW. The majority of the Arab Spring uprisings are homespun insurrections in various phases of their revolutionary cycle. In Libya, the anti-Qaddafi regime rebels have received external support



**REVOLUTION** Left: The Arab Spring was fueled through social media such as the twitter hashtag #25jan. <http://twitter.com/#!/search/%2325jan> Right: Social media continues to be a leading source for revolutionary thought. <http://www.facebook.com/Syrian.Revolution>.

from the U.S. and NATO. This support, both direct and indirect, falls short of the full application of UW. As of this writing, NATO support to the Libyan rebels is best classified as indirect support<sup>6</sup> or limited intervention.<sup>7</sup>

The value in examining UW against the Arab Spring is twofold. First, the Arab Spring revolutions and uprisings contain the environmental complexities resident in UW environments. Studying these cases offers insight into the way UW environments might take shape in the future. Second, the aim of UW is to coerce, disrupt or overthrow an occupying power or government; precisely the aim of a revolutionary. The successes and failures of the resistance movements and the subsequent actions of the governments provide valuable information for informing future UW theory, doctrine and training principles.

**Borderless social mobilization.** UW will be affected by the advent of *hyper-accelerated social organization*. The ability of citizens to instantly connect, communicate and act constitutes an evolution of the military notion of *mass*. High-volume social-media content forms a relatively innocuous type of mass until they stimulate and assist in illegal acts of resistance or war. John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, creators of the concept of *netwar*<sup>8</sup> have synthesized cyber, social and military capabilities into a modern concept of “swarming.” Arquilla and Ronfeldt define swarming as “seemingly amorphous, but it is a deliberately structured, coordinated strategic way to strike from all directions.”<sup>9</sup>

Swarming in the digital domain can easily span time zones, geography, economic and cultural barriers. The Arab Spring demon-

strated how social media can congregate its users digitally, then quickly shift to directing or influencing some form of focused physical mass or swarm.

In Egypt, thousands of social-media exchanges combined the normally benign activity of online social commentary with the unpredictable actions of revolutionaries, disenfranchised individuals and opportunists. The result? A persistent wave of e-mass inspired civil disobedience that toppled a 30-year regime in 18 days with a “narrative and a nudge.”<sup>10</sup>

Revolution in Egypt was stimulated by Wael Ghonim<sup>11</sup>, an Egyptian-born, Google regional marketing manager, who created a Facebook page titled, “We are all Khaled Said,” dedicated to a slain Egyptian businessman.<sup>12</sup> Ghonim’s Facebook page became a catalyst for the revolution. In a modern

example of swarming initiated by digital mass, Ghonim's Facebook page went viral, igniting the masses against the 25-year rule of President Hosni Mubarak.

Wael Ghonim's role in the revolution illustrates how social media has made the creation and mobilization of active revolutionaries in days and weeks — a stunning evolution that impacts the organizational principles of resistance movements.

Borderless social mobilization, enabled by digital mass, has compelling organizational implications for UW. Initially, borderless social mobilization allows like-minded groups to coalesce digitally with less risk than the traditional early, vulnerable stages of building a resistance movement. Subsequently, borderless social mobilization can be blended with traditional organizational methods, combining established techniques with innovative social-organization technologies. The organizational progression blends a digital front and a physical front, both of which are decentralized. The result is a multi-front, or more aptly, a "multi-sphere" campaign. This is the art and science of interpreting and acting on social-media cues as a principal element of combat-advising indigenous resistance forces. UW practitioners must now consider their organizational capacity to leverage social media in concert with traditional methods of supporting an underground, auxiliary and guerrilla force.

In the initial phases of digital-centric mobilization, U.S.-supported resistance forces can capitalize on the rapidity and relative safety of the decentralized cyber domain. For a regime attempting to defend or attack its internal threats, social media can create a highly decentralized and challenging front. As this decentralized front self-organizes in the cyber domain, a traditionally organized front of armed military capability — the supported guerrilla force — can organize in the physical domain. The threatened occupying power faces a multi-pronged, networked threat that is as difficult to predict as social media itself. This multi-sphere UW campaign methodology combines the chaotic power of borderless social mobilization with the lethality and precision of focused military effort.

This paradigm levels the physical realm of war with the digital realm, recognizing

social-media-centric communication as an equal to tactical military actions. Without question, acts of war and violent, tactical military actions will always shape the narrative. Arguably, tactical actions and social narratives can rarely be separated. However, this scenario illustrates the "information order with an operations' annex" supposition<sup>14</sup> that emphasizes the lasting effects of effective information proliferation over the fleeting nature of successful tactical actions. We must recognize that citizen-generated media content will shape public perceptions with credibility and speed. Our meticulously crafted and dogmatically staffed military public-affairs releases will be poor competitors for influence in this environment. Our UW proficiency will depend on revised authorities, uncomfortable risk calculations and social-media aptitudes that are not normally associated with the military action.

Our application of UW information management must understand what sociologist Manuel Costells calls the shift from the age of mass communication to the age of mass *self*-communication.<sup>15</sup> To shape the way people feel, think and behave, UW must consider social media as one would a catastrophic weapon system with no single owner or operator: how is it oriented, what are its targets, who understands its capabilities, how can one influence it, how can I protect myself and how can I leverage it against my adversaries?

Social media has expanded the possibilities for both U.S. and indigenous forces to mobilize, organize, recruit, communicate and network. The traditional resistance organization methods — furtive meetings, clandestine contacts, cellular structures — still have great relevance. However, social media is a proven accelerant, defying historical prognostications for the time required for irregular force information dissemination and organizational action. Previous methodical approaches and linear progressions of UW campaigns can now leverage unthinkably rapid social mediums. Managing this paradigm shift in a UW environment might be less suited for U.S. Cyber Command and better suited for a Special Forces Soldier with a smartphone, a computer and a cadre of a wired, indigenous underground. For SOF, herein lies our challenge: Will the

Special Forces leader who recognizes a decisive but fleeting opportunity, have the command authority, legal authority, the connectivity, the situational awareness and the confidence to risk seizing the initiative through social media?

Future UW campaigns must be designed to anticipate, nurture and capitalize on the multi-sphere concept. As a start, current UW education, training and experimentation venues must widely educate and train our force on borderless social mobilization, the phenomena of digital mass, swarming and the impacts of hyper-accelerated social organization.

## The Decentralized Underground

Successful insurgencies and resistance groups require leadership. In doctrinal UW, the underground is the nucleus of leadership that provides the direction, organization and stewards the strategy for the resistance force. Historically, the underground is a clandestine, cellular structure with adequate hierarchy to synchronize resistance actions. The proliferation of social media has introduced a new type of underground: a digitally connected, leaderless organization with varying levels of commitment to the cause.

The multiple-nation Arab Spring uprisings contained a similar pattern of electronic and physical mass that pre-existed any true unified leadership. In all affected countries, the resistance leadership formed after the initial revolutionary thrusts. To be sure, pockets of leadership did exist prior to revolutionary actions. However, these leaderless revolutions witnessed aspiring leaders scrambling behind the leading edge of the revolution, reacting and attempting to build organizational cohesion and primacy in the midst of upheaval.

Ori Bronfman and Rod A. Beckstrom describe the emergence of leaderless organizations in *The Spider and The Starfish: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations*.<sup>16</sup> The authors explain how decentralized organizations survive, thrive and, often, dominate. The first principle is "when attacked, a decentralized organization tends to become even more open and decentralized."<sup>17</sup> This principle aptly describes the behavior of nearly all 2011's North African and Middle Eastern web-inspired insurrections.

Examined against UW doctrine, the leaderless Arab Spring revolutions were

initiated by a previously non-existent, highly decentralized digital underground. Remarkably, these self-forming digital undergrounds performed the exact functions of a traditionally organized underground: intelligence, counterintelligence, subversion, propaganda, control of networks and direction of tactical actions. The digital underground has additional characteristics evolving in the media age: redundancy, distributed leadership and the ability to survive by mutation.

As witnessed in 2011, these digital undergrounds can morph into highly visible “overgrounds.” Publicity, transparency and mass

posted content, analyzing and potentially influencing the social-media indicators and resulting behavioral outcomes. The social-media common-operating picture will track and display Facebook feeds, Twitter posts, citizen-posted reports, YouTube videos, iReports and critically, their *trends in viewership*. The doctrinal decision-support matrix might contain actions to be taken when social-media tripwires are sprung. Battle drills might contend with flash mobs (creating or preventing), technology denial or patching detours around state-sponsored Internet censors.<sup>18</sup>

Both the military-style field leaders and the digital catalysts constitute insurgent leadership. While both play a factor, it is people who topple regimes, not cellular phones. SF should be prepared to effectively support both the decentralized digital insurgents and our traditional partners, the armed guerrilla leader. Success in future UW campaigns will likely blend the understanding of social networking with the application of SF advisers and U.S. joint firepower in support of a resistance movement or insurgency.

