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In This Issue

"Napoleonic Know-How" in an Age of Persistent Engagement

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A bevy of prominent national security thinkers have suggested that the US has entered an era of persistent engagement with troubled regions of the world. From this perspective, failing or failed states are likely to lure the US into counter-insurgency (COIN) operations, foreign internal defense, and other modes of irregular warfare for decades to come. The sources of these difficult situations will inevitably vary greatly, from ethnic conflicts to natural resource grabs; predatory kleptocracies to narco-terrorist regimes; proxy wars to religious extremism; and more. Yet all of these situations owe their origins in large part to the absence of the same governance infrastructures that have enabled successful modern states since the days of Napoleon.

Kinetic operations will almost always play a role in achieving conflict termination and establishing some measure of stability. But, too often, field commanders and national security policymakers fail to understand the administrative underpinnings needed to find and fix an elusive enemy, to achieve post conflict "stability, development, peace, and effective local sovereignty," and to keep insurgencies and the like from forming in the first place (Demarest 2008, p. 352; Manwaring 2006).

This paper asserts that a suite of administrative capabilities first mastered by Napoleon, what we call "Napoleonic Know-how," should be elevated in the considerations of commanders and national security policymakers as they wrestle with courses

of action in the engagement of nations and regions of special interest. Only when the US prioritizes the preemptive establishment of such administrative capabilities over post-crisis kinetic action will we know that US foreign policy community is truly interested in conflict prevention and long term stability during this era of persistent engagement.

An Introduction to Napoleonic Know-how

In a classic 1975 biography of Napoleon Bonaparte, Will and Ariel Durant stated that the Emperor "became almost as brilliant in government as in battle. He predicted that his achievements in administration would outshine his martial victories in human memory, and that his legal codes were a monument more lasting than his strategy and tactics. He longed to be the Justinian as well as the Caesar Augustus of his age." (Durant, 1975; PT II, p. 250.)

But Napoleon was no benevolent emperor. His art of government was to keep people reasonably happy by giving them what they wanted and to obtain from them all that one could get. Despite their clamor for it, liberty was not viewed among peoples' basic wants. And if certain conditions were met, Napoleon could easily repress liberty with impunity. Concerning liberty he quipped, "they would gladly renounce it if everyone could entertain the hope of rising to the top…What must be done then is to give everybody the hope of being able to rise." And this Napoleon genuinely did. His is no empty boast, "I have closed the gaping abyss of anarchy, and I have unscrambled chaos…Liberty means a good civil code. The only thing modern nations care for is property." (Herold, 1963; 97-99).

Even a Napoleonic ego is woefully insufficient to adduce what an understate-

ment those last words are for the 21st century. If he were alive today Napoleon would certainly gloat at how modern nations, a.k.a. the International Community, has failed to heed his example and instead pours billions of dollars, and millions of military and civilian personnel, into foreign aid and counterinsurgency operations that achieve far too little of the desired aims of peace and stability. With scorn he would berate the G8 leaders who are vexed, not by competing nation states but by non-state actors, who should have been marginalized long ago by three of the Emperor's methods: the Census, the Cadastre, and the National Identity (ID) card. Below we will examine these three ingredients of "Napoleonic Know-how".

1. The Census

The development of historical statistics was encouraged by the needs of the Napoleonic state and its increasing sophistication with public administration. Therefore, while it was the nascent United States of America that conducted the first modern, recurring census in 1790, Napoleon had more extensive uses for his census than simply congressional districting. With the manpower that he did not conscript into his Grande Armee' via the census, Napoleon created a legion of civil officials. He dispatched these bureaucrats into every village, town, and city in order to link together, first the entire French nation, and later an Empire that encompassed half of Europe, under a rational, strong, centralized civil administration that registered births, deaths, and marriages among other public records (*Kreis, 2000).* Indeed, the compilation of public data under Napoleon led to the formation of government commissions for investigative and regulatory commissions, even outside of France.

In fact, "the country where the French revolution had most immediate and permanent effect was the Netherlands."

(Johnson, 1991). The "French period" of the early 19th century changed social structures and politics in Holland and revived Dutch national mercantilism. And, it profoundly impacted the identities of individual Dutchmen. Napoleon's administrators forced them to have surnames, which was not a common practice in all the Low Countries. The Dutch were wise to the Emperor's designs on taxes and soldiers and, thinking this would be a temporary measure, offered comical names as a practical joke on their French occupiers. But, ultimately, the joke was on the descendents of those Dutchmen of yesteryear, some of whose descendants are stuck with ridiculous last names such as Suikerbuik (Sugarbelly), Naaktgeboren (Born Naked) and Zondervan (Without a Surname).

Under Napoleon's system, each person was tied to a physical address which fell within an administrative district. The milestones of these individuals' lives were recorded as official government statistics, which in the aggregate allowed civil authorities to promulgate regulations and administrative actions based on concrete data, and to monitor the effect of these measures. The effect? Little breathing room remained for scofflaws and illicit activity. With Napoleon's Census, everyone and everything was accounted for.

2. The Cadastre

As Napoleon's continental administration expanded, it became increasingly reliant upon the cadastre (land and property registry). This extension of the government's role was based on three assumptions. First, intrinsic to the territorial economy was private land ownership. Second, the cost of governing the territory was to be generated mostly from taxation of the privately owned parcels. And third, a record system, uniformly organized,

would be necessary in order to provide protection for rights by the owner as well as collecting taxes on the parcel (Mitchel, 1976).

Professor Robert Burtch explains that the Napoleonic cadastre did not just develop from the whim of the Emperor, but rather evolved due to the expansion of the French Empire into areas of Europe that had retained feudal land tenures that poorly defined peoples' rights and interests in land.

Half-measures always result in loss of time and money. The only way to sort out the confusion in the field of general land records is to proceed with the surveying and evaluation of each individual land parcel in all the communities of the Empire. A good cadastre will constitute a complement of my [Civil] Code as far as land possession is concerned. The map must be sufficiently precise and complete so that they could determine the boundaries between individual properties and prevent litigations. (Napoleon Bonaparte in Blachut, 1975)

But an economy-stimulating land market and ease of administration were not Napoleon's only rationale. Napoleon's statement, "The only thing modern nations care for is property" underscores how well he understood that in order to imbue his subjects with a sense of their rising to the top, they first had to be somebody, somebody with his name recorded with rights and interests in a land parcel. In other words, equality, liberty, and fraternity were made manifest to millions by their obtaining a postal address--- another Napoleonic civil administration reform. A key to the Napoleonic cadastral effort was a record system which was designed to meet several purposes. Three of the more important are (Mitchel, 1976):

1. The record would consist of a complete history of all the transactions that occurred within the parcel.

2. The record was expandable and capable of including other types of informational needs that became obvious through government and private industry operation.

3. The record formed a basic management information system in that the government's managers could generate summaries of selected jurisdictions.

Under this system, criminal actors (as Napoleon would have characterized any citizen generating wealth off of untaxed property transactions) were pinched. This had the side benefit of minimizing the extent to which bad actors could engage in predatory behavior and organized illicit activity. Sanctuary was largely eliminated through these public administration advances.

3. The National ID Card

Napoleon's 1803 implementation of national ID cards, the ancestor of all modern ID cards, transformed the free society of the earlier French Republic into a tightly controlled police state.

The Republic had created a degree of freedom unheard of in Europe, allowing free speech and giving workers the right to change their job or go somewhere else. By contrast, in most of Europe at this time the majority of the population lived in various forms of bondage, such as indenture. Unfortunately, in France, a free market and mobility of labour were driving up wages. In response, the French authorities criminalized industrial action and introduced an ID card for workers, which aimed to …make it impossible to change jobs [in search of better wages] without an employer's permission and [to] restrict movement, by requiring workers to get an impossible string of visas to move legally (Allonby, 2009).

Allonby notes that after the demise "of the French Empire, the liberated countries often retained the systems of census and control [that] Napoleon had introduced - they were too useful and efficient to abolish."

Allonby sums up the matter from Napoleonic history. "Identity systems require dependency to provide control. They have to be inescapable to work. Napoleon … felt [his] authority undermined by workers' self-help and welfare groups, where people helped each other out and disseminated information on how to get around the system." Napoleon's national ID cards came about to control labor costs and ultimately repressed civil liberties. However, such identification systems have also become the basis for the provisioning of both public and private services in civilized societies.

Napoleonic Know-how in the Context of Population-Centric Operations

Attorney and former U.S. Defense Attache' Officer Geoffrey Demarest recognizes the same civil-military-legal quandary COIN operators share with Napoleon: there is a significant "overlap of the concepts of public intelligence that underpin a peaceful society and the Big Brother intelligence that allows the State to repress resistance and opposition." (Demarest, 2011.)

Nevertheless, Demarest underscores precisely how and why elusive non-state actors remain beyond the reach of law enforcement and COIN operators. They resist cadastral surveys in their ungoverned sanctuaries just as they resist any public administration advances that threaten their anonymity and impunity. Unlike the European serfs and indentured peasants of 200 years ago, modern insurgents don't want to be somebody. They don't want a fixed address. When dealing with bad actors in the context of population-centric operations, the more administrative systems in place that tie identity to property parcels, the more civil/law enforcement

authorities can limit the mayhem they can cause.

Particularly at Phase 0 (e.g., at the pre-conflict "shaping" phase of involvement), military commanders and civil authorities must be involved in achieving comprehensive, transparent and available public records, (i.e., census, cadastre, and national ID cards), or else they are needlessly aiding and abetting havens for the insurgent. Such neglect also means a failure to build the administrative infrastructure necessary to achieve and sustain peace, prosperity and security. However, the positive identification that such Napoleonic Know-how can enable can be just as important during Phase 3 or 4 kinetic operations, in support of more traditional ISR assets. In the end, as ADM Eric T. Olsen points out:

> DoD defines irregular warfare as a "violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s)." *4*IW is then inherently both political in purpose and local in character. The focus is on populations and effective governance rather than on territories and material dominance. This has distinct implications for the way irregular wars must be fought and for the forces that fight them. (Olsen, 2010)

In post-conflict Afghanistan and Iraq competing land claims have impaired Stability Operations (SO) and thwarted hopes of a lasting peace. This situation will occur more frequently until commanders and civil authorities appreciate the relationship between people and their land, information typically registered in a cadastre (land and property registry). An enlightened commander engaged in a population-centric operation is

> interested in the demographics and behavioral characteristics of the

population, the center of gravity, within his footprint; namely, identifying the power brokers on the ground whose support or obstruction may determine mission success. By tying a name to a place, cadastral data can answer the difficult "who" question, i.e., who is impeding road construction or restricting access of a minority group to a health clinic? The intelligence analyst is interested psychological characteristics of a people group, and cadastral data can identify a group's ideologies and economic pillars." (Batson, 2010)

Two centuries ago Napoleon Bonaparte, renowned for his military genius, moved decisively to improve post-conflict governance and called his cadastre the greatest achievement of his civil code. Perhaps his only oversight in that statement is the powerful impact that the cadastre has in combination with his other administrative feats, the census and national identification.