We must understand the nature of leaderless organizations and calculate how distrib-

“To shape the way people feel, think and behave, UW must consider social media as one would a catastrophic weapon system with no single owner or operator.”

communication become their salient features. The revolutionary strength of a decentralized digital underground lies not in secrecy but publicity, signifying a complete reversal of the UW doctrinal template for undergrounds.

U.S. UW practice may have to contend with powerful “leaderless” forces impacting the operational environment. Working with resistance forces is already inherently nuanced and often chaotic. Future UW outcomes will hinge on skillfully channeling the chaos inherent in both the digital and physical domains and rapidly adjusting based on cues from each domain. The advent of spontaneously organized, leaderless resistance movements could be highly advantageous or unpredictability damaging. The challenge may lie less in the application of force, and more in understanding the nature of the resistance and anticipating how and when to sequence digital and physical actions needed to retain the initiative.

Battle tracking or more accurately — social tracking - the sentiment of these social forces and influencing their behaviors, will be a critical function of the U.S. UW headquarters. Future UW campaigns may require sophisticated “social-media operation centers” that track web- and cellphone-

Political campaigns already use similar tactics — all open source — to engage, in real time, by keeping a Twitter stream open to instantly understand how their candidates’ messages and exchanges are viewed.<sup>19</sup> Twitter provides instant feedback on how messages or actions are resonating. Political campaigns are increasingly skilled in enhancing a positive message or deflecting a negative outcome. The interpretations of the Twitter community can be more important than the candidate’s actual words or intent — this interpretation is seldom left to chance in the political arena and arguably it should never be left to chance during an UW action.

In future UW campaigns, we will have to recognize all forms of leadership, especially those that challenge our preconceived notions. Our prevailing mental images of insurgent leaders are the muddy-boots field leaders like Ernesto “Che” Guevara in the Bolivian jungles or the intrepid Afghan horsemen of the Northern Alliance. Our view of insurgent leadership must expand to the “digital commuter,” starfish-style leaders of the Egyptian revolution who stayed awake for days on end — sitting on their couches — feverishly texting and tweeting until the Mubarak regime capitulated.<sup>20</sup>

uted leadership can support and not cripple, the U.S.-sponsored resistance group. Social media has radically changed the mechanics of how communication affects social organization. We must educate and train ourselves to recognize and interact with these nontraditional forms of leadership and power.

## Weapon of the Narrative

Social media, wireless Internet, cellular phones and associated liberation technologies<sup>21</sup> are increasingly the predominant methods of transmitting compelling narratives. The Arab Spring, the London riots,<sup>22</sup> the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit<sup>23</sup> episode and most famously, the Occupy movements are examples of the emergence of a visually-oriented, ideologically impulsive Internet culture with the means to rapidly and collectively plan and act.

Electronic narratives are so pervasive that they generate actions before ideologies are considered. Nearly all the Arab Spring insurrections lack ideological cohesion for governing; what they have in common is powerful narratives for dismantling. Social media enabled the proliferation of these powerful narratives, amplifying what cultural anthropologists already know: narratives

in the form of stories, rumors, biographies and pictures drive our behaviors and shape our convictions.

Future UW considerations must ascertain how to compete in a fickle psychological arena in the era of the electronic narrative. Historically, insurgent ideological indoctrinations were slow-boiling, methodical processes in which narratives were used for the “hook,” and ideological indoctrination followed. The methods of Mao Zedong and other communist insurgent methodologies employed compelling, emotive narratives to recruit supporters. Only after these narratives mobilized recruits would the communist political indoctrination be introduced. Following the political indoctrination, one could then be trained as a true guerrilla.

With greater emphasis on building a narrative and less on ideology, social media offers an alternative to the historical, linear progression of developing a resistance storyline. This shift is incidental and accidental; a byproduct of our digitized world. Social-media content — personal, citizen-centric, picture-rich, story-filled — promotes personal narratives in greater volume and frequency, resulting in the increasing centrality of personal chronicles that demote the importance of ideologies.

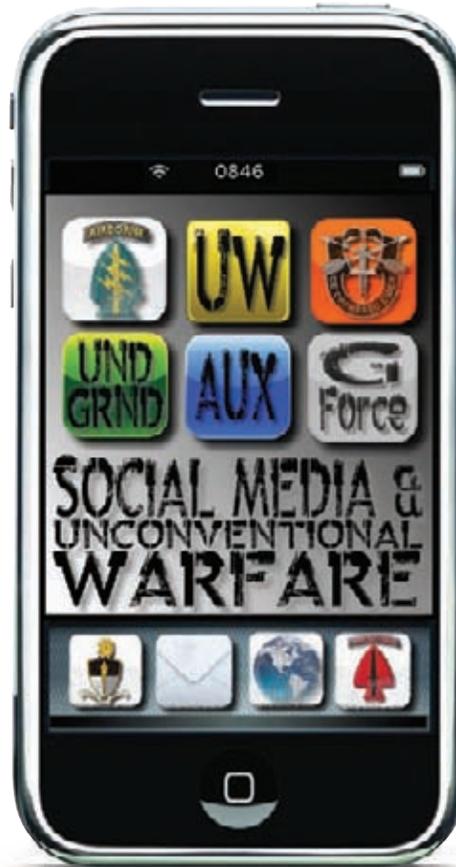
Social media proliferates information so quickly and broadly that the narratives replace ideology, at least temporarily. Whether it is narratives or ideologies that generate momentum, the psychological aspects of UW in the digital age require reviewing the agility of our methods of supporting insurgents, surrogates or resistance groups.

At its essence, UW is a method of psychological warfare. The merger of social media and UW is a natural progression. The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School was originally named the Psychological Warfare Center because of the inherent nature of special-operations forces and their emphasis on indirect, nonstandard methods.

Importantly, UW is a method for coercing and disrupting not just overthrowing. Coercion and disruption are psychological-influence methods used against our adversaries, where the objective is not to overthrow a regime but to achieve a more limited goal: creating a second front, supporting a decep-

tion operation, pressuring for peace or discrediting a regime’s ability to provide security.

Within UW, social media could prove to be a tool for persuading neutral populations to support an embryonic effort. A polarizing video, post or message could create favorable conditions for a UW campaign. Conversely,



**NO BOUNDRIES** Human connections have moved beyond the traditional face-to-face and social media must be leveraged in UW operations in order to keep pace with the environment. Graphic by Jodi Breckenridge Pettit

a detrimental posting could go viral, spreading negative perceptions that could erect unforeseen obstacles or foil well-sequenced actions. Future UW endeavors — even those in remote areas with little connectivity — remain subject to the perceptions created by citizen-generated information.

A UW campaign could be sequenced with psychological and social lines of effort as the principle “means” of delivery. Tactical actions would be planned and executed based on anticipating, shaping and exploiting social and psychological conditions. For example, the digital lines of operation could be *monitoring* (understanding), *post-*

*ing* (shaping), *denying* (blocking), *spreading* (pushing coverage), *swarming* (mass) and *messaging* (tactical or digital actions designed for psychological effect). In the digital domain, tactical actions would be evaluated as those having the most effect, derived from indicators quickly surfacing in social-media venues.

Experimentation is underway in current SF UW exercises to incorporate social media and handheld technologies into campaign planning and tactical execution. For technical analysis and application of social media in today’s operational environment, the Department of Defense Analysis Common Operational Research Lab is conducting real-time analysis on the effects of social media by integrating geospatial, cultural, relational and temporal data tracked, open source, from cellular phone technologies.<sup>24</sup>

As the Arab Spring results and the CORE Lab studies on Egypt<sup>25</sup> have proven, social media is powerful tool for producing the psychological effects necessary for a skilled application of UW. The tradecraft options are unlimited and well beyond the scope of this article. The challenge is maintaining the psychological initiative where everyone — citizens, states, provocateurs, refugees, media, militaries, hackers — has equal access to information and therefore, influence.

Across our education and training domains, the SOF community must recognize that social media and its rapid and effective proliferation of narrative have expanded the boundaries of the UW battleground.

## Conclusion

The future study, practice and successful execution of future UW must deliberately incorporate and account for the highly public sphere of social media. For U.S. SOF engaging in UW, the effective use of social media and the use of handheld technologies is perhaps less about technology training and more about mindset shifts in how we view the boundaries of UW.

To provide the widest range of options to our leaders, SOF must be prepared, rehearsed and comfortable in combining low-technology practices within a high-technology, commercially driven, social-media rich environment.

The classic UW image is of the underground resistance-cell leaders meeting with U.S. advisers, clustered in a dark basement around a crumpled map, secretly organizing and planning their next tactical move. This image, and its low-tech nature, is not passé — it is more valid than ever. UW remains a business of trust, respect and the human connection that is the hallmark of language-trained, regionally-oriented, combat-experienced SF Soldiers. But the traditional image of UW is now incomplete. It has a counterpart image that is equally important: a scattered network of digerati, males and females, urban and rural, local and global, all texting, tweeting, posting and hacking from thousands of locations. Publicity is as paramount to the success of the digerati as is secrecy vital to the success of the traditional underground resistance cell. We must be prepared to operate in the secret and the public domains, simultaneously.

UW campaigns are bold and decisive acts of military and political will. Future campaigns will contend with mature and powerful social-media environments. The Arab Spring merits further analysis of borderless social mobilization, digital undergrounds and the weapon of the narrative. Refreshing the theories, education, training, authorities and experimentation of UW will serve us well when our nation calls and our best option is — once again — UW. **SW**

*Lt. Col. (P) Brian Petit is the Director of the Special Operations Forces Leader Development and Education at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Social networking and unconventional warfare are analyzed in the Advanced Unconventional Warfare Elective, A576, required for all SOF officers attending the Intermediate Level Education. Lt. Col. (P) Petit has commanded Special Forces units at the detachment, company and battalion level. He is a veteran of Operation Joint Forge (Bosnia), Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines and Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan.*



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## Notes

1. <http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/101313/20110114/the-story-of-mohamedbouazizi-the-man-who-toppled-tunisia.htm>.
2. Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom, *The Spider and the Starfish: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations*, (Penguin Books, 2006).
3. American abolitionist Wendell Phillips (1811-1884). This quote was taken from Theda Skocpol, “*Social Revolutions in the Modern World*,” (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 241.
4. Department of the Army Training Circular No. 18-01, *Special Forces Unconventional Warfare*, (Washington D.C.; US Government Printing Office, 28 January 2011; distribution restriction), 1-1.
5. Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan was initiated with a doctrinal unconventional-warfare campaign, partnering the 5th Special Forces Group and their interagency partners with the Northern Alliance resistance forces. The northern front of Operation Iraqi Freedom was also a doctrinal unconventional-warfare operation, pairing the 10th Special Forces Group with the Iraqi Kurdish Forces.
6. Support to Libya has components of indirect support and direct support, less ground combat roles. The acknowledged use of US and NATO airpower is direct support to a resistance force and could well be considered doctrinal combat support.
7. “Limited intervention” is a US Army doctrinal term (not a joint term). US Army Doctrine, Field Manual 3.0 *Operations* (Washington D.C., US Government Printing). Limited intervention is not included in the new Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 3-0, 2011.
8. John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt have well-developed theories on swarming dating back to *In Athena’s Camp* (1997), *Networks and Netwars* (2001).
9. Arquilla and Ronfeldt, *Swarming and the Future of Conflict* (RAND, Santa Monica, CA, December 2, 2010). This excellent study examines the possibilities of adopting swarming as a doctrinal technique for US Forces.
10. CBS News, February 12, 2011, posted on <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/02/12/eveningnews/main20031662.shtml>.
11. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/video/2011/feb/08/egypt-activist-wael-ghonim-google-video>
12. <http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk>
13. Traditional organizational methods include clandestine organization methods used by undergrounds to establish leaders, organizational goals and tactical actions.
14. Remarks made by Admiral Eric Olson, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, January 2009 at the NDIA-SOLIC conference, Washington, D.C. The author of this article was present for this speech.
15. Manuel Costells, *Communication Power*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 2009).
16. Brafman and Beckstrom.
17. *Ibid*, 21.
18. James Glantz and John Markoff, “U.S. underwrites internet detour around censors,” *The New York Times*, June 12, 2011, 1.
19. Ashley Parker, “In Nonstop Whirlwind of G.O.P. Campaigns, Twitter is a Critical Tool,” *The New York Times*, January 29, 2012, 15.
20. For Egypt, the story of the #25Jan hashtag illustrates the power of a 22-year old female in disseminating information rapidly.
21. Glantz and Markoff, 1. The term “liberation technology” broadly refers to communication networks and supporting technologies that provide regional and global connectivity that bypass state-sponsored restrictions or enable technologically underdeveloped regions.
22. The London riots occurred between August 6 and 10, 2011, following a public protest organized around the fatal shooting of a British citizen by law-enforcement officers. Outside of traditional media outlets, much of the reporting occurred on social media outlets, both informing the public and shaping the events themselves.
23. The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) incident in August 2011 included local officials shutting down cellular phone service to thwart protesters from organizing via handheld technologies. The incident provoked wide public discussion on the role of law enforcement in limiting access to technologies that could cause potentially be used to cause harm to the public or damage property.
24. The CORE Lab at the Naval Postgraduate School “was established in 2007 with the mission to support U.S. and International field operatives in the analytical craft of integrating geospatial, cultural, relational and temporal data in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the Irregular Warfare environment.” COL Greg Wilson and Dr. Sean Everton are the co-directors of the CORE Lab. In addition to real time analysis, the CORE Lab instructs NPS students on how to apply advanced analytical methods for current conflicts. Reference CORE Lab pamphlet and author’s visit to NPS in September 2011.
25. The CORE Lab conducted an analysis of the hashtag referenced in footnote 18 (#25Jan hashtag) using open source data. This type of analysis provides invaluable information in mapping networks, network nodes, deception attempts, and social data relevant to understanding and visualizing a rapidly changing environment.



**BIRDS-EYE VIEW** Brig. Gen. Tovo, SOCCENT commander, conducts a tour of Southern Lebanon with BG. Tlais, the LAF South Litani Sector commander. U.S. Army photo

## SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND (FORWARD) – LEBANON SOF CAMPAIGNING “LEFT OF THE LINE”

BY COLONEL JACK J. JENSEN

**The SOC FWD Mission:** The SOC Forward’s mission is to shape and coordinate special-operations forces security cooperation and engagement in support of theater special-operations command, geographic combatant command and country team goals and objectives. The SOC Forward commander also exercises tactical control of deployed SOF in the respective country for the TSOC commander, who has operational control. The SOC Forward also serves as the TSOC commander’s eyes and ears in country to ensure that the SOF engagement strategy adapts to exploit opportunities in a dynamic 21st century geo-political and threat environment. To perform these functions, the SOC Forward must develop a close working relationship with members of the country team, the TSOC staff and partnership armed forces. The SOC FWD, which in the case of Lebanon is currently a three-man C2 node, relies on reach-back staff and logistical support from the TSOC. The Special Operations Command Central J33-Levant Operational Planning Team, for example, conducts planning, programming and coordinating support for SOC FWD Lebanon.

Although not formally a country team member under chief-of-mission authority, the SOF O6 SOC FWD commander is afforded a seat at the invitation of the ambassador at weekly country-team meetings and other country team director-level venues. Therefore, through placement of a SOF O6, the TSOC commander has been able to gain, in practice, a seat on the country team.

**Lebanon Geopolitical Environment:** Since gaining its independence from France on Nov. 22, 1943, Lebanon has been rife with internal instability and a 15-year civil war between Christians, Muslims and Palestinians. The war also provoked Israeli and Syrian intervention resulting in the introduction of multi-national peacekeeping forces. On February 14, 2005, former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated after calling for Syria’s withdrawal from Lebanon. On March 8, 2005, the militant group Hezbollah sponsored massive pro-Syrian demonstrations with hundreds of thousands of participants. In response, a million anti-Syrian protestors rallied on March 14 — a month after Hariri’s death — igniting the Cedar Revolution



**LIVE FIRE** Lebanese Air Assault Regiment troops conduct combined arms live-fire exercise. U.S. Army photo

that led Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon on April 26, 2005 after 29 years of occupation. In the summer of 2006, the 34-day war between Hezbollah paramilitary forces in southern Lebanon and the Israeli military was terminated by UN Security Council Resolution 1701 calling for withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon and a commitment from the Government of Lebanon to extend its authority over its territory through its legitimate armed forces with assistance from an enlarged UN Interim Force in Lebanon. Since the 2006 war, the LAF deployed three brigades to take control of Southern Lebanon and enforce the provisions of UNSCR 1701 with the assistance of UNIFIL. In addition, U.S. security-assistance has helped the LAF to improve its overall professionalism and capabilities. Despite these efforts, the LAF continues to suffer from significant capability shortfalls. Following the 2007 “Nahr Al Bared” Palestinian camp conflict, U.S. support to the Lebanese Special Forces units led by SOCCENT through its persistent SOC FWD and episodic joint-combined exercise training and counterterrorism engagements, has greatly improved these units’ ability to counter terrorists and other sources of instability within Lebanon.