Napoleonic Know-how in Action (and Inaction)

Such administrative capabilities, and the data they accrete over time, can be effective in enabling effective population-centric operations at all phases of operational engagement, and are key to reconstructing a shattered nation - "stability, development, peace, and effective local sovereignty" (Manwaring 2006) cannot be realized without them. Operational examples of their criticality abound.

Afghanistan: In the current counter-insurgency campaign in Afghanistan, the complete lack of land ownership records and postal addresses (outside the major cities) creates major impediments for ISAF military forces. Analysts have been forced to create geospatial databases based purely on location descriptions and historical activity of civilian and insurgent-related compounds and buildings. This painstaking task is done to aid in the characterization of the insurgent landscape and to decrease the likelihood of civilian casualties. Yet, the fact that the data is sometimes the result of misinformation or disinformation rather than validated civilian, administrative data means that unfortunate military accidents occur more frequently in the population of non-combatants. A comprehensive set of land ownership records and corresponding postal addresses would serve to eliminate many of these events, helping the Government of Afghanistan and ISAF win the hearts and minds of the Afghan populace by reducing civilian casualties. The lack of a national identification scheme only magnifies this problem, making it difficult to irrefutably tie individuals to locations. And, in a country where the lack of a census means a chronic mis-estimation of the population on the scale of several million, it can even be difficult to determine who is and is not Afghan.

Iraq: Not only does cadastral data enable population-centric operations, but understanding the differences in cadastral data allows irregular warfare forces to swiftly adapt to the areas they operate in. For example, the parcels of Iraq's urban areas are based on a rigidly structured and well designed address system where streets and houses are assigned numbers. The Iraqi people may indicate the precise location of a nefarious actor using this system, as it is one they use themselves everyday to travel the city. While military operations are often run using geographic coordinates, the existence of an address system and parcel database can determine the accuracy, speed, and the footprint required to undertake a successful security operation with minimal impact to the population.

Major Dan E. Stigall, a U.S. Army Judge Advocate (JAG) trained in continental civil law at Louisiana State University, deployed to Iraq in 2003, and has published widely on Iraqi civil law since that time. Stigall notes that Iraqi property law is derived primarily from Continental (Napoleonic) civil law but also contains elements of Ottoman and Islamic land law. Though there is still a great need to increase the administrative capacity of the judiciary, Iraq has been and remains capable of sound land administration (Stigall 2008, pp. 20-21). Even within Iraq, land administration systems differ but still offer the advantages of Napoleonic Know-how. While addresses in urban areas are based on street and house numbers, the rural areas of Iraq are based on an agricultural and irrigational parcel system. For example, land plots in areas of Sulaymaniyah Province are defined by a canal system that derives an address based on canal segment-branch-parcel. A rural location can be found at stunning accuracy based on this system. Similarly to the urban example, the accuracy and footprint required are inherently linked to the success, scale, and impact of the operation. Of course, a rigorous addressing scheme does not always imply an orderly administrative infrastructure for maintaining land parcel ownership information. And, this can undermine their value in achieving positive identification and legal occupancy, and winnowing on illicit activity.

Regardless, respecting and understanding the systems that already exist increases the degree to which irregular warfare forces can work with the local population to find what they are looking for, regardless of operating environment. Further investment can help a nation (or region) mature its cadastral system, build a personal identification system that ties legitimate individuals to property, and keep track of the dynamics over time through an ongoing census. Aiding developing nations in the establishment of or improvement to their Napoleonic administrative systems, benefits both the irregular forces and the host nation in many ways as they exchange data and capabilities.

Sudan: There are also cases in which systems that vaguely resemble those of Napoleon are abused to empower certain factions of a society over others. Yet, these are also the same administrative systems that an irregular expeditionary force should pay the most attention to in the future. In the currently unfolding crisis in Sudan, the Khartoum government has manipulated its census so that the southern population (where the oil fields predominantly are) cannot demonstrate its majority status and effectuate a legitimate secession. In the face of the January 2011 referendum, the Sudanese Government conducted a National Census in April of 2009 in which they intentionally left off questions on tribe or clan affiliation. The government felt that if the Ethnic Dinka in the South realized they now outnumber the Northern tribes, then they would most certainly vote for succession.

In such a context, establishing a (or overhauling an existing) census system, and making it rigorous by tying identity to individual land parcel records, can be powerful tools in bringing about sustainable governance. As such, before falling into an abyss of kinetic action, military commanders and the larger community of national security decision-makers should seek to institute Napoleonic systems in the target country.

Somalia: While Somalia represents a failed state in many respects, the northern parts of Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, are far more stable than Southern Somalia. This is in part because the basic concepts of the Napoleonic Know-how were put in place with local government.

Disparate clans control the South much more than in the Northern parts of Somalia, with no real land administration/cadastral property rights scheme to temper the competing claims to legitimacy. A continual lack of stability is the result, with terrorist activity from elements like Al-Shababb not only fostered in the Southern Somalia but also provided safe haven to conduct operations worldwide.

Senegal: Senegal has long taken a strong stance against terrorism, and in addition to signing on to regional (Trans-Sahel) counter-terrorism efforts, has worked hard to invest in the both the physical and the administrative infrastructure that highly constrains nefarious activity. In September 2009, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) signed a five-year, $540 million compact with the Republic of Senegal designed to reduce poverty and invest in economic growth by unlocking the country's agricultural productivity and expanding access to markets and services. This goal will be achieved through the rehabilitation of major national roads and strategic investments in irrigation and water resource management infrastructure. The government of Senegal (the Government) has identified two national-level strategies – to reduce poverty in Senegal through economic growth and to increase the country's food security. Both of these priorities will be facilitated through MCC's $540 million compact with the Republic of Senegal.

In order to succeed at development, Senegal recognized that it would need a sound infrastructure for identity. As a result, Senegal has taken impressive steps. The new national identity and voter's card system interfaces with the Government's own central database. In addition to personal data, a digital facial image, signature and four fingerprints are collected from applicants at one of the permanent or mobile registration sites. The data is then transferred to a central Dakar site for eligibility checks, including fingerprint comparison. Upon approval the data is transferred to a central production system where an automated, high speed system personalizes, quality assures and produces up to 80,000 cards per day. The National Identity and the Voter's Card are produced from a single system. Both card types are laminated Teslin, incorporating multi-layered security features and a 2D barcode to store the biometrics. Senegal's National Identity and Voter's Card system was implemented within 10 months and included the training of 1,800 personnel. Once launched, the system issued 9 million cards within a 12 month period. Yet, Senegal comes up short on the land administration front:

> Despite the efforts to control land tenure in Senegal through a framework of formal law, customary law continues to govern land rights and the transfer of land in much of the country. In Senegal's highly-stratified society, customary practices tend to favor elites (i.e. elders, and religious and political figures) at the expense of lower-caste farmers. The outcome of purportedly democratic elections of rural council members is strongly influenced by candidates' social status and political party. The council members, who wield the power to manage territorial lands, may themselves serve as elite landholders and village chiefs, and it is common for them to approve tacit land sales and leases, circumvent legislation, and engage in other corrupt and self-serving tactics in many areas (Faye 2008; Cotula 2006). (USAID Country Profile, Property Rights and Resource Governance)

The lack of formality in land administration, and the gross infrequency of a census (the first took place in 1976 and the most recent in 1988), has meant far too much breathing room for nefarious actors. Yet, the progress Senegal has made on identity offers great promise for the future of Napoleonic Know-how in diminishing the threat of terrorism in Senegal.

Mali: Mali is an example of a place where the lack of a rigorous identity infrastructure allows nefarious actors (say, Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb – AQIM) too many degrees of freedom. Everything in Mali is paper and is physically filed away in one the many decentralized government buildings in Bamako. Passports, while controlled, do not contain biometrics and are not held by everyone. Driving a vehicle requires a license which is made of paper, and the license plates in most cases are numbers painted the back side of the truck or car. Most Malians drive mopeds, which require no license and are totally unregulated. As such, policing nefarious actors is highly problematic.

Refugee Camps – Pakistan/ Kenya/Somalia/Etc.: Terrorists recruit many of their ranks from refugee camps in which people have little identity, property or representation in a census that might even use statistics to articulate their struggle. The means for unwinding this complicated mess is the subject of long debates. Beyond a focus on aid that alleviates the most acute suffering, national security decision-makers should look to the establishment of Napoleonic administrative systems as a means of slowly untying these Gordian Knots, and bringing order to the chaos. Establishing individual identity, determining a population's needs through a Census, and, as land administration capacity allows, recording refugees claims to physical land parcels is key.

The New Napoleonic Complex

Sophisticated military commanders, civilian authorities and national security policymakers understand that they must develop an understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics at play over their geography of strategic concern. MG Michael Flynn's bold 2010 report "Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan" had this imperative at its core.

The census, the cadastre, and national identification silently underpin everything that contributes to peace and stability in developed societies. Unfortunately, policymakers have not given impetus to collecting, in countries or regions of interest, the kinds of socio-cultural information on which developed societies rely. Nor have they set the establishment of administrative infrastructures as Reconstruction and Stability goals, despite the many lessons learned from counter-insurgency (Galula, 1964; Sepp, 2005). They leave the collection and analysis of such critical socio-cultural information to either an intelligence community ill equipped to collect and analyze open source data from public records, or they expect practitioners with other duties (for instance Provincial Reconstruction Teams, NGOs, etc.) to "gather as they go." The work of the Human Terrain Teams (HTTs), while admirable, were never meant to, nor would not meet the standards set by Napoleon's administrative infrastructure.

Such realities virtually guarantee that the necessary socio-cultural data will not be available to support foreign aid/investment, development activities, stability operations, law enforcement, or even the more coercive actions usually associated with the military. After all, when a nation lacks systems for positively identifying individuals, for keeping demographic records, and for rigorously tying

individuals to precisely defined land parcels, it lacks the capacity to make the determinations necessary to properly govern, to thwart non-state actors, to curb corruption, organized crime, and illicit transactions, or to defend legal freedoms. A government must invest in its citizenry so that the voluntary institutions of civil society emerge to reinforce democratic gains, invigorate commerce, and promote peace and stability.

There is a need for a radical doctrinal shift in the way the U.S. national security community thinks and behaves, so that its prioritizes the rapid establishment of administrative processes that accrete Napoleonic-Know-how in regions of the world predisposed to persistent conflict. This certainly would be a major departure from the way the U.S. national security community has expended its resources to counter instability in the post-Cold War era. In an era of diminishing budgets to conduct 21st century military operations abroad, now, more than ever an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

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Lieutenant Colonel Di Leonardo is a decorated combat veteran of US Special Operations. He has spent the last five years leading small groups of innovators within US Special Operations Command, providing intelligence data-driven solutions to the challenges in human, social, and cultural behavioral problems and building innovative technology solutions for counterterrorism. Many of his innovation cell's tools and ideas have been adopted throughout the DoD and the Intelligence Community.