Since the advent of a pro-Hezbollah “March 8” coalition government in the summer of 2011, U.S. security cooperation with the LAF has been under review by policymakers and plans are underway to adapt our security assistance toward the LAF’s implementation of UNSCR 1701 and controlling of Lebanon’s borders.

## US SOF Engagement:

While SOCCENT/SOC FWD-Lebanon’s strategy for U.S. SOF engagement in Lebanon continues to focus on the counterterror-

ism line of effort with Lebanese SOF units, a second LOE is being developed to leverage LSOF trainers to improve the LAF’s ability to implement UNSCR 1701. This LOE involves U.S. SOF assistance to the Lebanese Special Forces School to develop professional LSOF trainers who will be deployed as mobile training teams to train other LAF units, especially in Southern Lebanon. In addition, Civil Affairs and Military Information Support efforts coordinated by the civil-military support element and Military Information Support teams will be utilized to bolster the LAF’s predominance throughout Lebanon.

The recent U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Staff Assistance Visit from Sept. 18-30, 2011, was an important first step toward establishing U.S. assistance to the Lebanese Special Forces School. A continuation of this effort through future SAVs/subject-matter expert engagements will be critical to supporting both LOEs by developing capable LSOF instructors and an enduring professionalization

of the force. In addition, training engagements conducted by SEAL platoons and SF operational detachments will assist with developing cadre for the LSOF Mobile Training Teams.

## Conclusion

The shortcomings in LAF performance related to enforcement of the UN Security Council Resolutions primarily stem from capabilities shortfalls caused by a lack of modernization during the 29 years of Syrian occupation. The threat of impacts from instability in Syria, potential for Palestinian extremist unrest, the lack of a political mandate from the Lebanese government to disarm Hezbollah and threat of a provocation of Israeli military action against Hezbollah are the primary security challenges for Lebanon — and quite possibly the region. SOCCENT’s engagement strategy in Lebanon will help address all three by building capable LSOF CT forces, developing professional LSOF trainers and bolstering the LAF’s preeminence throughout Lebanon as a professional and capable armed force. **SW**

*Col. Jack Jensen is the SOC FWD commander in Lebanon. Previous assignments include: commander, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), Fort Bragg, N.C., 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and in CJSOTF assignments with the 3rd and 5th SF groups in Afghanistan and Iraq. He is a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, Naval Post Graduate School, and Industrial College of the Armed Forces at the National Defense University.*



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# OPERATIONALIZING STRATEGIC POLICY IN LEBANON

BY MAJOR MICHAEL FOOTE



The current strategy for success in Lebanon is built around two lines of effort: Increasing counterterrorism capacity within the Lebanese Armed Forces and direct support of UN Security Council Resolution 1701.<sup>1</sup> Each of these lines of effort is focused directly at the desired strategic end state of help building capacity in the Lebanese government so that it is viewed by the international community as legitimate and stable, and in possession of a military that is strong enough to eliminate any internal threats and to deny the necessity or presence of any internal militias or resistance forces to counter perceived external threats.

Achieving the above end state is not as simple as training the LAF to a predetermined level of military prowess. Once the military reaches that level, the government could call for the disarmament of all internal resistance movements; however, the regional turmoil surrounding Lebanon does not make that possible.

Despite the turmoil in the region, Special Operation Command Central has found and embraced a long-term regional partner force in the Lebanese Special Operations Forces. With these forces lies the cornerstone for increas-

ing the overall CT capacity of the LAF. LSOF elements have been the focus of U.S. foreign-internal defense missions in the form of joint combined exercises for training and counter-narcoterrorism operations for years. These missions have provided training and infrastructure improvements to the LSOF that have resulted in LSOF's designation as the Lebanese national strategic reserve. LSOF is the perfect partner force for U.S. Special Forces.

Recently, the process to create and utilize LSOF training teams to increase the capabilities of the conventional LAF forces to provide direct support for UNSCR 1701 has been implemented. AOB 5310, of the 5th Special Forces Group, was the first company-level U.S. Special Forces headquarters to deploy to Lebanon to provide mission command to its own Special Forces operational detachments. It was also charged with the conduct of a program of instruction based on the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School's Instructor Training Course to members of the various LSOF units who had been selected as the first LTTs tasked to train the conventional LAF brigades in Southern Lebanon. It is within these training teams that U.S. SF are

creating a capability with the potential to further the strategic plan in Lebanon.

## The Environment

The LAF is constantly forced to react to actions and provocations from internal and external threats. Syria lies to the north and east where members of the Free Syrian Army cross the border into Lebanon for supplies and medical assistance forcing the LAF to expend resources internally as well as focus on security along these borders. The Syrian border creates an additional challenge because the LAF must be light and agile enough to counter guerrillas and bandits, but strong enough to counter a potential conventional threat from the Syrian Government's forces. Within its borders, the Lebanese must also deal with a large Palestinian population contained within 11 refugee camps scattered across the country and the extremists who hide within them. Israel lies to the south providing an extremely proficient conventional enemy who constantly probes the border testing the Lebanese response and the response of Hezbollah.

Hezbollah is not merely a threat to the stability of Lebanon because of its focus on



**RAPPORT BUILDING** Lebanese troops train with their counterparts from the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne). U.S. Army photo

the destruction of Israel through violent means. It is an organization that has a strong support base among a large segment of the local population and because of this they have gained a significant amount of legal power within the various pillars of the Lebanese legislative architecture. Utilizing this legal influence to its benefit, Hezbollah portrays its militias as a resistance force required for the safety of the Lebanese people against the Israeli aggressors.<sup>2</sup> To counter this effect and message, it is imperative that the LAF become tactically and operationally more proficient than Hezbollah's resistance in order to mitigate the idea of the necessity of a resistance for national security.

The LAF's constant struggle against each of these threats creates an immense shortfall on unit readiness and training. While the LSOF units have the luxury of waiting in reserve with time and resources to train their soldiers for specific mission sets (not to mention the training and resources provided it through JCETs and CNTs), the conventional LAF continues to be handicapped by a lack of training time, funding and modernization. It is this handicap that the LTTs are designed to mitigate.

## Description of LSOF

**Lebanese Ranger Regiment.** The Lebanese Ranger Regiment has a long and proud

history within the LAF. Originally established in 1966, it served as the elite guard of Lebanon. Following the civil war, the regiment was reestablished in 1984 and has had a significant impact on nearly every other LSOF organization in service today. The successes of the Lebanese Rangers led to the establishment of the LAF's own Ranger School in 1990. The red beret of the regiment is a great source of pride across the country.

The Ranger Regiment is built around five mechanized-infantry companies, three mountain companies and an armor company, all of which are sustained logistically by a support company and a service and support company. The regiment's primary mission is to serve as the national-strategic reserve. Being prepared for the numerous and varied missions that the regiment could potentially be called on to react to, requires the leadership to provide significant training to the Rangers who fill the ranks. Rangers are trained in small-unit tactics, medical training, mountain training, rappelling and demolition. The Lebanese Ranger Regiment's prowess is visible in its success across a wide spectrum of operations including actions against Israeli aggression in 2006, combat against Palestinian extremists at the Nahr El Bared refugee camp in 2007 and internal-security operations that ensure legitimate elections in Lebanon.

## Lebanese Air Assault Regiment.

Founded in 1992, the Air Assault Regiment is tasked with serving as the strategic mobile-reserve force for Lebanon. Its forces can conduct reconnaissance missions, raids, ambushes, long-range patrols and search and rescue operations. The regiment most recently participated in the battle at Nahr El Bared against Fatah al Islam in May 2007.

The Air Assault Regiment consists of five combat companies, one armored company, an artillery battery and a support company. The regiment's ranks are filled by soldiers who have completed the three-month Ranger Course and the Air Assault Course. Soldiers also receive specialized training on urban combat, demolitions, sniper marksmanship, medic course, rappelling and reconnaissance.

**Lebanese Marine Commandos.** Also known as the Lebanese Navy SEALs, the Marine Commandos were founded in 1997 to provide Lebanon with a maritime special-operations capability. Their training is based around the same small-unit tactics, close-quarter battle drills and advanced-combat skills on which the other LSOF focus. Additionally, the Lebanese SEALs are trained in combat-dive operations, underwater demolition, maritime CT and watercraft interdiction. The Marine Commandos provide a critical asset to the LAF in its defense of more than 200 kilometers of the Mediterranean coastline.