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A full bibliography is provided in the online edition.

Developing Better Relations with Russia

by John D. Johnson

The Obama Administration has made improving relations with Russia one of its main foreign policy goals and its efforts to date have borne fruit and put U.S.-Russia relations on a positive footing looking toward the future. For its part, NATO also has re-engaged in a concentrated effort to improve relations with Russia since NATO-Russia Council meetings were suspended in 2008 following Russia's military action in Georgia.[1]

As a result of these efforts, since the post-Soviet low in relations with Russia following the 2008 Russia-Georgia War, relations between the U.S., NATO and Russia have steadily improved over the past two and half years. And in spite of lingering mistrust and marked differences on some issues, the U.S., NATO and Russia have created a positive political environment where real dialogue and engagement on a number of shared interests makes possible a "true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia" for the 21st century as expressed in NATO's new Strategic Concept.[2] Moreover, as important strategic issues such as counter-terrorism, Afghanistan, Iran and North Korea continue to challenge all sides, and other external powers continue to evolve, cooperation seems as important now as at any other time since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

This paper aims to examine recent U.S. and NATO efforts to develop better relations with Russia, identify areas of common interest and disagreement, and provide recommendations for the way forward. This article will, at times, attempt to take into account the Russian perspective, a side that is sometimes overlooked in Western media, in order to highlight where U.S./NATO and Russian views diverge on key issues.

"Reset" in U.S.-Russian Relations

In February 2009 at the Munich Security Conference, Vice President Biden first announced the administration's "reset" policy saying, "…it's time to press the reset button and to revisit the many areas where we can and should be working together with Russia."[3] In July 2009 at the U.S.-Russia Summit in Moscow, President Obama re-emphasized the "reset" policy saying, "… President [Medvedev] and I agreed that the relationship between Russia and the United States has suffered from a sense of drift. We resolved to reset U.S.-Russian relations, so that we can cooperate more effectively in areas of common interest."[4]

A tangible example of the "reset" with Moscow is in the reduction of strategic nuclear arms. In January 2011, Russian

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[1] See Evolution in Relations for list of Key Milestones in NATO-Russia Relations, Updated November 24, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50090.htm.
[2] Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," November 19, 2010, para 33, http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/index.html.

[3] Remarks by Vice President Biden at the 45th Munich Security Conference, February 7, 2009, http://germany.usembassy.gov/events/2009/feb-biden-security/.
[4] Press Conference by President Obama and President Medvedev of Russia, July 6, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Press-Conference-by-President-Obama-and-President-Medvedev-of-Russia/.

President Dmitry Medvedev signed the ratification of a nuclear arms reduction treaty with the U.S., known as the New START Treaty.[5] President Obama signed the ratification documents in February 2011.[6] New START limits the number of U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550 (down from the previously agreed to ceiling of 2,200) and limits strategic sea, air and intercontinental delivery systems to 800 (only 700 of which can be deployed at any given time).[7] The New START Treaty is an important bilateral arms control agreement that reduces the number of nuclear warheads in both the U.S. and Russian arsenals and provides for a verification regime of each other's nuclear warhead stockpiles and capabilities. But more importantly, New START is part of the broader U.S. and NATO efforts aimed at developing better relations with Russia in order to enhance Eurasian security for the 21st century.

In terms of the "reset" bearing fruit, in addition to the New START Treaty mentioned previously, a significant outcome of the July 2009 Summit in Moscow was the creation of the U.S.-Russian Bilateral Presidential Commission.[8] The commission's working groups cover many important areas of cooperation including: economic development; energy and the environment; nuclear energy and security; arms control and international security; defense, foreign policy and counterterrorism; preventing and handling emergen-

cies; civil society; science and technology; space; health; education; and culture.[9]

Overall, the Obama administration's approach has been pragmatic in working to improve affairs with Russia. Russia has welcomed the "reset" albeit somewhat cautiously.

NATO-Russia Relations

In his first major public speech after taking office, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen focused on Russia saying in September 2009 that "...of all of NATO's relationships with Partner countries, none holds greater potential than the NATO-Russia relationship."[10] Additionally, Secretary Rasmussen said that NATO should reinforce cooperation against common security threats, rejuvenate the NATO-Russia Council and conduct a joint review of 21st century security challenges.

In addition to calling for a "true strategic partnership" with Russia at its November 2010 Lisbon Summit, NATO's new Strategic Concept attempted to assuage lingering Russian mistrust of the Alliance by stating emphatically that, "NATO-Russia cooperation is of strategic importance as it contributes to creating a common space of peace, stability and security. NATO poses no threat to Russia."

In a similar cooperative vein, at the November 2010 NATO-Russia Council meeting, parties agreed to develop a comprehensive joint analysis of the future framework for missile defense cooperation (progress of which will be discussed in June 2011) and endorsed the Joint Review of 21st Century Common Security Chal-

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[5] "Medvedev signs ratification of nuke pact with US," *Associated Press*, January 28, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/28/AR2011012801508_pf.html.
[6] Patricia Zengerle, "Obama Signs New START Treaty Documents," *Reuters,* February 2, 2011, http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/02/us-usa-russia-start-idUSTRE71177U20110202.
[7] Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offense Arms, www.state.gov/documents/organization/140035.pdf.
[8] U.S.-Russia Relations: "Reset" Fact Sheet, June 24, 2010, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/us-russia-relations-reset-fact-sheet, provides a more comprehensive overview of the "Reset" policy achievements.

[9] Press Conference by President Obama and President Medvedev, July 6, 2009.
[10] "NATO and Russia: A New Beginning," Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at the Carnegie Endowment, Brussels, September 18, 2009, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_57640.htm.

lenges.[11] Specific security challenges endorsed included: Afghanistan (including counter-narcotics), terrorism (including the vulnerability of critical infrastructure), piracy, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as well as natural and man-made disasters.[12]

Many Areas of Common Interest; Some Areas of Disagreement

As the U.S. "reset" policy agenda and NATO-Russia Council Joint Review of Common Security Challenges listed above suggest, U.S. and NATO cooperation with Russia clearly makes sense when one considers the broad array of common interests and security challenges. However, while there is agreement on many areas of common interest, there are other areas where the parties disagree in part and, yet, still other areas where the sides remain far apart.

An attempt to list the areas of common interests drawn, in part, from the previously mentioned strategic documents would look something like this: Afghanistan, arms control, counter-narcotics, counter-piracy, counter-terrorism, cyber security, economic cooperation (e.g., Russia's Skolkova "Silicon Valley", modernization initiatives and World Trade Organization accession), energy security, Iran, natural and man-made disasters, North Korea, missile defense, organized crime, proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, and the resolution of frozen conflicts (e.g., Transnistria in Moldova, South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia, and Nogorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan).[13] Fur-

thermore, if New START is an example of agreement in an area of common interest, then missile defense and frozen conflicts are examples of areas where there is partial agreement or some disagreement.

Missile defense has been called a "game-changer" in the media.[14] In other words, it is an issue that has the potential to become a genuine breakthrough in terms of U.S./NATO and Russia political and security cooperation. However, missile defense probably falls into the category of a common interest but one where the parties disagree in part. First, at Lisbon, President Medvedev proposed a "sectoral approach" to missile defense and aspects of that proposal are still being studied by NATO.[15] Further, President Medvedev called for Russia to be an equal "partner" with NATO in missile defense, but it is not clear that NATO views Russian participation in that light.[16] Finally on missile defense, it's not clear that Russia's threat perception of Iran is the same as the U.S.'s assessment of the Iranian ballistic missile theat. Due to differing threat assessments of Iranian capabilities, Russia could, down the road, call into question the validity of the planned land-based missile defense assets in Central and Eastern Europe. Put another way, if Russia does not believe that Iran has the ballistic missile capability to reach Central Europe in 2018, Rus-

[11] NATO-Russia Council Joint Statement, November 20, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_68871.htm?selectedLocale=en.

[12] NATO's Relations with Russia, Updated November 24, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50090.htm.

[13] Russian President to Visit Silicon Valley Before Meeting Obama, June 18, 2010, *Voice of America News,* http://www.voanews.com/english/news/europe/Russian-

President-to-Visit-Silicon-Valley-Before-Meeting-Obama-96661539.html.

[14] Simon Saradzhyan, "Missile Defense: Game-Changer in NATO-Russia Relations," January 25, 2011, *International Relations and Security Network,* http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/ISN-Insights/Detail?lng=en&id=126409&contextid734=126409&contextid735=126408&tabid=126408.

[15] Andrew S. Weiss, "The Kremlin's Bold Missile Defense Gambit," January 27, 2011, Rand Corporation, http://www.rand.org/commentary/2011/01/27/MT.html.

[16] Warning Of New Arms Race, Medvedev Calls For Cooperation With West On Missile Shield, *Radio Free Europe,* December 1, 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_medvedev_parliament/2234566.html.

sia may question the need for NATO to deploy land-based missile defense systems in Poland or in Romania for that matter. Russia also perceives that land-based systems in Central and Eastern Europe could impact the U.S.-Russia strategic nuclear balance, a potential issue during the latter stages of the "Phased Adaptive Approach" for missile defense in Europe.[17]

On the issue of frozen conflicts, there appears to be less political will on the part of Russia to resolve the conflicts than on the side of NATO or the U.S. The U.S. National Security Strategy from 2010 broadly stated U.S. policy vis-à-vis Russia and frozen conflicts when it said, "While actively seeking Russia's cooperation to act as a responsible partner in Europe and Asia, we will support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia's neighbors."[18] Each conflict merits its own attention and discussion, but the conflict in Georgia points to a fundamental disagreement between the parties. In August 2008, Russia fought a five-day war with Georgia and later recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In July 2009 at a joint press conference with Russia's president, President Obama reiterated U.S. support for the inviolability of Georgia's borders saying, "...Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected."[19] This dichotomy illustrates how far apart the two sides are on the issue. Indeed, Russia's recognition of the two disputed areas suggests the conflict is resolved from their viewpoint. Clearly, greater international involvement is needed and much works remains to be done.

Finally, in spite of recent positive NATO-Russia developments, there remain multiple points of contention. For example, Russia is opposed to NATO's open door policy toward Georgia and Ukraine, believes a new security architecture for Europe is needed to replace the outdated NATO model (see Russia's November 2009 proposal for a new European Security Treaty (EST) architecture), and still does not accept Kosovo's independence from Serbia (an issue that also is viewed by Russia as a precedent for its recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia).[20] Meanwhile, NATO is concerned about Russia's occupation of Georgian territory, Russia's suspension of its participation in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, and Russia's selective prosecution of businessmen (e.g., former head of oil giant Yukos, Mikhail Khodorkovsky) and opposition leaders.[21]

Recommendations for the Way Forward

Looking to the future, below are two general recommendations for developing better relations and cooperation with the Russian Federation.

1. Continue to build trust on both sides.

There remains a trust deficit on both sides and that mistrust has proven difficult to overcome after years of Cold War animosity. However, the current positive environment started under the Obama Administration presents an opportunity to engage in regular dialogue like that which is being done under the auspices of the Bilateral Presidential Commission working

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[17] Fact Sheet on U.S. Missile Defense Policy, A "Phased, Adaptive Approach" for Missile Defense in Europe, September 17, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/FACT-SHEET-US-Missile-Defense-Policy-A-Phased-Adaptive-Approach-for-Missile-Defense-in-Europe/.
[18] National Security Strategy of the United States, May 2010, http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/05/27/a-blueprint-pursuing-world-we-seek.
[19] Press Conference by President Obama and President Medvedev, July 6, 2009.

[20] Russia Unveils Proposal For European Security Treaty, November 30, 2009, *Radio Free Europe,* http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Unveils_Proposal_For_European_Security_Treaty/1891161.html.
[21] Profile: Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Updated December 30, 2010, *BBC News Europe,* http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12082222.

groups, military-to-military exchanges and other private venues (e.g., Silicon Valley dialogue).

NATO's Strategic Concept stated that "NATO poses no threat to Russia" and that it seeks "…a true strategic partnership between NATO and Russia."[22] However, from Russia's perspective, if this statement is true, then there remain questions about the need for NATO contingency plans for member states who are also neighbors to Russia.[23] Russia's aggressive approach to dealing with its neighbors through force, in the case of Georgia, or through other means (energy in the case of Ukraine) also perpetuates mistrust.[24]

As pragmatic as the U.S. and NATO approaches have been toward Russia, going forward it is just as important that Russia reciprocate positively. Transparency in common approaches to dealing with common interests also is essential to building trust.

2. Sustain momentum in areas of common interest.

The U.S., NATO and Russia share many common interests. Therefore, there are numerous opportunities for collaboration and confidence building where there could be win-win outcomes versus the Cold War zero-sum game mentality.

Afghanistan is a good example. Clearly the U.S. and NATO interest there is to fight terrorism and to create a stable Afghanistan for the future. Russia's interest in Afghanistan is more keenly tied to

counter-narcotics, owing to the problems that Afghan-produced drugs create in Russia. According to a recent report from the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime, "Russian addicts consume 75 to 80 tons of Afghan heroin each year, and an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 Russians die in drug-related incidents annually."[25] However, Russia also is concerned about the potential that violent extremists in Afghanistan will go elsewhere when the conflict is over or if NATO pulls out of Afghanistan precipitously. As a result, Russia has cooperated with NATO by providing transit routes through Russia for cargo and troops, and has provided helicopter support and training to Afghan security forces.[26] Moreover, Afghanistan is a case where we see several linked issues or interests; the country is connected to terrorism, drugs and crime. Therefore, it's possible, as we see in Afghanistan, that cooperation in one area could lead to cooperation in other unforeseen areas in the future.

Conclusion

Overall, the U.S. "reset" policy toward Russia and NATO efforts to re-engage Russia have accomplished both tangible results and created a positive political atmosphere where the parties can work together on common interests looking toward the future. This positive atmosphere presents a real opportunity for dialogue and cooperation. Given the many common security challenges of the 21st century, and in spite of some differences, collaboration now in areas of common interest is in the best interests of the individual

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[22] Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," November 19, 2010.
[23] Jorge Benitez, "NATO official confirms defense plans for Russia's neighbors," *Atlantic Council*, Dec. 13, 2010, http://www.acus.org/natosource/nato-official-confirms-defense-plans-russias-neighbors.
[24] Andrew E. Kramer, "Russia cuts off gas deliveries to Ukraine," *The New York Times*, January 2, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/02/world/europe/02iht-02gazprom.19044537.html.

[25] Kristin Deasy, "UN Report Tracks Crossborder Impact of Afghan Heroin," *Radio Free Europe*, Oct. 22, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/UN_Report_Tracks_Crossborder_Impact_Of_Afghan_Heroin_/1858365.html.
[26] Gregory Feifer, "Russia Goes Back to Afghanistan," *Radio Free Europe*, October 28, 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/gandhara_russia_in_afghanistan/2203631.html.

countries involved, and also benefits regional and international peace and security.

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Making a Sandwich in Afghanistan:

How to Assess a Strategic Withdrawal from a Protracted Irregular War

by Paul Rexton Kan

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The dinner offerings at the dining facility at ISAF headquarters were not the best when I took a break one night from working with CJIATF-Shafafiyat. The general's military aid, a lieutenant, sat down at the table with a few slices of bread, some meat and cheese. I said, "That actually looks better than what I got". He replied, "Sir, if it's one thing the Army taught me, it's how to make a sandwich." This is an appropriate metaphor for NATO and US efforts in Afghanistan and perhaps an important corollary to John Nagl's "eating soup with a knife." Simply put, it means doing the best with what you have in the face of worse options. When it comes to the war in Afghanistan, most of the focus has been on the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy and what it will mean for 2014 when International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) mission will fall to the Afghan Security Forces. To be sure, civilian decision makers will take into account the metrics used by the military as it undertook its assessment of success. But whether 2014 will be a "period" or a "comma" marking the international community's military in-

volvement in the country will largely depend on strategic level considerations of politicians, and not purely the military metrics of an operational strategy like COIN.

All wars end. Yet when governments choose to end their involvement in an irregular war by withdrawing their military forces in the shadow of prolonged violence, they face a complicated set of propositions. When a superior conventional force has withdrawn from a protracted irregular war without achieving its initial political and strategic goals, decision makers and military planners often conceive their departure as a failure of will—military, political, national or a combination of them. After all, a war waged by a country with a superior military force is one that it was *supposed* to win and to win quickly. When quick victory is elusive, the reliance on the will to carry-on appears a natural "Plan B". President George W. Bush summed up this sentiment by stressing a lesson that he learned from the Vietnam War during a trip to that country in

2005: "we will succeed [in Iraq] unless we quit."[1]   In the case of Afghanistan, President Barack Obama also emphasized the need for determination. "We are focused on disrupting, dismantling and defeating al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and preventing its capacity to threaten America and our allies in the future….It will take time to ultimately defeat al Qaeda, and it remains a ruthless and resilient enemy bent on attacking our country. But make no mistake -- we are going to remain relentless in disrupting and dismantling that terrorist organization."[2] However, before the President's remarks, the communiqué from NATO and the Afghan government at the end of the Kabul International Conference on Afghanistan reflected the pivotal year of 2014 as a drawdown for ISAF. "The international community expressed its support for the president of Afghanistan's objective that the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) should lead and conduct military operations in all provinces by the end of 2014."[3] It appears that the goal of the US and NATO is the withdrawal of troops, whether or not Al Qaeda is disrupted, dismantled or defeated.

Much has been written about how and why wars end as well as about how and why powerful nations lose irregular wars.[4]

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[1] Michael Fletcher, "Bush, in Vietnam, Says Change Takes Time", Washington Post, 18 November 2006, A14.
[2] Statement by the President on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Annual Review, December 16, 2010, URL: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/12/16/statement-president-afghanistan-pakistan-annual-review
[3] "Draft Communique Sets 2014 as Target for Afghan Military to Lead", New York Times, 20 July 2010, URL: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/21/world/asia/21kabultext.html?pagewanted=all
[4] See for example, Fred Ikle, Every War Must End, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Efraim Imbar Democracies and Small Wars, (New York: Routledge, 2003); Richard Betts, Conflict After the Cold War, second edition, (New York: Longman, 2004). Also, see Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, Conflict Termination and Peace Agreements, 1989-1996", Journal of Peace Research, (August 1997); Michael Renner, Ending Violent Conflict, (Washington, DC: Worldwatch Institute, 1999); and Stephen Cimbala, Through a Glass Darkly: Looking at Conflict Prevention, Management and Termination, (New York: Praeger, 2001).

Moreover, there has not been a shortage of recommendations about how and why the US should leave Afghanistan. But, what have other governmental decision makers involved in other protracted irregular wars of the past worried about when faced with the prospect of a strategic withdrawal? Have these worries borne themselves out? Considering such questions reveal a type of strategic template for the discussion of what a military withdrawal from the conflict in Afghanistan might entail.

Common Fears, Shared Worries

No matter the country that has withdrawn from a memorable irregular conflict—the French from Algeria, the Americans from South Vietnam, the Soviets from Afghanistan and the Israelis from southern Lebanon—each government has grappled with the attempt to balance short term and long term considerations. Attempting to balance such considerations reveals an interplay of common preoccupations even though the strategic objectives of the superior power in the irregular conflicts were different: maintain continued sovereignty against an anti-colonial movement, defend a Cold War ally against communist aggression and insurgency, defend a sympathetic communist regime from violent internal challengers and force a guerrilla group out of a neighboring country in the name of self-defense. None of the cases is a precise match to the type of irregular war occurring in Afghanistan; nor are they similar to one another. Moreover, no matter how different the strategic objectives of the governments involved in irregular wars were or when the conflicts occurred, there were still common concerns over a nation's international prestige, questions about regional stability, worries over domestic political fallout,

tensions in civil-military relations and issues of interaction with the regime that assumes control after the withdrawal.

These are also cases that "ended badly" for the withdrawing party. But examining the worst case scenario is important when considering a case as complex as today's intervention in Afghanistan. As the United States grapples with its fate in Afghanistan, the implications of past withdrawals lurk like a specter in the background. This study does not seek to explain how or why decision-makers finally decide to withdraw, nor does it describe how or why the US might end its involvement in Afghanistan in 2014. This paper does not delve into whether such a deadline is feasible or how and why the US should end its involvement. Instead, it provides the factors that have been a part of other previous withdrawals and thereby articulates the parameters that any reasonable assessment must take. Whether any withdrawal from Afghanistan will be "precipitous" or done "responsibly", all of the common concerns that were part of previous departures will inevitably be contemplated, assessed and balanced in one manner or another by those taking over the Afghanistan policy in 2014.