## Creating the LTTs

Over time, the need to bolster support for UNSCR 1701 has become increasingly apparent. To achieve the goals of the UNSCR, a plan was devised to create training teams from the ranks of each of the LSOF brigades with the mission of providing training focused on improving the conventional LAF brigades stationed in the south. These LTTs would work with the Lebanese Special Forces School and the LAF G3 for training and doctrine to ensure the commands providing the LTTs and the commands receiving their training understand the importance of this task. Implementation of this plan would occur in two phases: create and train the LTTs and advise and assist them in their mission.

Creating instructors is never a simple or quick task. During October and November 2011, ODAs 5321, 5324 and 5325, of the 5th

Special Forces Group, and a SEAL platoon conducted JCETs with the LSOF brigades. Each of the detachments was tasked to work with their partner force's leadership to identify soldiers with the skill, talent, experience and ability required to be an instructor. Each LSOF brigade was to provide 12 soldiers—two officers and 10 noncommissioned officers — to fill the role of the LTT. It was key during this time to gain the support of the LSOF commanders. Without LAF command support, the LTTs would never receive the caliber of personnel needed to effectively conduct this mission.

No commander wants to give up his most talented soldiers to provide training for another unit. We see this within our own Special Forces groups as the “best of the best” are chosen for instructor duty at SWCS. General Jean Kahwaji, commander of the LAF, understood the frustrations shared by the LSOF commanders, but conveyed to them the importance of utilizing the talents and strengths of the LSOF to increase the capacities of the LAF overall and by December the LTT personnel had been identified.

AOB 5310 arrived at the Lebanese Special Forces School in January 2012 with the mission of training the personnel selected to fill the ranks of the LTTs. The program of instruction was based on the ITC taught at SWCS. Focused on creating instructors, the POI utilized small-unit tactics as the vehicle to demonstrate the various methods of instruction to the students and evaluate the students' abilities to both conduct the tasks at hand and teach those tasks to others. Another goal of the AOB was to ensure the LTTs departed the Special Forces School with their own LAF-approved POI designed specifically for the training of the LAF conventional brigades in the south.

The advise and assist portion of the LTT plan will begin in April 2012. Members of the Asymmetric Warfare Group will deploy into the Litani Sector of South Lebanon to advise and assist the LTTs in their training of the conventional brigades deployed in support of UNSCR 1701. Each LTT will split into two components of one officer and five NCOs. These LTTs will then provide a 10-day POI to a single platoon of their assigned conventional brigade. This will then be repeated with

## AWG Training Advisory Assistance in support of SOC Forward-Lebanon

The greatest threat to peace and stability in Southern Lebanon is the provocation of Israel by a terrorist rocket attack from Lebanese soil. This was a common occurrence before and during the 2006 war, and preventing these attacks is a key element of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended that conflict. The element responsible for maintaining security and preventing these provocations is the conventional Lebanese Armed Forces brigades in the South Litani Sector of Lebanon. The U.S. supports the full implementation of UNSCR 1701; and to that end the Special Operation Command (Forward) Lebanon has instituted a Lebanese Instructor Training Course<sup>1</sup> conducted by AOB 5310 of the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne). The course is training members of the Lebanese Special Operations Forces to deploy to the south to conduct a training course for LAF platoons, and to increase their capability and capacity to support UNSCR 1701.

### But What to Train On?

The LSOF regiments and their conventional LAF brigade counterparts have different missions, operations and geographical focus. The LSOF are the national-mission force, held in reserve and focused on threats or responding to significant events from their headquarters in predominantly Christian sections of Lebanon. Their SLS Brigade counterparts are geographically focused on maintaining legitimate Lebanese Government control of the area south of the Litani River, historically a Hezbollah-dominated operational environment, and preventing terrorist activities. Rarely do the two meet, and when they do, it is usually during operational deployments.

Key to the success of the training is to create a relevant and credible instructor program. A relevant and credible instructor-training program then becomes a medium to increase interoperability between LSOF and LAF. It is a powerful first step in building the synergy of SOF to conventional army interoperability that the U.S. special-operations forces and U.S. conventional forces have learned over a decade of war. It also demonstrates to the people of southern Lebanon and the terrorists that the LSOF are supporting their conventional brothers and sisters.

Realizing the LSOF have limited experience in the SLS, the U.S. government has limited access and the ITC training dates were set, the SFL commander requested an operational advisory team from the Asymmetric Warfare Group to deploy to Lebanon in support of AOB 5310 to conduct a training-needs assessment of the SLS Brigades. The intent of the assessment was to identify and ensure that the training was relevant to the conventional-brigades needs, but would also meet the strategic goals of the U.S. government.

The AWG has experience advising U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and global experience supporting theater special-operations commands operating in Uganda, Bangladesh, Colombia and Mali on similar mission sets in complex environments. AWG's ability to deploy globally as a no-cost resource, with short notice is mission-enhancing to TSOCs and Special Forces groups. AWG teams can conduct similar training assessments prior to, or between JCET/CNTs and theater-security cooperation exercises, which provides an additional capability to maintain continual engagement with host-nation forces.

This assessment team spent four days living with the LAF of the SLS and observed operations in all three brigade operational environments along the UN Interim Force in Lebanon which operates along the border of Israel. This allowed the team to identify tactical-level observations and integrate recommendations to AOB 5310 to enhance the relevancy and credibility of the ITC to both the LSOF trainers and their future LAF students. Upon completion of AOB 5310's ITC, the AWG team will deploy to the South Litani Sector with the LSOF instructors to advise and assist them as they train their conventional LAF counterparts to better implement UNSCR 1701.

### Conclusion

The tactical-level efforts by AOB 5310's ITC will have operational and strategic affects within Lebanon. Operationally, it increases SOF to army interoperability and sends an important message in the Hezbollah-dominated environment of south Lebanon. Strategically, it increases the LAF's capability and capacity to support UNSCR 1701 and increases regional stability.

*By Cmd. Sgt. Major Michael Cortes and Maj. Chris Kuzio, Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), Team Lebanon.*



**OPEN RANGE** Lebanese soldiers train to teach their conventional counterparts. U.S. Army photo

the other half of the LTT and a new platoon. With this rotation, the LTTs will train a total of six Lebanese platoons each month providing the conventional brigades with improved skills in a critical sector of the region.

### The Long Term Gains

It is important to understand that the seemingly elementary successes of creating and employing the small LTTs are critical steps towards future strategic success in Lebanon. UNSCR 1701 states, “There will be no weapons without the consent of the Government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the Lebanese state.”<sup>3</sup> Yet, Hezbollah has tens of thousands of rockets and an arms budget that provides weapons beyond the fiscal reach of some nation-states. The power Hezbollah wields in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley comes from the direct support of Lebanon’s Shia Muslims. It is allowed to exist as an armed resistance force because of the perception that the LAF is not capable of defending Lebanon against Israel and other regional foes. Making the LAF more capable in the very regions where the fear is strongest is what gives the LTTs the potential to create a positive strategic effect.

While LSOF are the elite units of Lebanon, they are only called to action in response to, or in preparation for, a crisis. This

mitigates their familiarity with the environment and denies them a direct relationship with the population. Success in the Litani Sector requires a constant and consistent presence that will only come from spending time on the ground and with the people of the region. The LAF brigades have filled this role since 2006 and the LTTs will provide them additional capabilities to provide increased stability to southern Lebanon.

An increase in LAF capabilities must also be tied to an information operation focused on gaining influence within the population. The LAF is seen across the country as the sole non-sectarian entity and is held in high esteem throughout the Lebanese population. Promoting this organization as the primary guarantor of both internal and external security will mitigate the need for any resistance or militia forces. The conventional capabilities of the LAF and the CT capabilities of the LSOF should be highlighted for these same reasons. Civil-military assistance in areas of Hezbollah control and influence could also be utilized, however, great care must be taken to ensure the LAF’s goals and desires are tied into these projects so they are not wasted or even counterproductive. Information operations will be critical. Each message must be clear and focused because most of the target audience will have spent their entire lives actively supporting Hezbollah,

doubting the power of the Lebanese Government, and preparing to fight against Israel.