Concerns over International Prestige

A term like "peace with honor" is a tacit acknowledgment that some sense of national pride must be preserved when considering the removal of combat forces from a conflict that is not going well. National pride, honor or prestige is a strategic preoccupation; a nation's credibility with its allies and deterrence of adversaries are part of short and long term calculations. As French Premier Guy Mollet put it, "France without Algeria would be

nothing."[5] Yet when confronted with the inevitability of Algerian independence and the end of French sovereignty, "what was most important to DeGaulle was that it be done well, and with *honor*."[6]

National leaders were often worried about what "message" they would be sending to the larger world by departing without having achieved their strategic objectives. President Gerald Ford was still preoccupied with how the US should deal with a collapsing South Vietnam even after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords: "I am mindful of our position toward the rest of the world, and particularly of our future relations with the free nations of Asia. These nations must not think for a minute that the United States is pulling out on them or intends to abandon them to aggression."[7]

Beyond the damage to the reputation of a nation's strategic resolve, larger ideological objectives are thought to be sullied by backing out of the ongoing struggle. Much as Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon fretted over how withdrawing from Vietnam would erode America's standing as the leader of the free world, many in the Soviet government, including Premier Mikhail Gorbachev when he first assumed office, were worried that a withdrawal from Afghanistan would damage its position as the vanguard of revolutionary socialism in the Third World.[8] The Israeli military believed that their "stay in Lebanon serves our struggle over the ex-

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[5] Gil Merom, Why Democracies Lose Small Wars (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 90.

[6] Christian Fouchet, France's last representative in Algeria quoted in Alistair Horne, A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962, (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 379. Emphasis added.

[7] Address by the President to Joint Session of Congress, April 10, 1975.

[8] Geoffrey Jukes, "The Soviet Armed Forces and the Afghan War" in Amin Saikal and William Maley, eds, The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 83.

istence of Israel"[9] while withdrawal jeopardized the notion of Eretz Israel.

Questions about Regional Stability

A common refrain of those arguing against a withdrawal has been that "things would be worse if we left." Typically those "things" have meant the withdrawing party's geopolitical interests in the larger region surrounding the conflict. Questions were raised such as whether the country would remain stable in the aftermath of a withdrawal and what if any "spillover effects" there might be; which neighbors might become predatory and extend their influence within the country; will the region be entirely "lost" to the influence of the withdrawing party? There was also the troubling issue of "blowback" or whether the enemies might follow the withdrawer home in the aftermath. Lyndon Johnson was famous for arguing that the US leaving Vietnam would mean that communism would advance so much that "tomorrow we'll be fighting in Hawaii and next week San Francisco."[10]

To mitigate these concerns over the possibility of any subsequent regional instability, the withdrawing party has sought to maintain some geo-strategic influence; if it was not able to meet its strategic objectives with military force at the moment, it has opted to try to do so with other means in the near and long term. Governments leading previous withdrawals have explored such a possibility in a number of ways as they considered a total withdrawal. One common approach was to try to "indigenize" the ongoing war before disengaging so as to prevent instability of the country leading to interventions by neighboring states. Efforts were made to strengthen and empower local supporters to carry on the burden of the departing party. The French attempted to find "Arabs of a third force" who would maintain some form of French sovereignty in Algeria and to prevent the FLN from sweeping into power. "Vietnamization" was a way to bolster the South Vietnamese government and the Soviets sought "national reconciliation" in Afghanistan to build support for the communist backed Kabul government.[11] One broad, and yet specific measure, of a country's ability to stand on its own after disengagement was whether its own military forces could conduct independent military operations against irregular forces without assistance from the military forces of the superior power. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) proved capable of independent operations before the signing of the Paris Peace Accords and the Soviets were encouraged when the Afghan Army was able to score some defensive victories against the mujahedin in Jalabad in 1989.[12] Even though the South Lebanese Army (SLA) was to be disbanded under a UN resolution, the commanders of the SLA assured the Israeli government that it would stand and fight in the aftermath of an Israeli pullout.

Another way that withdrawing parties have attempted to maintain their geopolitical influence was to expand their deterrence posture in the region. In the cases of South Vietnam and southern Lebanon, decision makers attempted to renew deterrence efforts to include neighboring powers who were perceived as potential troublemakers. The Nixon Doctrine pledged that the US would protect its Asian allies against nuclear threats, but declared that in other cases of aggression that America

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[9] Merom, 195.

[10] Peter Merrill, <u>Case Studies in the Termination of Internal Revolutionary Conflict</u>, (Washington, DC: Advanced Research Projects Agency, 1967), 64.

[11] Sarah Mendelson, <u>Changing Course</u>, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 112.
[12] Alan Marshall, "Phased Withdrawal, Conflict Resolution and State Reconstruction", (United Kingdom: Conflict Studies Research Centre, Ministry of Defence, June 2006), 6.

would provide assistance and "look primarily to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense."[13] Similarly, although Israel would lose its defensive buffer when it withdrew from southern Lebanon, it could still maintain effective deterrence against Syria with the possession of Shab'a Farms while holding Lebanon responsible for attacks on Israel emanating from the former buffer zone. In fact, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak confided to a retired officer that he would use all the weapons in Israel's arsenal against anyone who attacked from Lebanon.[14]

Worries over Domestic Political Fallout

As the costs to national treasuries and the cost in human lives began to mount during the course of the wars in Algeria, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Lebanon, public support waned and opposition built. While domestic political opposition was part of the strategic calculations of many decision makers, they also grappled with their legacies and reputations; did they want to be remembered for not only losing a war that they were supposed to win while opening themselves to charges that they "lost" the country and possibly the region to further influence? During the war in Algeria, French historian Raymond Aron warned that the newly elected French government of Guy Mollet would be seen as weak and responsible for France's decline as a European colonial power because if "Algeria is lost, and there is France on a slippery slope down which Spain and Portugal slid."[15] LBJ speculated

that if he "lost" territory to communism, "Well, they'd impeach a President though that would run out, wouldn't they?"[16] Kissinger explained to George McGovern that "we can't do what you recommend and just pull out, because the boss's whole constituency would fall apart....There would be a disaster, politically, for us here at home."[17] Yuri Andropov "already understood that it was necessary to reconsider this policy [of remaining in Afghanistan]....But he understood that it was very complicated. It touch[ed] the interests of the ruling elite and to come to this quickly in a definitive way was impossible."[18] As the Lebanon war deepened, Prime Minister Menachem Begin resigned without ordering a withdrawal of Israeli forces.

An important feature of contemplating a withdrawal has been for key decision makers to figure out how to assign blame for the initial intervention and thus the subsequent withdrawal. Such a tactic was used to blunt domestic criticism. In the case of Vietnam, the Nixon and Ford Administrations were able to argue that it was Congress who "lost" Southeast Asia to the communists through their constant obstructionism. Soviet decision makers were able to lay the blame for the intervention on members of Brezhnev's inner circle.[19]

Tensions in Civil-Military Relations

Militaries have been generally hesitant to agree to a withdrawal after a long term investment in time, resources and troops. For them, disengagement means that

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[13] Henry Kissinger, The White House Years, (New York: Little and Brown, 1979), 35, 272. After the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, Nixon repeatedly promised the South Vietnamese that the US would come to its aid if the North violated the agreement.

[14] Fawaz Gerges, "Israel's Retreat from South Lebanon", Middle East Policy, (March 2001), 109.

[15] Horne, 175.

[16] Transcript of telephone conversation, LBJ and Senator Richard Russell, 27 May 1964, in Michael Beschloss, ed., Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963-1964, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 369.

[17] Gerald Strober and Deborah Strober, Nixon: An Oral History of His Presidency, (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), 171.

[18] Mendelson, 75.

[19] Alex Marshall, "Managing Withdrawal: Afghanistan as the Forgotten Example in Attempting Conflict Resolution and State Reconstruction", Small Wars and Insurgencies, (March 2007), 69.

there is no chance left for victory and the possibility of a tarnished reputation as an institution. Contemplating a withdrawal has had damaging effects on civil-military relations, in some cases, creating the impression among the ranks that politicians are pulling out the rug from under the military. For example, reports surfaced of disenchantment within the Soviet military as Geneva talks seemed to indicate a withdrawal date was finally being set.[20] The most extreme reactions came from the French military when it refused to obey civilian authorities in 1958 as accommodation with the FLN appeared imminent and in 1961 with the attempted coup by French military officers after DeGaulle voiced support for an "Algerian Algeria."[21]

Conversely, political leaders have felt disappointed by the lack of results provided by the military, meaning that the crossroads between withdrawal or escalation and expansion is the fault of the military because it has been unable to prevail. Secretary of Defense McNamara expressed his frustration over the military's failure in the wake of the Tet Offensive, "[W]e have no assurance that an additional 205,000 men will make a difference in the conduct of the war….There is no [military] plan to win the war."[22] When General Wheeler told LBJ's inner circle that the US was not trying to win a military victory, Secretary of State Dean Acheson exploded, "Then what in the name of God are five hundred thousand men out there doing—chasing girls? This is not a semantic game, General; if the deployment of all those men is not an effort to gain a military solution, then words have lost all meaning."[23] Similarly, government minister Rafael Eitan was irritated by Israeli Chief of the Gen-

eral Staff Amnon Shahakin in 1997: "These words [i.e. that there is no military solution to the Lebanon problem] are likely to be interpreted as pressure by the military on the government, as though the IDF is tossing the problem over to the political branch and saying 'solve it…do as you wish, we have no solution."[24]

Ironically, clashes between civilian authority and military officers are also deepened after political leaders have given the military a freer hand to meet the strategic objectives. This is a common feature among the cases--national leaders have contemplated withdrawal more seriously following their nations' escalations, expansions and increased offensives. In many cases, like the US military in South Vietnam and the Red Army in Afghanistan, political leaders actually used the military as a "final push" to add to the calculus of disengaging. The "Christmas Bombings" and Operation Linebacker were as much designed to gain concessions from the North Vietnamese as they were to appease the South Vietnamese and "convince the hawks at home that the war had been 'won' in something like the traditional sense."[25] Gorbachev reportedly gave the military one more year to achieve victory, "to prove themselves" before he would order a withdrawal.[26]

Issues of Future Interaction with Post-Withdrawal State

Indigenization has been conceived for a number of purposes, one being, as Henry Kissinger put it, "to be a healthy interval" between a military departure and the ul-

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[20] Rogers, 131.

[21] Horne, 422.

[22] Lloyd Gardner, Pay Any Price: Lyndon Johnson and the Wars for Vietnam, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc, 1995), 436.

[23] Ibid., 454.

[24] Yoram Peri, Generals in the Cabinet Room: How the Military Shapes Israeli Policy, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2006), 84.

[25] Lloyd Gardner, "The Last Casualty? Richard Nixon and the End of the Vietnam War, 1969-1975", in Marilyn Young and Robert Buzzanco, eds., A Companion to the Vietnam War, (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 253.

[26] Mendelson, 102-103.

timate fate of the post-withdrawal state.[27] To prolong this interval and to potentially build a state friendly to the withdrawing party's interest, a departing power will seek to gain some concessions and agreements from its adversary and other antagonists in the region as ways to gauge whether a withdrawal is feasible. Talks with those who "could not be negotiated with" suddenly appear desirable—France negotiated with the FLN, the US with the North Vietnamese, the USSR with the mujahedin via Pakistan and the Israelis with the Syrians. The objective is linked with the hope that conditions in the country and in the region will not force a reinsertion of military force at a later date. Signaling his intent to bring Soviet troops home, Gorbachev promised to do so only when a political settlement was reached that would "reliably guarantee a non-renewal of the outside armed interference" in Afghanistan.[28]

Questions of moral obligations to those who previously worked with the withdrawing party did arise in calculations to disengage, but plans were often vague. Avi Yehezkel, chairman of the Knesset defense budget subcommittee during the months prior to the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, stated that "anyone who wants to leave [southern Lebanon] we should welcome with open arms. Otherwise we won't be able to look at ourselves in the mirror."[29]   In the case of Algeria, there was no specific mention of the status of the *harkis* in Algeria under the Evian agreement, but were thought to be safe-

guarded by its general commitment to protect human rights.[30]

In the cases of South Vietnam and Afghanistan where the interventions were based on keeping their governments independent and self-governing, less consideration was given to those who worked alongside the withdrawing power. Making plans for a mass evacuation would have severely undercut the argument that these nations would be stable enough to remain viable in the aftermath of disengagement while at the same time providing the motivation for collaborators to begin to desert, defect and flee. Relying on Vietnamization, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger refused to design a strategy to extricate those Vietnamese and Cambodians who worked alongside the US.[31] Yet the chaotic final evacuation in South Vietnam was characterized by Kissinger as "fulfill[ing] the human obligation" toward those who had worked with the Americans.[32]   The only plans made by the Soviet authorities were the distribution of special identity cards to leading members of the Afghani government in the event of an evacuation, but the vast majority was left to deal with the implications of "national reconciliation". [33]

Fears Realized, Worries Materialized?

The factors discussed are intertwined and cannot be easily separated. For example, Vietnamization was not solely designed as a way to maintain US influence within South Vietnam, it was also used to

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[27] Henry Kissinger, Draft Memo for the President (September 1971).

[28] Pravda, 26 February 1986, in Riaz Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot: Negotiating Soviet Withdrawal, (Lahore, Pakistan: Progressive Publishers, 1993), 146.

[29] Leslie Susser, "Israel Opens Compensation Talks with the SLA", The Jerusalem Report, 10 April 2000, 4.

[30] Martin Evans, "The Harkis: The Experience and Memory of France's Muslim Auxiliaries", in Martin Alexander, Martin Evans and J.F.V. Kieger eds., The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-1962: Experiences, Images, Testimonies, (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan Ltd, 2002), 126.

[31] T. Christopher Jespersen, "Kissinger, Ford and Congress: The Very Bitter End in Vietnam", Pacific Historical Review, (August 2002), 442.

[32] Press Conference of Henry Kissinger, April 29, 1975.

[33] Tom Rogers, The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1992), 102.

build a stable South Vietnam that would demonstrate American commitment to allies and adversaries as well as curtail domestic criticism. Civilian decision makers not only chose to escalate the conflict to appease the military leadership, but to ease domestic criticism before a withdrawal.

Although the factors were singly and in combination part of the calculations of the withdrawing party, were the concerns of decision makers and military leaders justified when they finally chose to withdraw? For example did predatory neighbors of the conflict seek to thwart attempts at a successful withdrawal and undermine efforts of the withdrawing party to leave with honor thereby stymieing the desire to maintain some geostrategic influence? Were the reputations of decision makers tainted by the withdrawal in the minds of their citizens and domestic political rivals? The answers are mixed, suggesting that withdrawals turn out to be not as painless as advocates believed but also less painful than critics imagined.

Although issues of a nation's international reputation were ever-present on the minds of national leaders who sought to preserve it by avoiding a withdrawal, many ended-up ironically choosing the option of quitting to *prevent* any further damage to their country's standing in the world and continued distraction from other foreign policy goals. Charles DeGaulle who wanted to strengthen France's position in Europe eventually acquiesced to the FLN's demands. Nixon and Kissinger wanted Vietnam War settled "so that they could attend to other pressing diplomatic matters, including détente with the Soviet Union, tensions in the Middle East and the new relationship with China."[34] Similarly, the Soviet leadership felt that the ongoing

Afghan war was an impediment to achieving renewed détente with the West.[35] In a seeming twist, the national reputation which suggested a successful outcome to the conflict became jeopardized by prolonging the war. For example, rather than reiterating the initial justification for an intervention into South Lebanon as self-defense, Israel's Foreign Minister, David Levy explained that the continued presence of the IDF in southern Lebanon was untenable--"it legitimized attacks against Israel as an occupying force."[36]

Any message about the meaning of a withdrawal is largely interpreted by the receiver; the decision maker will not necessarily know how a withdrawal is understood and assessed by allies or adversaries until the next foreign policy issue arises. As such, forecasting the effects on international prestige is difficult since the decision maker is at the mercy of the actions and rhetoric of others at some indistinct future point in time. For example, in the cases examined, it is debatable whether the enemy was emboldened by the withdrawal. Predictably, the enemy's rhetoric centered around the "defeat" and "humiliation" of the withdrawing party who is seen as a "paper tiger", but the withdrawing party's narrative challenges such an interpretation. It is difficult to answer a subjunctive question: Would any future attacks not occur if the withdrawing party remained locked in its struggle? Certainly subsequent enemies have used a nation's withdrawal in their rhetoric as evidence that the withdrawing party is weak—Al Qaeda routinely looked at the US departure from Somalia as part of their calculations to attack the US in an attempt to

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[34] Jespersen., 442.

[35] Rogers, 4.

[36] Withdrawal from Lebanon: Press Briefing by Foreign Minister Levy, May 23, 2000. http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Speeches+by+Israeli+leaders/2000/Withdrawal+from+Lebanon-+Press+Briefing+by+FM+Levy.htm

force it to withdraw from the Gulf region and Saddam Hussein saw the US experience in Vietnam as evidence that the US would not be able to withstand a high casualty rate. However, these instances were not the only explanations for the actions of America's enemies in the early 21st century and any tarnished reputation or seeming lack of strategic resolve did not prevent allies from joining US coalitions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In the cases examined, national decision makers who initiated the conflict and worried about public opinion and their legacies, "failure was not an option". This might explain a common feature among these strategic withdrawals—the national leaders who decided to pull out their military forces were not the same ones who initially inserted them. New leaders were typically more immune from the rationale used to begin the war and from charges that they lost the war, especially if the war is being perceived as going badly by their core political constituency. In the USSR, key members of Gorbachev's inner circle of reformers were sympathetic to withdrawal and were able to isolate hardliners opposed to removing all Soviet forces from Afghanistan. In the cases of France, the US and Israel, public opinion shifted against their respective wars, permitting a freer contemplation of a withdrawal by decision makers. These leaders were able to change the vocabulary about disengagement. "Retreating, surrendering and losing" were replaced by phrases like "turning the page" or "staunching the bleeding".

However, even the ascension of pro-disengagement politicians into office did not end the national debate about what a withdrawal would entail; in the cases of Vietnam and Afghanistan, a type of "bidding war" occurred in the political arena where political allies urged a faster withdrawal. In the US during the withdrawal

of combat forces from South Vietnam, newly elected politicians and newly appointed officials attempted to "outbid" those calling for a speedier withdrawal by pledging to bring home greater numbers of US troops ahead of the time tables they had initially proposed. Similarly, in 1986, Gorbachev wanted to speed up international negotiations on the Afghanistan war to "bring this to an end in short order" while his Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko went as far as to say that the USSR would accept Afghanistan as a *neutral* state if that terminated Soviet involvement more quickly.[37]

Indigenization efforts proved to be short-lived, even where they were coupled with a regional deterrence strategy. Not only did South Vietnam, and southern Lebanon ultimately fall into the hands of the adversary, their neighbors were not deterred from acting in a predatory fashion. North Vietnam toppled South Vietnam two years later, and with the support of Syria, Hizbollah swept into southern Lebanon and continued to harass northern Israel, prompting another Israeli incursion in the summer of 2006. Although the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan outlasted the USSR as a nation-state, it was still at the mercy of Pakistani and American designs. Algeria was a slightly different case since DeGaulle acquiesced to the FLN, granting Algerian independence while neighboring Tunisia and Morocco had already been granted independence.

When a time table for withdrawal was set without tying it to specific military and political conditions, false-starts have aggravated civil-military relations that were already strained during the anticipation and planning of the disengagement. As

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[37] Lester Grau, "Breaking Contact without Leaving Chaos: The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan", Journal of Slavic Military Studies, (April 2007), 239.

the withdrawal was occurring, leaders of armed forces argued to keep more combat power in theater to flexibly respond to actions of the adversary and prevent additional military and civilian casualties. Adding to the tension in civil-military relations, military officials were concerned about the safety of departing troops and sought to delay the redeployment of troops until "conditions were right." In South Vietnam, when combat forces were to be removed, General Earl Wheeler emphasized "the threat to US forces and the risk involved in force reductions."[38]

An additional complication arose in the cases of South Vietnam, Afghanistan and southern Lebanon--local leaders asked that the military slow its pace of departure to forestall enemy gains. The result was a more gradual process of withdrawal than the politicians' preferred time table. The *mujahedin* continued their operations despite treaty agreements, forcing Moscow to pause the second phase of its withdrawal in late 1988 and "despite Gorbachev's impatience, almost half of the war would be fought under his leadership."[39]

When it came to the status of those who worked alongside the disengaging forces, no matter whether or not guarantees of safety were expressed by the withdrawing party or by groups who would potentially carry out reprisals, they suffered in the wake of departing forces. In Algeria, as the reprisal attacks and massacres occurred, DeGaulle was adamant that the *harkis* were not to be repatriated in France and went so far as ordering that those who arrived in France be returned and ordered the army not to intervene to stop the massacres.[40] In the frenzied evacuation of Saigon, few South Vietnam-

ese collaborators were rescued while President Gerald Ford ordered naval vessels to remain off the Vietnamese coast to rescue refugees even though the North Vietnamese worked to prevent them from fleeing. With the dissolution of the USSR in the previous year, the fall of President Najibullah's regime in Afghanistan was treated with disinterest by Boris Yeltsin's Russian Federation. In his inauguration speech, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak promised "to take all necessary measure to guarantee the future of the Lebanese security and civilian personnel who have worked alongside over the years."[41] Yet with compensation and resettlement packages, the SLA and other collaborators were left largely to fend for themselves when the withdrawal actually occurred. Sadly, the choice of "suitcases or coffins" for collaborators is often made for them by the withdrawing party.[42]

Although the parameters of common concerns were present when considering a strategic withdrawal, these same parameters were used to assess the *operational withdrawal* when it was underway. The way in which the withdrawal was occurring and whether it was considered operationally successful were viewed as *strategically* critical. This should not be a surprise since the links between the operational and strategic levels of war are much tighter in irregular conflicts—and appear to continue to be so even when a withdrawal is underway. Concerns over international prestige still haunted the process of disengagement. After the Paris Peace Accords and facing the deterioration of the South Vietnamese government, Ford told his cabinet, "we apparently stand helpless, our fidelity in question, our

[38] Graham Cosmas, MACV: The Joint Command in the Years of Withdrawal, 1968-1973, (Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 2007), 153.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Rogers., 127.