LTTs and their advisers will be able to increase the effectiveness of all portions of a counterresistance plan. Increased time on the ground will provide opportunities to learn about the population’s desires, needs and grievances. These opportunities will create the potential to illuminate the resistance and other terror networks for LSOF to conduct actions against. They will also allow for feedback from the IO plan to ensure the desired target audience is interpreting the desired message in the desired manner. Implementing each of the various portions of the LOEs from CT to IO to LTTs in a synchronized and cohesive manner will allow the Government of Lebanon to leverage the population’s support towards the Government of Lebanon and away from Hezbollah. **SW**



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*Major Michael Foote is currently serving as commander of A Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He previously commanded two SFODAs and served as battalion operations officer within 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne).*

### Notes

1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 was approved on 11 August 2006. The resolution was intended to resolve the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese conflict and resulted in a ceasefire that began on 14 August 2006. Focused not simply on ending the hostilities of 2006, UNSCR 1701 provides a potential roadmap to lasting peace in Lebanon by emphasizing the disarmament of all armed groups within Lebanon, the deployment of 15,000 LAF soldiers below the Blue Line, a UNIFIL force of no more than 15,000 to assist the LAF forces in that region, and the limitation of weapons to the armed forces of the Lebanese Government.
2. Pamphlet from the Government of Lebanon, “Our Army and the Youth...When the Nation Calls,” distributed for the 68th Anniversary of Independence, 22 November 2011.
3. United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1701 (New York: 2006), 2, [https://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/465/03/PDF/N0646553.pdf](https://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/465/03/PDF/N0646553.pdf?OpenElement). OpenElement (accessed 2 February 2012).
4. *World Tribune*. “Israeli Intel: 40,000 missiles, rockets in Lebanon,” July 11, 2008. [http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2008/me\\_israel0321\\_07\\_11.asp](http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2008/me_israel0321_07_11.asp) (accessed 2 February 2011).

## ACTIVE DUTY

### Forth-quarter selection-board schedule

DATE	BOARD
05 June 2012	Colonel Promotion
14 August 2012	ROTC PMS
20 August 2012	Army Reserve Colonel Command
05 September 2012	Lt. Col. Maneuver Fires and Effects Command/ Senior Service College

## OFFICER

### Human Resources Command

The Headquarters Active Component Manning Guidance for Fiscal Year 2011 has been extended through the remainder of FY 12. This guidance is still deployment/latest arrival date driven with our constrained officer populations and establishes active-component manning priorities, manning goals and responsibilities at all levels for the accomplishment of these goals by breaking up our force pool into the following categories: deployers, priority mission units and units falling in a non-prioritized category called rest of the Army.

#### What officers need to know based off of this guidance?

##### Mission requirements vs. authorizations

- Branch fills mission requirements, not authorizations
- There are more requirements than officers available to move
- HRC operations, not branch prioritizes requirements
- The number of officers available to move determines fill
  - Key & developmental complete vs. non-key & developmental complete
  - Dwell restricted vs. non-dwell restricted

##### Officer manning cycles

- Three distribution cycles per year for the active component; one major-manning cycle (second quarter of the fiscal year) for active Guard and reserve with a review of status and adjustment in the fourth quarter
- HRC conducts distribution only 6 to 7 months out (this is why branch cannot say exactly what positions will be available a year out)

**Leaders:** Mentoring officers in your unit on assignment possibilities is extremely important. The Army is changing quickly. Promotion rates, the number of combat deployments, the loss of temporary end-strength increase and officer grade-plate reduction will impact career progression of the Army officer corps. That is why we continue to stress sustained outstanding performance over an officer's entire timeline, not just certain jobs, is key. Bottom line: Junior officers must understand that their path to success will not necessarily look like their mentor's and that the opportunities for broadening assignments at the captain and major levels are few.

### Promotion Selection Boards

Since 9/11, the officer promotion-management system has experienced promotion selection rates higher than the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act recommendations. This resulted in higher selection rates, which has created larger year groups. An example of this was the FY11 Colonel Promotion Selection Board. The promotion zone year group contained 151 more officers than the promotion zone year group for the FY10 Colonel Promotion Selection Board. As a result, when the prescribed DOPMA selection rate was applied vice the higher post-September 11 selection rates, a large number of qualified officers were not selected for promotion.

Bottom line is the quality of an officer's file is important; having a good Department of the Army photo, making sure your officer record brief is current, accurate and well written evaluations are critical. Leaders actively managing their personnel and quantifying performance and potential on OERs is more important than ever to ensure the best qualified officers are identified for promotion and school selection.

## CIVIL AFFAIRS

### Civil Affairs Skill Identifier

The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School is the proponent for 11 Civil Affairs skill identifiers. These 11 skill identifiers are awarded to officers with a technical expertise normally acquired through civilian education or work experience.

- 5Y Civil Defense Officer
- 6C Economist
- 6D Public Education Officer
- 6E Civil Supply Officer
- 6F Public Transportation Officer
- 6G Public Facilities Officer
- 6H Public Safety Officer
- 6R Public Communication Officer
- 6U Agricultural Officer
- 6V Cultural Affairs Officer
- 6W Archivist

These functional specialties trace their lineage to World War II, when Lt. Gen. A. E. Grasset, a Canadian-born member of the Royal Engineers served as the J5 on the Supreme Allied Headquarters Expeditionary Force staff. Accompanied by a representative of the government in exile, these specialists would reconstitute civil administration so that local resources in manpower and in strategic material would be used to further military operations. (FM 27-5 *Military Government and Civil Affairs*, 22 December, 1943).

Officers who possess these skill identifiers typically align within the six Civil Affairs functional specialty areas. Functional specialty areas support U.S. government efforts to assist partner governments in the fields of rule of law, economic stability, infrastructure, governance, public health and welfare, public education and information. (Refer to FM 3-57 *Civil Affairs Operations*, Chapter 2 for further reading on functional specialty areas).

Award of skill identifiers is open to any commissioned officer, regardless of branch or component. Refer to Smartbook DA PAM 611-21 *Military Occupational Classification and Structure Table* Chapter 4 (<https://smartbook.armyg1.pentagon.mil>) to review the prerequisites for each identifier. Applicants who seek award of one of these skill identifiers should send supporting documents to [swcscapersonnel@ahqb.soc.mil](mailto:swcscapersonnel@ahqb.soc.mil). Once awarded by the proponent, notification is sent to Human Resources Command and the petitioning officer.

## NUTRITION: The Building Block for Performance

BY CHRISTI M. LOGAN

Many special-operations Soldiers report high optempos, frequent travel and busy home schedules as their primary reasons for choosing fast foods or processed foods. When choosing these options, many operators are focused on getting adequate carbohydrates and protein and are willing to overlook the higher fat content because they have a higher energy need.

What most of them misunderstand, however, is that it is not the high-fat content or additional calories consumed but the *type* of fat consumed that is the primary concern. Foods high in saturated and trans fats are performance-inhibiting and result in increased inflammation, poor healing, a weakened immune system, reduced blood flow to the tissues, slowed decision-making and slowed memory and learning. On the other hand, mono-unsaturated and omega-3 fats are performance-enhancing and work on the cellular level to speed wound healing, reduce inflammation, support the immune system, reduce depression and improve blood flow to the tissues. They may even reduce the side effects of traumatic-brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Additionally, after missions and physical-training sessions, the body is hormonally in a breakdown (catabolic) state. That state can be switched to a building-up (anabolic) state with appropriate recovery nutrition that optimizes muscle gains and replaces stores of glycogen. When the consumption of saturated and trans fats is high after missions or training, the breakdown process is made worse, and the building-up phase will be significantly delayed, if it occurs at all. Soldiers do not hesitate to use a variety of physical methods (i.e., foam-rolling, hot-cold plunges or sleep) to mitigate or recover from the negative effects of training, yet they seldom consider how the fats they consume after missions or training might also affect their day-to-day recovery.

The first step in reducing the intake of saturated and trans fat is to use the “nutrition-facts” panel found on food packages and menus. Aim for consuming foods with no more than 1g of saturated and trans fats combined per 100 calories. Be aware that some foods, like protein bars, use saturated and trans fats to improve shelf stability and “mouth feel.” Therefore, be sure to check the label when reaching for bars post-training. Additionally, reduce or avoid the following foods containing high saturated and trans fats: fatty meats, whole-fat dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese), tropical oils (palm, coconut), partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, commercially baked goods (crackers, cookies, cakes, etc.), fried foods (doughnuts, French fries, etc.), shortening, some margarines, bacon, sour cream, cream cheese and butter.

When choosing fats, focus on mono-unsaturated and omega-3 fats, such as

omega-3 fortified eggs, olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil, olives, avocados, nuts, fatty fishes, soybeans, ground flax seeds or flax-seed oil and dark-green leafy vegetables.

Choosing the light, low-fat or fat-free versions of margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressing, sour cream or cream cheese will further minimize the intake of saturated and trans fats.