[41] Patrick Clawson and Michael Eisenstadt, eds., The Last Arab-Israeli Battlefield? Implications of an Israeli Withdrawal from Lebanon, (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), 86.
[42] Horne, 480.

word at stake."[43] US Ambassador to South Vietnam, Graham Martin went further by wanting to "arrange our leaving so that the manner of it would not add a further disgrace to the sad history of our involvement."[44] Ariel Sharon reacted to the chaotic scene during the IDF retreat from southern Lebanon by writing, "Israel's withdrawal caught our Lebanese allies by surprise. Who is going to trust us in the future….What message does this send to our allies in the region? The Palestinians and the Syrians alike view Israel's recent withdrawal as a sign of weakness."[45] The Soviet media attempted to put the best face on the mounting casualties among Red Army troops during the withdrawal: "In May 1945 when the Great Patriotic War [World War II] was coming to an end, the death of every soldier on the threshold of victory was a particularly painful event. A similar situation, most likely, now exists in Afghanistan. Each new death will be especially grievous and distressing."[46]

The withdrawal itself also weighs heavily on the military when reprisal attacks have occurred; for the French military, the attacks undermined "the most basic failure of the mission, namely the protection of the population from attack."[47] In fact, civil authority over the military broke down in the departure from Algeria when many French troops assisted in the escape of thousands of *harkis* even though they were explicitly ordered not to do so by DeGaulle.

Domestic fallout over the manner in which the withdrawal occurred was affected by a number of the other parameters. For example, the treatment of collabora-

tors as the withdrawal has occurred was greeted with mixed reactions within the withdrawing state. In France, the reaction was muted due to the general hardening of attitudes among the public who "wanted to turn the page as quickly as possible."[48] In Israel, public opinion was more sympathetic to members of the SLA who saw them as being "abandoned" by the IDF.[49] As such, many members of the SLA and their families were assisted by Israel with relocation to the US, Australia, Britain and Canada. Political opposition was also emboldened by the slow execution of an evacuation of a country's nationals. As South Vietnam appeared on the verge of collapsing, Texas Democratic Congressman Jack Brooks complained about the "indecisiveness of the US Ambassador to Vietnam and the State Department in the face of this mounting threat to American lives."[50] The legacy and reputation of the decision maker also figures into how a withdrawal is perceived. In response to Ambassador Martin asserting that he would be the fall guy if the evacuation of Saigon went badly, Kissinger wrote, "My ass isn't covered. I can assure you I will be hanging several yards higher than you when this is all over."[51]

Contemplating the Future in the Here and Now

The current debate over Afghanistan appears to be pulled towards issues of international prestige and regional instability as expressed in America's objectives to defeat Al Qaeda and its allies as well as buttress the stability of Pakistan. Underlying this debate is an indigenization strategy to build Afghan institutions, particularly in the security arena, so that US

[43] Notes of the Cabinet Meeting, January 29, 1975, 1-2, 1975/01/29 Cabinet Meeting, box 4, James E. Connor Papers, GRF Library.
[44] Jespersen, 465.
[45] Ariel Sharon, "Leave Lebanon—but Not This Way", Wall Street Journal, 31 May 2000, A26.
[46] Rogers, 143.
[47] Evans, 128.

[48] Evans, 127.
[49] Tracy Wilkinson, "Pullout from Lebanon: Lebanese Militia Finds Sanctuary—but No Solace", Los Angeles Times, 24 May 2000, A1.
[50] Jespersen, 464.
[51] Ibid.

and coalition forces can shift more responsibilities to Afghan security forces like the police and army. These may be the important parameters of the debate for now, but the other three factors of domestic political fallout, military melancholy and relations with a post-withdrawal Afghanistan will need examination if the debate about withdrawal is to be at its fullest.

Depending on the conditions in Afghanistan when a withdrawal is underway, it is unclear who in the US might be faulted for "losing". In order to maintain geostrategic influence in the region, at this stage, Iran and Al Qaeda in Iraq are not likely to be treated as reliable negotiating partners in any strategic calculation to withdraw. Tensions in civil-military relations may develop and become acute. Under the Obama Administration, the US military pursued a type of surge strategy to bring more forces into areas of Afghanistan that were under the threat of the Taliban. Will this be treated by the Obama Administration, or a successive administration should Obama lose re-election in 2012, as a "final push" as in the other cases and will the US military resist the 2014 date if the Afghan security forces are not deemed strong enough to protect the state? Such resistance from the military might force the President to back away from his commitment or to overrule his generals.[52] Either scenario will cause a strain between civilian and military leaders.

To date, very little concern has been focused on the plight of those Afhan supporters of US and coalition efforts inside the country. Much like the cases of South Vietnam and Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the US strategy of building an Afghanistan that is stable, unified and at peace with its neighbors means that making any plans for the evacuation of collab-

orators would undermine the strategy itself. To make such plans would signal our allies and enemies in Afghanistan that we do not believe that it can survive without us. This, in turn, would lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy by instigating "defections" among pro-American leaders and citizens to the adversaries' camps, encouraging more violence among the various non-state armed groups in Afghanistan and even inviting interventions by regional powers.

The operational withdrawal, once underway, will also come under scrutiny. Planning for the day that the last American boot leaves Afghan soil needs to include the conditions under which such a departure might require a slower process. For example, what are the circumstances that US forces might delay implementing portions of the timetable for departure due to security risks to their troops or if Afghanistan itself appears to be coming apart and falling into civil war? How can the US prevent or manage a potentially chaotic withdrawal?

The tonic to alleviate these concerns is intimately linked with the larger strategic goal in Iraq which is still largely undefined. Does the US seek an Afghanistan that is a viable state with a friendly government or will the Obama Administration be content to muddle through with a version of "Afghan good enough"[53], meaning the best the Afghans can muster given the conditions of the day? If the objective is to leave an Afghanistan that is viable as a state, then a chaotic withdrawal under fire may require an articulation of a set of parameters that would require an American "re-intervention" in Afghanistan. Such an articulation may not be necessary if the objective is "Afghan good enough"; a chaotic withdrawal under such a scenario,

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[52] Elisabeth Bumiller and Thom Shanker, "Generals Propose a Timetable for Iraq", New York Times, 18 December 2008, 25.

[53] Larry Kaplow, "The Last Day of the Iraq War", Newsweek, 12 January 2009, http://www.newsweek.com/id/177717

however, would seem to validate the pessimistic visions contained in each of the five concerns examined.

If the past is prologue, the debate over withdrawing from Afghanistan will become even more wrenching for national leaders, military officials and the American public as more months are added to the years that have been already fought in the country. Withdrawing has serious consequences for all who are involved in fighting an irregular conflict. For the withdrawing party that possessed a superior military and was thought to be able to quickly prevail, the words of an Israeli commentator during the IDF's departure from southern Lebanon offer a caution— "We too learned that there are no happy withdrawals, no free withdrawals."[54] The process of the US military's withdrawal from Afghanistan and how it unfolds are serious and require an understanding of what the short and long term implications might be. As Jean Bethke Elshtain powerfully asks: "having gotten things so wrong during the evacuation of South Vietnam, will the United States get things any more right this time?"[55] After all, decision makers in the future will likely use withdrawal from Afghanistan in their imaginings of what a potential disengagement from their particular conflict might entail. But, then again, that is another sandwich....

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[54] Wilkinson.

[55] Jean Bethke Elshtain, "The Ethics of Fleeing: What the US Still Owes Iraq", <u>World Affairs</u>, (Spring 2008), 92.

Wrong War: An Interview with Bing West

by Michael Few

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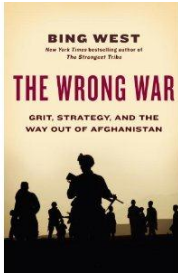
Bing West's <u>The Wrong War: Grit, Strategy, and the Way Out of Afghanistan</u> will be out on the bookshelf tomorrow. We asked Bing, a longtime supporter of *Small Wars Journal*, for an exclusive interview prior to publication. We wanted an honest, open discussion on the current war in Afghanistan and modern warfare. He more than delivered, and hopefully, this interview will be followed in several weeks with another by <u>Octavian Manea</u>. Enjoy the interview, and make sure that you go out and get his book! - Mike

The new book title is quite provocative. Why is Afghanistan the "Wrong War?"

Afghanistan is the Wrong War for our benevolent strategy of wooing the Pashtuns by offering money. Our senior leaders say the war cannot be won by killing. It will surely be lost if we don't kill more Islamist terrorists and hard-core Taliban. More disturbing, the US is steadily getting out of the arrest and imprisonment business, due to politics in the States.

Why aren't we the "Strongest Tribe" in Afghanistan?

In Iraq, the Sunni tribes, with an established hierarchy and strong intra-clan ties, came over to our side because, as their leaders told me, they concluded we were the strongest tribe. It was no accident that the Sunni Awakening began in Anbar, where the Marines had hammered the insurgents - al Qaeda and Sunni tribes alike - year after year. In Afghanistan, the Pashtun sub-tribes have no such established hierarchy. Many villages have scant contact with the next. The Pashtuns will remain neutral and standoffish until they decide who is going to win. They are convinced the Taliban will return as we pull out.

In 2009, General Stanley McChrystal implemented a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign for Afghanistan. Early reports from the field suggest that some battlefield commanders misinterpreted the intent and placed restrictive rules of engagement on ISAF security forces limiting their ability to close with and destroy the enemy. Contrastingly, during this same time period, Special Operations Forces conducted numerous direct action raids killing and capturing hundreds of Taliban and al Qaeda operatives. What effect did these actions have on the grunt Marines and Soldiers in the field and the way the military views war and warfare?

In the past three years, I have embedded with many rifle companies. COIN is a franchise business. The variation among the franchises is enormous. Some companies have five outposts; others have 18. Some companies have permission to track every patrol with mortars and to fire immediately upon request of the patrol leader - no questions asked. Others have difficulty. Our senior generals did go too far in criticizing from the top. As rules of thumb, the ODA and Marine units have more de-

grees of freedom to call in fire at a lower level. Many of the Army platoon commanders, after Ranger School, have expressed to me disappointment that they could not act more aggressively on their own. I know this is a tough balancing act, but most Taliban shoot and scoot successfully.