When possible, choose foods that are yogurt- or olive oil-based, especially for margarines and mayonnaises, to increase mono-unsaturated fats. Another simple trick is to use fat-free, plain Greek yogurt in place of sour cream. Greek yogurt has a thicker consistency, is higher in protein and tastes similar to sour cream, even kids like the substitution. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that all fats are calorically dense, and calories can add up quickly,

so exercise good portion control at all times when using fats in your meal plan. **SW**  
*Christi M. Logan, RD, CSSD, LDN; SWCS THOR3 contract performance dietitian.*

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1 cup (243g)  
Serving Per Container: 4

#### Amount Per Serving

**Calories: 100** Cal from Fat: 14

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 1.5g **2%**

**Saturated Fat** 0.97g **5%**

**Trans Fat** 0g **0%**

**Cholesterol** 12.15mg **4%**

**Sodium** 473.85mg **20%**

**Total Carb** 12.64g **4%**

Sugars 1.39g

Dietary Fiber 1.94g **8%**

**Protein** 8.97g

Vitamin A 28% • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 2% • Iron 0%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

**CHECK THE FACTS** Aim for consuming foods with no more than 1g of saturated fat and trans fat combined per 100 calories.

### QUICK GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE-BASED FAT CHOICES

Instead of:	Choose:
Regular margarine or butter	Light margarines, fat-free spray butter, yogurt or olive oil based spreads
Whole milk or 2 percent milk	Low-fat (1 percent), or fat-free (skim) milk
Vegetable, palm or coconut oil	Olive, canola or peanut oil
Regular salad dressing	Reduced-calorie or fat-free salad dressings, lemon/lime juices or vinegars
Sour cream	Fat-free, plain Greek yogurt
Cream cheese	Nut butters or avocado
Regular mayonnaise	Light/low-fat mayo or light/low-fat olive based mayo

## A COMBAT ADVISOR'S GUIDE TO TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT: HISTORY, LAW AND WAR AS OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

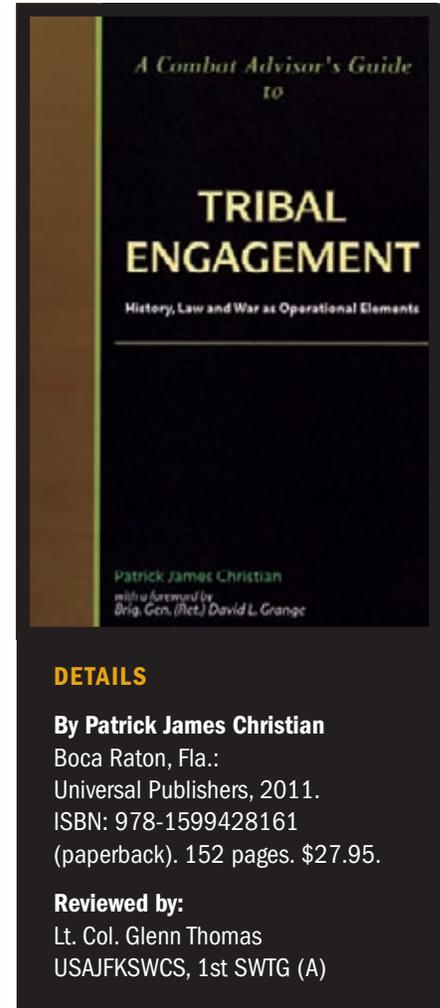
Patrick James Christian is a Special Forces officer who has served as a combat adviser in Ecuador, Colombia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Iraq. In the performance of his advisory duties, he worked with numerous ethnic and tribal parties and through this book he seeks to share his wealth of experience. In his book, *A Combat Advisor's Guide to Tribal Engagement*, Christian aims to prepare others for the challenges of tribal engagement, which he describes as activities "to influence the action, structure and direction of cultural-political entities, normally as part of a larger military or diplomatic campaign plan."

Tribal engagement requires greater investment in individual efforts than in operations centered on large formations. By the time the military is introduced into a region, there are already circumstances where conflict is ongoing or on the verge of outbreak. Additionally, conventional military forces generally prepare to negotiate the legitimacy of an "external" state, while combat advisers generally engage in activities that negotiate the legitimacy of the "internal" state. It is under these circumstances and in this environment that military advisers can expect to operate. The guide stresses the importance of preparations made prior to a deployment, especially in regards to gaining an understanding and appreciation of the geography and population. Christian understands that most military personnel do not possess backgrounds in anthropology, sociology or psychology, but will have to apply approaches used by each of these disciplines in order to be successful in tribal engagement.

In the book, he introduces a framework of "history, law and war" that advisers can use to gain a better understanding and appreciation of a tribal group's motivations. By utilizing this

framework to study and analyze tribal groups, combat advisers can break free from ethnocentric biases that often cloud one's ability to appreciate the context that drives how a particular group acts. As members of the military, advisers generally fixate on mission accomplishment as it relates to a desired endstate. In doing so, combat advisers may not understand the importance of cultural identity that often sets one tribe apart from another and even frictions that exist within a tribe. Christian contends that tribes — like most civil societies — operate along psychological lines centered on competition between an "ingroup" and an "outgroup." Though a relatively simple construct, it is one that is often overlooked by novice advisers who often inject their mission objectives without consideration of unintended consequences. In addition to prescribing individual methodologies to build rapport, often supported by personal accounts, Christian also introduces considerations for tribal-engagement planners. A chapter is dedicated to supporting campaign planners by providing several lists of questions, organized under five strategies, that provide a thorough foundation for background study and analysis for use in developing an overarching campaign plan.

Introduced as a guide for personnel serving as combat advisers or participating in tribal engagement, the book also seeks to educate "the families and friends" of those deployed. In this effort, the book falls short as the book is written in a style that is more aligned with an academic dissertation than a readily accessible guide. Readers with limited military or advisory experience might find the book intimidating; however, to those who view the military as a profession and aspire to increase their understanding of the very reasons why



### DETAILS

**By Patrick James Christian**  
 Boca Raton, Fla.:  
 Universal Publishers, 2011.  
 ISBN: 978-1599428161  
 (paperback). 152 pages. \$27.95.

**Reviewed by:**  
 Lt. Col. Glenn Thomas  
 USAJFKSWCS, 1st SWTG (A)

men rebel, this book provides a solid introduction. Christian, a seasoned Special Forces officer, recognizes that tribal engagement is a growing mission and one that is not solely in the realm of special-operations forces. Throughout the book, readers will find numerous ideas, tactics, techniques and procedures that will greatly reduce the "learning curve" for new practitioners of tribal engagement. He includes personal accounts that provide readers tangible anecdotes for future reference and it is within those stories that the reader is able to separate the practice from the study of tribal engagement. Though the book may intimidate some readers, the premises and ideas presented by Christian are sound and warrant study by current and future practitioners of tribal engagement. **SW**

## PERSONAL OPINION ON U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS

BY COLONEL JOHN M. COLLINS, U.S. ARMY (RETIRED)

### SOF Truths

Many true believers throughout U.S. Special Operations Command have memorized the SOF Truths, the first four of five bullets that I conceived and Congressman Earl Hutto signed in the Foreword to *U.S. and Soviet Special Operations* on April 28, 1987:

- Humans are more important than hardware
- Their quality is more important than quantities
- Special-operations forces cannot be mass-produced
- Competent SOF cannot be created after emergencies occur

When General Stiner sent me on a cook's tour of his subordinate commands in 1993, the first stop was Fort Bragg, N.C., where U.S. Army Special Operations Command commander Lt. Gen. Wayne Downing proudly concluded his formal presentation with a slide that displayed the SOF Truths. He did a double take when I told him "They're wonderful," then said, "I wrote 'em."

If asked to start over from scratch, I would add one word to the fourth bullet so it would read "Competent SOF cannot be created *rapidly* after emergencies occur." Otherwise, I believe they are still solid as bricks, but wish that whoever enshrined the first four had retained Number 5, which says "Most Special Operations require non-SOF assistance." That oversight was a serious mistake in my opinion, because its omission encourages unrealistic expectations by poorly tutored employers and perpetuates a counterproductive "us versus everybody else" attitude by excessively gung-ho members of the SOF community.<sup>1</sup>

### Mission Priorities

Few national security policy-makers in the White House, Pentagon and on Capitol Hill have ever heard of the SOF Truths. Those potentates nevertheless determine which special-operations missions take precedence at given times and places and thereby influence what you and your colleagues here, there and everywhere do every day.

Congressional legislation in 1986 identified 10 primary SOF responsibilities: direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, counterterrorism, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, humanitarian assistance, theater search and rescue and "such other activities as may be specified by the President or the Secretary of Defense," a catch-all category that pertains primarily to the Joint Special Operations Command.

The top dog at MacDill almost immediately altered several of those duties. Strategic reconnaissance became special recon and theater search and rescue became combat search and rescue. A slew of collateral functions that feature counterproliferation, counternarcotics, disaster relief, peacekeeping, security assistance, personnel recovery and coalition warfare soon appeared.

USSOCOM put counterproliferation in the primary category more than a decade ago. I wrote a related Congressional Research Service report after reading Dan Kurzman's book *Blood and Water* book about a raid that successfully sabotaged Hitler's heavy-water plant at Vermark, Norway during World War II. My

treatise first discussed standoff and on-site intelligence collection followed by Options A through F, which addressed blockades, actions to kidnap key technicians, soft kills, confiscation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, destruction of NBC facilities and destruction of delivery vehicles. The wrap-up read this way: "All SOF counterproliferation options are risk-laden and unattractive (some may be infeasible), but inaction could prove worse if enemies use weapons of mass disruption or destruction against crucially important targets. Critics then would clamor, "Why didn't U.S. leaders take steps to prevent a catastrophe?"

Putting the foregoing list of primary and collateral responsibilities in proper priority is a tough task, because requirements tend to flip flop like fish out of water.

Unconventional warfare, commonly called UW, took precedence during World War II, when OSS teams assisted resistance movements in Nazi-occupied France. Detachment 101's Kachin tribesmen never lost a battle in northern Burma. Donald Blackburn, Russell Volckman and Wendell Fertig recruited, trained and led guerrilla bands that gave Japanese invaders fits in the Philippines for more than four years.

Direct action was a big deal during the Korean War — my buddy Bob Kingston, who ran waterborne raids on the east coast during his second tour — demolished an entire enemy train in a tunnel one moonless night.

The U.S. Army's SOF centerpiece at Fort Bragg changed missions several times during the Cold War. The Psychological Warfare Center that opened shop in 1952 schizophrenically embraced Aaron Banks' 10th Special Forces Group dedicated to UW. It became the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center and School in 1956, then the JFK Center and School after several redirections and redesignations.

Brig. Gen. Bill Yarborough soon thereafter popularized counterinsurgency, currently called foreign internal defense. President John Fitzgerald Kennedy bought that concept lock, stock and barrel at a Fort Bragg formation on Oct. 12, 1961. When Yarborough apologized because his FID-trained troops weren't authorized to wear green berets, JFK said, "They are now."

UW prevailed when I belonged to the Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force in Paris. Its main mission in the mid-1960s must have been conceived in La La land, because plans called for SOF to sponsor resistance groups behind the Iron Curtain, where snitches faithful to the Kremlin infested every layer of Warsaw Pact society from top to bottom. Prospects of success approximated zero.

Army Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations units in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Philippines currently concentrate on FID, whereas Delta Force, Rangers, most SEAL teams, AFSOF's special-tactics teams and the Special Operations Aviation Regiment consistently emphasize direct action. Direct action in fact has prospered since 1986, because every USSOCOM commander thus far has climbed the DA ladder, mostly within the Joint Special Operations Command. No Army Special Forces careerist has ever occupied that slot. Morale problems prevailed throughout the

SOF community a decade or so ago, given complaints that JSOC's special-mission units enjoyed promotion opportunities, budgetary allocations, flying hours, ammunition allowances, joint training time and other favors far superior to those that other SOF received. Such complaints have been muted since 9/11, but reportedly bubble beneath the surface.

Army Special Forces troops are well trained and equipped in hostage rescue, but I wonder why any commander would waste area-oriented, foreign-language qualified, high-cost, low-density UW and FID specialists on direct-action missions except in emergencies.

So, what's my recommendation to SOF schoolteachers regarding missions, given my belief that planning on certainty is the worst of all military mistakes? Concentrate on responsibilities that currently are in demand, but maintain respectable competence in all others so you don't have to reinvent the wheel when priorities shift unexpectedly, as they've repeatedly done in the past.

### Shortcuts To Superior Performance

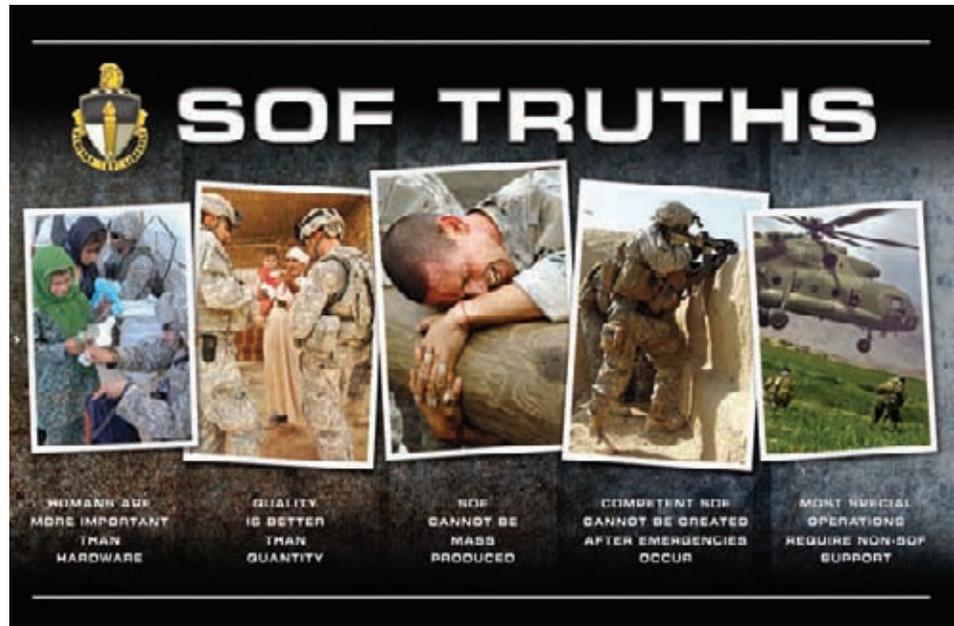
When superiors don't know what to do it's hard for subordinates to know how to do it, but they must do the best they can with the hands they're dealt. The key question currently is: How can U.S. SOF improve already impressive performance during the ongoing global war against ruthless, unorthodox foes whose innovative strategies and tactics morph at mind-boggling speed?

Autocratic restrictions, built-in biases, compartmentalization, enforced compromise and security classifications have made it difficult for the commander at MacDill to generate and sustain chain reactions of creative thought since 1986, when the command stood up.

I presented my solution to General Wayne Downing 18 years ago with correspondence that said, "A picture on the wall of my office shows David standing over Goliath. The caption reads 'Who Thinks Wins.' Your headquarters and component commands need all the help they can get to thrive during these trying times, because the best staff you could possibly assemble would contain only a tiny fraction of the talent that is potentially available. Experienced SOF officers and NCOs the world over are eager to furnish you a wide range of options on every subject that concerns your command, but find no convenient way to do so.

"We discussed a clearinghouse for new ideas when you were a brand new brigadier general. Now that you are CINCSOC, I offer to show your staff how to put concepts into practice. You have a lot to gain and nothing to lose, since you alone would determine which ideas to adopt and which to discard."

Downing decided to give it a try, but his clearinghouse never amounted to much, primarily because the absence of



**TIME-TESTED** John Collins penned the original five "SOF Truths" in 1987.

a global email net severely restricted outreach. Your boss [the USASOC commander] at Fort Bragg, in sharp contrast, could establish instantaneous contact with every computer savvy Army Special Forces Soldier, active and reserve, regardless of rank or location. No-holds-barred brainstorming admittedly would produce a lot of junk, but hit enough jackpots to make the process pay off. I know, because that's the way my national security email forum called the Warlord Loop works.

### Final Reminder

Your mission today and for an unknown number of tomorrows is to expand Army Special Forces without sacrificing quality, bearing always in mind that competent SOF really can't be mass-produced and really can't be created rapidly after emergencies occur. Balladeer Barry Sadler got it right when he penned these praiseworthy words: "One hundred men we'll test today, but only three win the Green Beret." **SW**

*John Collins retired from the U.S. Army in 1972, following service in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. During his military career, he served in a myriad of jobs including chief, Campaign Planning Group, MACV, director Military Strategy Studies and chief of the Strategic Research Group at the National Defense University. Following retirement, he served as the Senior Specialist in National Defense, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress from 1972-1996. He has written a number of books, including U.S. and Soviet Special Operations, America's Small Wars: Lessons for the Future and Special Operations Forces: An Assessment and U.S. Special Operations Forces. He is also the author of the SOF Truths.*

### Notes

1. USSOCOM Commander Admiral Eric Olson enshrined the fifth SOF Truth in 2010.

Department of the Army  
JFK Special Warfare Center and School  
ATTN: AOJK-PAO  
3004 Ardennes Street, Stop A  
Fort Bragg, NC 28310-9610

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