General David Petraeus famously said that we should use money as a weapon. Some interpret this guidance as a need to have a free-fire exercise in spending and reconstruction efforts in order to win hearts and minds. Others caution subtle restraint or coercive civil affairs to ensure that spending is measured to ensure increasing returns on investment and mutually beneficial partnerships. How would you describe our monetary investment in Afghanistan given the current strategy?

From Karzai to the villagers, the response has been rational: take or steal every dollar the Americans are foolish enough to give away. In the US, the Great Society and the War on Poverty created a culture of entitlement and undercut individual responsibility. We exported that failed social philosophy to Afghanistan.

Despite the initial sluggishness of the Marjah campaign, the Marines are finding success. COIN is traditionally a long, slow process. Moreover, in RC-East, commanders in the 101st are executing a violent pacification of long held Taliban and al Qaeda strongholds, and we're quietly garnering local tribal militias through the Village Stability Operations (VSO). Why should we not give ISAF more time to conduct President Obama's counterinsurgency campaign?

True, the Marine companies are spending millions in Marjah, now that the overt, armed Taliban have left. The criterion of success, however, are districts standing on their own without US rifle companies. In ten years, that has not happened, and six American commanding generals have praised their counterinsurgency campaigns. I have not seen one village with a self-defense force that has killed Taliban and stood on its own.

In a recent <u>interview</u> with *SWJ*, Karl Hack suggested, "You cannot, for instance, go straight to a comprehensive approach for 'winning hearts and minds' and expect it to work, if you have not first broken up the larger insurgent groups, disrupted their main bases, and achieved a modicum of spatial dominance and of security for the population of the area concerned." Do you agree that in many small wars security and the suppression of the insurgency must come before construction and investment efforts?

In Vietnam, the mission of our Combined Action Platoons was to patrol so vigorously that the Viet Cong locals and main force would not enter the AO. The second mission then was to bring in police to ferret out the secret cadre. Overarching those two missions was the daily integration with the Popular Forces, who knew they would be left on their own, usually after nine to twelve months. (My CAP took longer - 485 days.) Security and a belief that you will win are the first requisites for a government.

In Afghanistan, our mission is patrol until the overt Taliban pull out. Then, our battalion commanders then move on to projects and economic development (over $10 million for many, if not most battalions) and to governance. Most battalion commanders are the de facto district gov-

ernor, or the co-equal. The battalion commanders are then expected to assist in the institution of the rule of law. But since US soldiers are not permitted to arrest Afghans, the rule of law has gradually been dropped from the COIN catechism.

In Vietnam, counterinsurgency focused upon the destruction of the Viet Cong insurgency, and was successful by 1970. For ten years, in Afghanistan, our new COIN doctrine has focused upon building a nation, and has not been successful. The COIN doctrine says our troops are expected to be nation-builders as well as warriors. I believe that is deeply flawed. Our military, despite the exhortations of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, should not be a Peace Corps. We need another decade or so to succeed at that, and we need about a trillion dollars and a commitment of about a hundred battalions.

The math is staggering. There are more than 7,000 Pashtun villages and fewer than 50 NATO battalions that will go into combat. Americans cannot protect 11 million Pashtuns. The open border is 1500 miles long; the government in Kabul is rotten; President Karzai is serpentine.

What do you propose for a new strategy?

Push the Afghans to fight their own war. Stop fighting for them. Create the Adviser Corps we have needed for the past ten years. Our air surveillance is so extraordinary today that we can deploy about 50 advisers per 400-man Afghan battalion and patrol rigorously without unduly risking our advisers. We do not need 100,000 troops. The average grunt sees a real live Taliban only a few times in a tour. We spend as much time in shuras as on patrols. That has not yielded return on the investment. The Taliban needs to mass in order to threaten to retake gov-

ernment control in the urban areas. Given our air, they cannot mass.

Given a shift to an advisor only strategy, should we turn command of the Afghanistan campaign over to Army Special Forces, the traditional American experts in small wars?

We need a three-star in charge of the advisers, who in turn must become our main effort - focused upon insisting the Afghans fight their own war. The greatest institutional defect is that we have conceded total control over promotions and firings to Karzai. That can and should be changed.

The wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan led to a resurgence and explosion of theory and study into small wars, a field once relegated to minor departments of security studies and defense analysis. Much of this discussion and debate takes place at Small Wars Journal through major stakeholders such as LTC (ret.) John Nagl, LTC (ret.) David Kilcullen, GEN David Petraeus, and LTG William Caldwell as well as numerous junior and field grade officers and NCO's returning from the field trying to apply practice to theory. Has this increase in the study of small wars provided the collective community a greater wisdom of war and warfare?

The new religion of benevolent counterinsurgency has been defined by the best writers. Especially in Big Army, attracting attention and prominence is helped enormously by an advanced degree and by the publication of theoretical papers on macro topics at the high level of warfare.

The new COIN, however, remains an unproven theory, with a distinct downside. Since non- kinetics have been advocated as the smart approach to warfare, from the

top down the infection of risk-aversion has spread. Most battalions know the sections of their AOs where the troops will be shot at; those areas are avoided until rotary-wing CAS is scheduled; that takes four to seven days. Every casualty is investigated; if a junior officer has strayed from the published regulations, he is in trouble. Every company and battalion commander must give away the money he is given, and must insure his books balance, etc. We have overly entangled and distracted our rifle companies, and we have turned a blind eye to the need to detect, arrest and imprison those in every village who are true Taliban or part-timers.

Some will respond that the new COIN is still kinetic. It's true that in the two doctrinal pubs (COIN and Irregular Warfare) there is ample mention of being aggressive. Combined, the two pubs run over 250,000 words, with appendices. There's a paragraph in the pubs for every taste and position.

For instance, Nate Fick and John Nagl wrote an op-ed in NYT on 21 February, saying, "even in Sangin, ranking among the very worst districts... the Taliban are being driven from their sanctuaries as the coalition focuses on protecting the Afghan people..."

I just returned from Sangin, where I accompanied a platoon on its daily fights. My story is published in the National Review. Interestingly, the editors, without consulting me, decided the title would be: ***With the Warriors****: How our Marines go about the business of destroying the Taliban*. Note the editors did not say, "The business of protecting the population". What I witnessed in Sangin was a straight-up battle. (See the article with the warriors.) The British tried "protecting the population" for four years by doctrinal COIN means and were penned in. The Marines are slugging it out

– killing - every day. The aggressive regimental commander has one rule: every firefight will end with Marines "closing to zero"; that is, standing on the ground where the Taliban fired. These grunts are doing what my combined platoon did in Vietnam – killing the enemy. Yes, that in turn brings "protection" to the people --- regardless of what the people want. That's the nature of war.

Nate and John acknowledge in their op-ed that, "The coalition has been able to capture or kill far more Taliban leaders in nighttime raids... The United States can't kill its way to victory, as it learned in Vietnam and Iraq, but it can put enough pressure on many Taliban fighters to encourage them to switch their allegiance."

While Nate and John praise our SOF raids for killing, they add the obligatory new COIN bromide that "we can't kill its way to victory". No single phrase has sown more confusion among a generation of riflemen that we have trained to kill. Any war is about killing, first and foremost. That is what distinguishes war from diplomacy. Vide our Revolutionary War, the Civil War, WWI, WWII, Vietnam and Iraq. North Vietnamese killed the South Vietnamese soldiers and seized Saigon with tanks. The Sunni tribes eventually informed upon those affiliated with Al Qaeda, and they became targets to be killed or captured.

Over the course of three years of embeds in the north, east and south of Afghanistan, I did not find one village that fitted the pattern of Vietnam. For instance, in the village of Bing Nghia where I fought, 15 Americans arrived in June of 1966; the large majority of villagers welcomed them; the US squad trained a local platoon by fighting the Viet Cong night after night; no big projects were constructed; no Americans tried to help with governance; 17 months later, the Americans left the vil-

lage to fend for itself. Before the Americans arrived and after they left, most of the villagers had an anti-Viet Cong ideology.

That is not the case with the Pashtuns. Their Islamic and cultural association with the Talban is different. Their refusal to commit is much deeper and more conflicted than we encountered in Vietnam.

I agree with Nate and John that most Americans are leaving Afghanistan sooner than 2014. However, the cause will not be that we have protected a Pashtun population that has in turn reciprocated by rejecting the Taliban. Undoubtedly that will be the public claim. But the president is not going to run for re-election with a perceived mess in Afghanistan. Hence, we will have achieved our basic objectives by 2012. That is a political given. Regardless of how we leave, our political leaders will declare victory; e.g., Kissinger was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for "ending" the Vietnam war. How the Afghan narrative is shaped will depend upon the skill of the White House.

Nate and John and I also agree that we must hasten the transfer of responsibility to Afghan soldiers backed by more advisers. However, the *cause* of the transfer will not be that we have succeeded in protecting a Pashtun population dispersed over a vast countryside ideal for guerrilla tactics. The math is staggering: 7,000 Pashtun villages and about 250 US rifle companies. The Pashtuns are determined to remain neutral until one side or the other wins. The Pashtuns are the prize for winning the war, not the means of winning it.

The new COIN theory is based on the social contract: the US provides protection and money, and the Pashtuns reject and inform on their Taliban relatives in their midst. The Pashtuns have not kept their side of the contract. Their self-interest lies in remaining neutral until they see a clear winner.

We have confused our soldiers and our mission by clinging to one theory – population protection - about counterinsurgency. Galula popularized that view when he was at Harvard. But his earlier and more honest book about how he fought in Algeria is revealing; he employed tactics – execution, threatening to bake people, etc. – that contradicted his latter encomiums. Every war creates its own facts, regardless of theories. In Afghanistan, the population will not determine the outcome. The end will be determined by the tenacity of the Taliban, or by the infusion of a fighting spirit into the Afghan army, or by a messy deal that will cause us all to ask: why did we fight so long and hard for that? All three outcomes are separate from the Americans. The Afghans are perfectly willing to take our money and let us continue to do the heavy lifting.

It is time to subordinate the misplaced rhetorical emphasis upon population protection and insist that the primary mission be partnered training – to include the relief of ANA incompetents - with timelines for the turnover of security responsibility, including Afghan soldiers patrolling in the villages. The US military should explicitly downgrade the effort devoted to nation-building projects, shuras, governance and economic development. Yes, this means the ANA becomes the power behind Karzai's throne. The armies in Turkey and South Korea provided a stabilizing influence.

Our current level of effort is politically unsustainable here at home. Our generals cannot want to give freedom more than the Pashtuns are willing to fight to gain it. If we cut back our spending and our troop levels, we will be able to persuade the Congress and many in the Executive Branch to stay longer in Afghanistan. I did

not come to these conclusions quickly or lightly. In The Wrong War, I recount battles that have gone on for years; we are trying to do too much.

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